Message

November is Native American Heritage Month (also referred to as American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month). The Maine DOE has published a list of resources you may consider using to support your students’ understanding of the past and present lives of indigenous peoples, the many rich cultural traditions and languages, and the complicated history of colonialism.

Maine DOE Newsroom: Resources for National American Indian Heritage Month

An additional resource for you to check out is the Anti-Defamation League’s Native American Heritage month webpage, sharing free lesson plans for teachers and much more on this critical and fundamental aspect of the American story.

April Perkins
Educator Highlight
This week, intern Isabel Honigman interviewed Patsy Gendron, an EL teacher in Biddeford. Thanks, Patsy!

Can you tell me a little bit about your background? What motivated you to become a teacher?
I've always had a love of reading, and when I was a kid, my mother used to read stories to me and my sisters from an Irish fairytale book. I began my career as a 1st-grade teacher and I desperately wanted to teach kids how to read. Later, I moved on to have different roles in the district as a literacy teacher and coach. I also became a Title I Director and the one question that kept coming up from my colleagues was "What can I do to help EL learners to read?" Although I already had my M.S. Lit. Ed., this question sparked me to go back to school at USM to become certified with an ESL endorsement. That endorsement really helped me to support my colleagues. After working as the Title I Director for a while, I realized I missed teaching and working hands-on with the kids. Luckily, that year, three EL teaching positions opened in my district and I received one of them.

What has been the biggest or most impactful challenge you have faced as an educator?
Maybe it was the learning curve when I first began teaching and working with EL students. I had a lot to learn, and I am grateful to have learned so much from my students. I learned about where they are from and what life has been like for them. Creating a safe environment is really important for those students who have been through much more in their short lives than many of us can imagine. I strive to create a supportive and safe environment every day in my classroom.

How do you navigate having different levels of learners in your classroom?
Absolutely, that happens all the time, especially as an EL teacher. You may have a beginner that has just joined the class coming into a room with students who are more advanced. I really make it a point to get to know all my students. That way I can give them individualized work at their level but also create activities that will help everyone. I work hard to stay updated on strategies and tools I can use to make sure everyone is receiving comprehensible input. I also believe in using culturally relevant materials as well and having students see themselves in the materials we are using in the classroom. Finding stories they can relate to and talk about is essential.

If there was one piece of education policy that could be immediately implemented, what would you choose?
When EL staff work alongside classroom teachers throughout the district, in many cases, we are responsible for training those colleagues with ways and strategies to support our EL learners. Ideally, it would be great to see some classwork or training through a multi-year plan to provide support to all staff. Like many districts throughout the state, EL & other staffing is in short supply. We could all certainly use more staff to provide the highest quality of education for our students and to meet their individual needs.

What is a teaching tip you want to share with other educators?
I think just really listening to the kids. Wait time is super important so they can process what you are saying and be able to answer you effectively. As the teacher, you are the model for the classroom. If you model your patience and wait time, the rest will follow. You are not here to fly through the class and curriculum. You need to take time with every one of your students.

ExcEL 2026: Improving Outcomes for EL Students in Rural Areas

An opportunity to earn the ‘Effective Educator of MLLs’ micro-endorsement
Open to ALL educators in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine

ExcEL 2026 makes professional learning accessible to teachers wherever they are located, and ‘the work’ is embedded in their teaching so it aligns with their immediate learning needs. This is an opportunity to join the successful ExcEL network and substantially improve outcomes for your English Learners.

There is NO cost to participate. Participants receive stipends for successfully completing micro-credentials as well as support for classroom materials and supplies.

Apply now: https://forms.gle/KQ1w7BPzGjUeNYHSA

To learn more about micro-endorsements visit https://www.excelleadershipacademy.org/pages/micro-credential/
Professional Learning

All virtual Maine DOE offerings will be recorded and posted to the Maine DOE YouTube channel unless noted with an asterisk.

Maine DOE Professional Development Calendar

WIDA Self-Paced eWorkshops are available 9.1.21-8.31.22

11.6.21 8:30-4pm: Northern New England TESOL Virtual Conference

11.10.21 7-8:30pm: Immigrant Connections Educational Experiences of Afghans: Learning from Afghan Refugee Students & Families

11.16.21 at 3pm: Maine DOE Seal of Biliteracy

11.18.21 at 3pm: AATF-Maine and Cultural Services of the French Consulate in Boston Bringing about an Awareness of Social Justice in the Foreign Language Classroom

11.19.21-11.21.21: ACTFL Virtual Convention and Expo

11.30.21 9am-4pm at USM: AATF-Maine and Cultural Services of the French Consulate In-Person Workshop: Développer les compétences orales en classe de FLE (Contact Noah Ouellette (noah.ouellette@diplomatie.gouv.fr) or Nathalie Gorey to register.

2.7.21 8am-4pm: National Association of English Learner Program Administrators Hybrid Conference: Advancing Linguistic Equity through Program Leadership

2.10.22-2.12.22 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Conference in NY

Articles of Interest

Learning for Justice: With and About: Inviting Contemporary American Indian Peoples Into the Classroom

Chalkbeat: Learning in a new language is exhausting. Remember that.

Maine DOE Newsroom: Our Journey to Success: The Westbrook 21st CCLC Intercultural Community Center

Futurity: How Bilingual Brains Switch Between Languages Seamlessly

Smithsonian Folk Life Magazine: La Prochaine Génération: The Next Generation of Louisiana French Speakers

Teachers of Critical Languages Program

We are pleased to announce round 2 of the Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP) grant application! TCLP is fully funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and helps U.S. K-12 schools to launch new or expand existing Arabic or Chinese language programs.

TCLP makes it easy for U.S. schools to grow their critical language programs by placing fully-funded teachers from Egypt, Morocco, or China to teach Arabic or Chinese as a foreign language for an academic year. By sharing their languages and cultures, the teachers bring global competencies to their host schools and communities. Host a teacher in 2022 by starting an application today!

The application deadline for TCLP host schools is Friday, January 7, 2022 at 11:59pm EST.
Assessment Updates

ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

- Initial materials orders will be received by Maine schools and SAU offices by 12/15/21. Additional materials can be ordered by SAUs from 12/15/21 – 2/25/21.
- Students will be available to view in the WIDA AMS platform beginning November 30th. SAUs can begin setting up test sessions and assigning accommodations to students participating in the ACCESS for ELLs Online, per their IEP / 504 Plan. Please confirm assessment accommodations with the student’s case manager prior to assigning in WIDA AMS.
- The three accommodations which alter the presentation of the test - Manual Control of Item Audio (MC), Repeat Item Audio (RA), and Extended Speaking Test time (ES) must be selected for the appropriate students in WIDA AMS prior to the administration of the first domain.
Job Opportunities

Bangor ESL Teacher

RSU 51 French Teacher

RSU 3 Long-Term Substitute Spanish Teacher

Scarborough MS Spanish Teacher

RSU 2 Hall-Dale MS Spanish Teacher (French also desired)

South Portland Multiple ELL Teacher and ELL Ed Tech Positions
(Advertised as one-year positions, but there is potential for continued employment)

RSU 22 Middle School Spanish Teacher

Biddeford ELL Ed Tech III

RSU 22 Adult Education ELL Instructor

Westbrook ELL Elementary Ed Tech III (One Year)

RSU 44 ELL Tutor

Falmouth HS Latin Teacher (One Year)

MSAD 54 Part-Time ELL Tutor

Biddeford ELL Ed Tech II

SAD 15 Long-Term Substitute Spanish Teacher

Waterville ELL Teacher

AOS 98 (Boothbay Region HS) Spanish Teacher

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Monthly Office Hours
An informal opportunity to connect with DOE staff and teaching colleagues

ESOL
3rd Wednesday of Each Month
Next: 11.17.21 at 3:30pm
Focus Topic: Translanguaging and the Seal of Biliteracy
Register by 11.14.21

World Languages
2nd Wednesday of Each Month
Next: 11.10.21 at 3:00pm
Focus Topic: Teaching with Depth about Holidays
Register by 11.7.21

Announcements
None for this week! :P