Message

I’m very excited to announce two wonderful professional learning opportunities coming up soon!

For World Languages teachers: On December 7th at 3pm, Dr. Thomas Sauer, Assistant Director of Resource Development at the NFLC and Codirector of PEARLL, will be presenting a webinar on the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning framework. This framework brings together core best practices for language teaching in an organized way to support teachers in their professional growth.

For ESOL teachers: On December 13th at 3pm, Laureen Avery, Director of the ExcEL Leadership Academy (see page 2 for details) will provide an overview of the free professional learning opportunities available to all Maine teachers to improve their skills in meeting the needs of ELs. Teachers who participate in the ExcEL Leadership Academy will receive a $250 for each micro-credential they complete. Classroom and content-area teachers are encouraged to participate!

April Perkins
Educator Highlight
This week, intern Isabel Honigman interviewed Deb Backman, German teacher at Cony Middle/High School in Augusta. Vielen Dank, Deb!

What drew you to teaching German? What is it like teaching German in Maine?
I started taking German in 8th grade at Milton High School in Vermont, where we were not too far from the Canadian border. Everyone else chose French because of our location, so I chose to study German to be different. My teacher was the wife of a German professor at UVM, so they convinced me to go there for undergrad. I had no intentions of being a German major, but I studied abroad and graduated UVM with a major in German. I also had no intention of teaching, but I received a Fulbright award as an ETA (English Teaching Assistant) in Vienna and I went there to get better at language and immerse myself in the culture. I fell in love with teaching while I was there and when I got back, I got my Master’s in Education UVM and I student taught at South Burlington High School. After graduating, I found a one-year position at a school in Maine, Maranacook Middle School, so I decided to take it because my Grandmother lived there. After my year there, the position at Cony opened up and I have been there for 22 years. Teaching German is challenging because when we had the recession in 2008-2009, a lot of German programs were cut. It’s a little tougher to hold on to German programs because we do not see as many people with German heritage here. I think we have around nine high school programs in Maine and you are usually the only German teacher in your district.

What type of work did you do as the president of the Maine chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German? How has this leadership experience changed your teaching?
I have been president of Maine AATG for multiple years and at different times. My first year teaching at Maranacook, a coworker told me to go to an AATG meeting and join. I went to a couple meetings and they quickly nominated me to be president. I think maybe in my third year teaching I became the president of AATG. I also at one point was the Northeast representative of the AATG. I have played many different roles. I served on the executive council of AATG twice. That is how I met a whole bunch of people and it has created great professional development opportunities for me. It has really affected everything I have been able to accomplish as a teacher.

What has been the biggest or most impactful challenge you have faced as an educator?
It is always coming back and facing the school year again. You keep expecting it to get easier and it never does. I try to meet every year with the same energy. The pandemic has not made anything easier. The overall trend in education is that we always have to do more, we never have to do less. We would need to hire more people and have the budget to do so for the work to lighten. Everyone, from teachers to administrators to the janitorial staff, has constantly had more added to their plates.

How do you think your teaching style differs from other teachers and what is most important to you in the classroom?
What I do would not necessarily work for the next person. Teaching is an art form, and everyone needs to develop their own style. I take all professional development opportunities and look at what other people are doing. That way I can steal it and adapt it to work for me and my classes. One thing that is unique about German teachers is that we are constantly sharing everything we do. Style-wise, I am a little bit traditional, but I also do a lot of technology. But there is no one thing I do. What I value most in the classroom is a sense of excitement and energy. I love it when the kids are excited to learn and enthusiastic. They start to be excited about German and switch it into their everyday lives. For example, some of my students now play their video games in German. That is why I love what I do.

ExcEL Leadership Academy:
Free Opportunity for ESOL Professional Learning Starting January 2022

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

11.16.21 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: 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.

12.2.21 to 1.19.21: NECTFL Virtual Workshop Series for Fall/Winter

12.7.21 at 3pm: Maine DOE Hosts Dr. Thomas Sauer of PEARLL Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning Framework and Catalyst

12.9.21 4-5pm: FLAVA Co-Constructing Practices To Help Students With Disabilities Move Toward Proficiency

12.13.21 at 3pm: Maine DOE Hosts ExcEL Leadership Academy

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

Maine DOE Newsroom: Webinar on the Maine Seal of Biliteracy

Maine DOE Newsroom: Webinar on the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning (TELL) Framework

Science X Daily: Cognitive study shows lack of bilingual education adversely affects English language learners writing skills

EdSource: Bilingual independent study: How one California district is making it work

Bangor Daily News: Caribou teacher is vying to make central Aroostook the foothold for French immersion in Maine

Portland Press Herald: Language center gives New Mainers boost in quest for college degrees

Diego Ojeda: ¿Él, ella, elle? The case of inclusive Spanish in education

Edutopia: Helping Students Reacclimate to Being With Others All Day

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

➢ **November 30th**: Student rosters and test sessions become available in WIDA AMS.
➢ **December 15th**: Initial Materials orders received by schools and SAUs. The materials will be shipped directly to schools, and will include overage of materials for grade clusters with more than 10 students rostered. Overage materials as well as District Test Coordinator Manuals will be included in the boxes shipped to SAUs.
➢ **December 15th**: Additional Materials Ordering becomes available to SAUs in WIDA AMS.

**With the ACCESS for ELLs window opening on 1/10/22, we are officially entering assessment season!**

It’s important to take time in November and December to prepare and organize for the assessment administration. The **WIDA Secure Portal** contains helpful resources available to District and School Test Coordinators and Test Administrators, including the following topics:

- **Pre-Testing: Test Scheduling**
- **Technology Installation and Technology Overview** (important to share with the appropriate technology colleagues who will be preparing the devices used during ACCESS)
- **ACCESS for ELLs for New Coordinators and New Administrators**

**Helpful Links & Resources**

**Accessibility and Accommodations** - Information about the available features for the ACCESS for ELLs and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. Remember to confirm with students’ case managers in the event the English learner has an IEP/504 Plan with assessment accommodations. This is part of the student’s legal right to FAPE, under IDEA.

**Preparing for Assessment: Practice and Sample Items** - It’s critical that students participating in state assessments have opportunities to interact and practice with the kinds of items they will see on the test. If students will be employing accessibility features or accommodations, it’s also an opportunity for them to see how this will function in the actual platform. Please remember to build time in either late December or the first week of January for students to become familiar with this resource.

The expertise of Maine EL Educators is a critical component of assessment development

Many thanks to Barbara Benjamin McManus, EL Educator in Lewiston Public Schools, for recently sharing her expertise on a Bias/Sensitivity Review Panel for Maine’s alternate assessments.

Additionally, a huge thank you to Krista St. Cyr, EL Instructional Coach in Lewiston Public Schools, for her participation at the annual Quality Control Meeting hosted by the Center for Applied Linguistics and WIDA.
**Job Opportunities**

- Westbrook Long-Term Sub ELL HS Teacher
- Westbrook Long-Term Sub ELL Elementary Teacher
- Auburn Cultural Broker/Interpreter Park Ave Elementary
- Maine DOE Educational Technology Infrastructure Specialist (Limited Period)
- 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

**Announcements**

**FLAME Fall Newsletter**
Check out the fall newsletter from the Foreign Language Association of Maine (FLAME). Note that FLAME is seeking to fill several board positions, so if you're interested in developing your own leadership, this is a great opportunity.

**Virginia DOE SLIFE Guidebook**
The Virginia Department of Education has released an excellent resource related to educating students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). Note that Maine does not yet have a formal definition of SLIFE; however, much of the information and many of the resources in this guidebook are relevant to us.

**New Colorín Colorado Resource**
Colorín Colorado has released a guide on Using Diverse Books with ELLs.

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

At least five registrants are required in order for office hours to be held.

**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: 12.8.21 at 3:00pm
Focus Topic: Avoiding Burnout
Register by 12.5.21