The Maine ESOL Meeting will be taking place virtually on 3.11.22! The theme for this year is Realizing our Shared Responsibility. Students who are English learners (ELs) benefit from systems designed around the understanding that all teachers are language teachers. Providing equitable access to high-quality language and content learning for students who are ELs is the responsibility of all educators.

We are now accepting proposals for presentations, workshops, and panel discussions! Topics that relate directly to Realizing our Shared Responsibility are encouraged, but all ESOL-related topics are welcome. Here are just a few potential topics to consider:

- Co-teaching
- Implementing the WIDA ELD Standards Framework, 2020 Edition
- Collaboration between ESOL and content/classroom/special educators
- Interdisciplinary instruction
- Instructional coaching
- Using assessment as a springboard for collaboration

Submit your proposal here. Registration will open next month. Stay tuned for more details! Feel free to contact me with any questions.

April Perkins
Can you tell me a bit about your background? What motivated you to teach?
I actually majored in International Affairs and French. I did an academic year abroad in France and a summer in Quebec and that is where I fell in love with French culture. I anticipated following the international affairs route but after I graduated and re-evaluated, I decided to look into teaching. I was able to teach high school English in Guadeloupe through a program with the French government. That got my foot in the door for teaching. I started teaching in Maine in 2005 at the Tremont Consolidated School and I have been teaching there ever since. Before COVID, I used to take students to Quebec biannually and I got them to show them what I love so much about the culture, as well as give them the opportunity to speak French in an authentic setting.

What inspired you to write a bilingual children’s book? Did your experiences as a French teacher influence the book?
Oh, absolutely. I noticed that there are not a lot of novice to intermediate books that integrate culture. There are not a lot of bilingual children’s books for beginner students. French children’s books written for native speakers are often too advanced for my students. I wanted to write a book that integrated culture while teaching the language. That was the root of the inspiration. I was hiking one day in Acadia National Park and I heard a Québécois family calling to their dog in French and his name was Disco. I thought, “What a way to connect with kids.” You know, kindergarteners don’t necessarily understand what French is. But if a dog can understand French, that makes it more accessible and fun for them. The beginning of the story is a boy calling to his dog, Disco. The boy and Disco connect eyes and he is transported to Quebec. It is a magical story through Quebec. A lot of it is connected to my travels in Quebec and I used photos from my trips to create the illustrations. For example, my husband and I went to Carnival one year so I could take photos and we also staged a Quebec dinner with friends for more photos and inspiration. I am now working on illustrating another French children’s book set in Guadeloupe.

How does being able to teach students French from kindergarten to 8th grade benefit their learning?
I really like to see their progress through the years. By starting really young, it’s not just like teaching a language, it is much more natural. It really ties into what they are learning in their other classes, like teaching them about numbers, colors, animals, and weather. It is great to learn the basic rudimentary things early and build an appreciation for the language early. When they are older, you can connect to other subjects and do more interesting things. I do a World War II unit, for example. Also, my seventh and 8th graders just completed a French cooking unit, which culminated in making a bûche de Noël (French yule log cake) in class. They wouldn’t have been able to do this as easily if they hadn’t already learned food vocabulary in their younger years.

How do you think your teaching style differs from other French teachers and what is most important to you in the classroom?
I guess it depends on what level you are talking about. Because I teach such young kids, it can be more interactive. The current way is to focus less on grammar and make it more natural. I do not know if it differs, but I think that is the way we are heading which is great. I use interactive and hands-on learning. I am fortunate to work with amazing colleagues. I enjoy collaborating with classroom teachers and specialists- PE, technology, music, and art- and building on their ideas and expertise. I integrate a lot of different disciplines within my language teaching. I also teach social studies. The best units I have done are the ones that connect to other subjects. Students want to feel like they know something coming into the room. It empowers them. For example, I love to teach French history in the United States and talk about the explorers. 7th and 8th graders do a unit on World War II and the Holocaust movie Au Revoir Les Enfants, while they also read the Diary of Anne Frank in ELA class. I love art, so any art connections are also fun units. They learn about an artist in art class and then we learn about it in French. For example, we learned about Gothic architecture and drew Nôtre Dame. A more interdisciplinary approach definitely increases engagement and helps students retain what they have learned.
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

**ExcEL Leadership Academy**: Free Micro-Credentials (and option for graduate credit) in ESOL Topics

**WIDA Self-Paced eWorkshops** are available 9.1.21-8.31.22

1.15.22 CARLA Workshop 1: Assessment and Feedback in the Virtual Classroom

1.18.22 at 6pm: Wabanaki Public Health & Wellness Stories from the Dawnland

1.18.22-2.8.22: MaFLA Winter Workshops

1.19.22 6-7:30pm: Maine MultiCultural Center “From Guilin, China, to Bangor, Maine,” presented by Chunli (Lily) Crane

1.24.22 at 4pm: US DOE Office of English Language Acquisition Education and Afghan Newcomers: Keeping the Promise

1.26.22-3.31.22 CARLA Presentation Series Spring 2022

1.27.22 at 3pm: Maine DOE Hosts French Heritage Language Program (This webinar will be an overview of the program. See their website for details.)

1.29.22 10am-1pm: CARLA All Are Welcome in Language Class: UDL from Principles to Practice

1.30.22 at 3pm: Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium Take Good Care: Prioritizing Teacher & Student Well-Being

2.2.22-2.4.22: JNCL-NCLIS Virtual Language Advocacy Days

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

2.16.22 4-5:15pm: NNETESOL Webinar Infusing Critical Language Awareness Into Our Writing Lessons

3.1.22-3.8.22 Center for Applied Linguistics Institute on Newcomers in Your School: Cultural Connections and Instructional Strategies

3.7.22: SLIFE Conference Presented by MinneSLIFE and Inlier Learning (Option to attend virtually or in-person in Philadelphia.)

3.11.22: Save the Date for the Maine ESOL Meeting (Details to come!)

3.11.22-3.12.22: Save the Date for the FLAME Conference

3.18.22-3.19.22: Multi-State Association for Bilingual Education Dual Language Conference and Pre-Conference School Visits

Summer 2022: CARLA Summer Institutes schedule now available

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Articles of Interest

Smithsonian Magazine: Teaching a More Complete Picture of MLK

KQED: Retaining and sustaining Black teachers

Edutopia: The ‘Beautiful Struggle’ of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Portland Press Herald: Assignment for schools: Increase teacher diversity

Bangor Daily News: Wayne Newell, who helped preserve the Passamaquoddy language, dies at 79

Sun Journal: Lewiston community welcomes Afghan refugees

Maine Public: Congolese and Angolan immigrants find housing in Old Orchard Beach - but the stay is temporary

Press Herald: South Portland hotel transformed to take in asylum seekers

Maine DOE Newsroom: WEBINAR: Resources to Address the Mental Health Impact on Students, Families, and Staff

Maine DOE Newsroom: Maine DOE and MCCS Partner to Offer Free College Courses for Adult Education Students

News Center Maine: Mainer turns passion for Chinese culture into an award-winning career translating literature
ACCESS Administration Window Now Open!

Technical Assistance

Assessment observations are a form of technical assistance designed to meeting federal requirements pertaining to assessment monitoring. Equally importantly, these observations can yield contextual and situational data to be used in conjunction with quantitative sources, to provide a better picture of the quality and equity of administration of assessments across Maine SAUs and schools. The Maine DOE Assessment Team utilizes this information to design planning and professional development for the upcoming school year, as well as to gather critical data about the student assessment experience.

The Assessment Team is asking local ACCESS Assessment Coordinators/Administrators plan to conduct at least one assessment observation within the SAU during the Winter 2022 ACCESS for ELLs administration, using the updated **Observational Checklist Tool**.

New & Important Resources

- Maine DOE ACCESS Assessments page for Coordinator, Educator and Family Resources!
- Assessment Security Webisode Series

Helpful Links

- Accessibility and Accommodations Guide
- WIDA AMS User Guide

Questions? Concerns? Please reach out!
Jodi Bossio-Smith, State Coordinator for Alternate and WIDA Assessments
Jodi.bossio-smith@maine.gov
207.530.1462
Job Opportunities

RSU 19 is seeking a consultant teacher who can assist with ACCESS for ELLs test administration. If you’re interested, contact Stella Duhaime, Assistant Director of Special Services, at sduhaime@rsu19.net.

MSAD 27 French Teacher

Vermont DOE Education Programs Coordinator 1: English Language Learners

Cape Elizabeth ELL Ed Tech III

The New School (Private School in Kennebunk) Spanish Teacher and American Sign Language Teacher

RSU 64 High School Spanish Teacher

RSU 4 High School French Teacher

Winthrop Remote High School Spanish Teacher

South Portland Multilingual/Multicultural Specialist (Part-Time)

South Portland Community Partnerships Coordinator (Part-Time)

RSU 57 High School French Teacher

Brewer Long-Term Substitute French Teacher

Westbrook Communications Specialist

Auburn Cultural Broker/Interpreter Park Ave Elementary

Announcements

Language Codes - Dari
If you are enrolling students who are Dari speakers, their language will be listed as Persian in the student data system. Dari is a dialect of Persian, but we’re working on finding a way to specify that students and their families speak Dari. Stay tuned!

MAEC Webinar Recording: Roundtable for Reform: A Conversation Among Superintendents
If you missed this recent webinar, you can now view the recording – featuring Portland’s own Superintendent Xavier Botana.

Anti-Bias Toolkit
The Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine has released an Anti-Bias Toolkit for schools. It includes tools for needs assessment and policy review, as well as many other resources.

Fulbright Teacher Exchanges
Applications are now open for Fulbright teacher exchange programs, which fund research projects and professional learning abroad for K-12 teachers. Check out Distinguished Awards in Teaching Research, Distinguished Awards in Teaching Short-Term Program, and Teachers for Global Classrooms.

Lunar New Year Celebration
The non-profit Chinese & American Friendship Association of Maine is hosting a celebration to mark the start of the Year of the Tiger. On February 5th from 1-4pm, all are invited to participate in cultural experiences, activities for children, and a performance at 2pm by Boston’s Chinese Folk Art Workshop. Tickets can be purchased here.

English Language Fellow Program
Applications are open for the US Department of State’s English Language Fellow Program. Fellows participate in 10-month assignments abroad to teach English and/or train teachers.

Learning for Justice Educator Fund
Applications are now open for this fund, which "offers the opportunity to work with LFJ to address systemic inequities within education." Apply by April 1st. Details here.

Monthly ESOL 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.

The January 19th office hour has been cancelled due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict.

If you require any assistance, please contact April or Jodi.

3rd Wednesday of Each Month

Next: 2.16.22 at 3:00pm
Focus Topic: Family Engagement & Approaching the End of the ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS Administration Window

Register by 2.13.22