Message

The annual FLAME Conference (virtual) has been scheduled for 3.11.22 and 3.12.22! This year’s theme is Help Me Get Through the Year. Presentation proposals are being accepted through 2.11.22. Click here for more details and the proposal form!

The Maine ESOL Meeting will be taking place virtually on 3.11.22! The theme for this year is Realizing our Shared Responsibility. Submit your proposal here. Registration will open next month. Stay tuned for more details! Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Nominations are now open for the FLAME World Languages Teacher of the Year and ESOL Teacher of the Year!! Submit nominations for your outstanding colleagues by 2.11.22.

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Can you tell me a little bit about your background? What motivated you to become a teacher?

I am the son of a refugee. My grandparents were Holocaust survivors. My father was born in a displaced persons’ camp in 1946 in Landsburg, Germany and then he moved with his parents to Waterbury, Connecticut in 1949. A lot of my childhood consisted of negotiating meaning with grandparents who did not speak English so I could communicate with them. While I did not dive into learning Polish and Yiddish, I took every language possible at school. I was also negotiating meaning through my other interests in drama and music. I have always enjoyed communicating ideas whether that was through language or music. I was the lead singer of a rock and roll band for eight years, but teaching has always been my dream. I fell in love with teaching in high school when I would tutor other students. I loved enabling success through tutoring and helping students feel successful. That combination of negotiating meaning and my love of teaching is what led me to be an EL teacher.

How do you navigate having different levels of learners in your classroom?

The idea is that everyone is going up the steps of a ladder. Everyone is going up the same rungs, but they may vary in how fast they are going up that ladder. With a diverse group of learners, I try to keep the content the same. The only difference is how students produce language depending on how I am working with them, whether that’s an open ended question or a question with more differentiation depending on their acquisition level. When you have a diverse group of learners, higher order thinking is still possible. Asking students “why?” is so important and can show you the high order thinking they are constantly doing. I like to do different pair activities. One example is an information gap activity using language as the medium where I give some information to one student and the rest of the information to the other student. I also have different support for newer students, but I generally keep the content the same while keeping the language to a level that’s appropriate. I want to keep as much as possible the same for all my students.

If there was one piece of education policy that could be immediately implemented in the district, what would you choose?

I am very eager to learn more about how we test children in programs that are given the designation of gifted and talented. I do not see a lot of equity. I wonder if our tests have been normed for students from other communities. I wonder if the people writing the tests look like all the students taking the tests. In many schools in Portland, in a class of 22 it is not uncommon to have three special education with an IEP, or a gifted and talented student, and the teacher needs to take certain steps to meet their needs. At the same time, in a class of 22, you may have 11 ELLs who have a list of guiding recommendations for meeting their needs, but there isn’t the same kind of backing to their plan as there is for an IEP.

How do you think your teaching style differs from other teachers and what is most important to you in the classroom?

Nothing I do is original. I have had the best content and EL teacher mentors. I am so grateful. One thing I try to stress the most is that if your kids know what the target is, they can hit it. Do they know the goals and targets for the day? Is it in a language that is comprehensible for them? I try to make sure that the kids get the target and they are aware of their learning. Also, bringing in music to the classroom is what is natural for me. The one thing that unites people more than anything is music. I’ll have students sign their names when they are trying to learn them. I find all sorts of ways that I can work music into my lessons. I am working hard to learn the languages that the parents of my students speak. Having the support of your students’ parents is one of the best things you can do. I build relationships and I am clear about what the expectations are.
Professional Learning

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

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

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

1.25.22 at 2pm: EdWeek A Seat at the Table: Why Retaining Education Leaders of Color Is Key for Student Success

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 4:45pm: 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: Maine ESOL Meeting (Virtual) - Registration will open soon!

3.11.22-3.12.22: FLAME Conference (Virtual) - Registration will open soon!

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

Articles of Interest

Maine DOE Newsroom: Foreign Language Association of Maine Accepting Nominations For ESOL Teacher of the Year and World Languages Teacher of the Year

Edutopia: Using Cheers and Claps to Motivate World Language Students

Maine DOE Newsroom: Professional Development Series with Liz Kleinrock, nationally-recognized author with Teaching Tolerance on Anti-racist and Anti-bias Education

Portland Press Herald: Family engagement specialist in Portland schools is in running for national award

Global Voices: These podcasters are carrying African Languages into the new audio world

KQED: Secondary Traumatic Stress for Educators: Understanding and Mitigating the Effects

News Center Maine: Portland student group creates leaders for change
ACCESS Administration Window Now Open!

Technical Assistance 2022

Technical Assistance Visits are now underway! 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.

If you would like a DOE Assessment Team member to provide onsite technical assistance during this year’sACCESS for ELLs administration window, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Technical assistance can include many elements based on the needs of the SAU, such as:

- Modeling an assessment administration
- Observe assessment administration (While feedback can be provided upon request, the visit is not an evaluation of the Test Administrator).
- Answer questions regarding EL assessment and services

The Assessment Team is also 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.

Questions? Concerns? Please don’t hesitate to reach out:
Jodi Bossio-Smith, State Coordinator for Alternate and WIDA Assessments
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207.530.1462

Professional Development Series with Liz Kleinrock, nationally recognized author with Teaching Tolerance on Anti-racist and Anti-bias Education

Are you interested in learning about anti-racist and anti-bias education? If so, register for this no-cost training with Liz Kleinrock, the anti-racist and anti-bias educator who won the 2018 Teaching Tolerance Award for Excellence in Equity. She will share her expertise about having difficult conversations in the classroom about race and ethnicity. Don’t miss this three-part professional development series, to how “Education is Everywhere” (2019 Ted Talk). Sponsored by the Maine County and State Teachers of the Year Association, this series is offered at no cost. Zoom link will be sent to registrants prior to sessions. To receive four contact hours, please commit to all three sessions.

Session 1: February 8, 2022, 7-8:15 pm
Session 2: March 15, 2022, 7-8:15 pm
Session 3: April 5th, 2022, 7-8 pm

Register here
Job Opportunities

St. John’s Catholic School Long Term Substitute - Music & Latin Teacher (PK-8)

RSU 44 Spanish Substitute Teacher

Garbanzo Writer for ELLs (Part-Time/Remote Materials Creation) - Spanish proficiency required

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

Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program
As part of its formal partnership with the Chinese Ministry of Education (Taiwan), the Maine DOE would like to announce that the Taiwan Foreign English Teacher Program is now accepting applications. If you’re interested in an opportunity to grow your teaching and intercultural skills abroad, this is a great opportunity.

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!

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.

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.

Bangor Chinese School Events
To celebrate the Lunar New Year, Year of the Tiger, the CLCCM and Bangor Chinese School in collaboration with Husson University and the City of Bangor will present calligraphy lessons and a New Year Celebration.

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.

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