

Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

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February 2021 Newsletter

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Greetings from Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez

Dear Colleagues,

As spring approaches, I am heartened with a renewed sense of hope. We have welcomed a new President to guide our country with a cabinet that is much more reflective of the diversity of our nation. One special individual to celebrate is Dr. Miguel Cardona. Dr. Cardona is the first Latino ever to be nominated as Secretary of Education.

Born in Puerto Rico and raised in Meriden Connecticut, he has served at every level of public school education – from teacher, principal, superintendent, to state commissioner. Dr. Cardona, a bilingual Spanish speaker, has been a champion in responding to the disparate needs of English Language Learners and immigrant students.



Here in our own state, we celebrate two champions as well - Dr. Lester W. Young Jr. as the first African American to serve as Chancellor for the Board of Regents and Dr. Betty Rosa as the first Latina to serve as Commissioner of Education and President of the University of the State of New York.

Chancellor Young's commitment to all children throughout his career of over 50 years in public school education speaks of his advocacy, courage and unwavering dedication to improve the educational journey and lives of all children. Dr. Rosa accepted the Commissioner position to continue to lead our state during these difficult times after serving as Chancellor for the past five years. We thank Chancellor Young and Commissioner willingness to serve in their new roles to continue to advocate and champion for the education of all students in New York.

This past year, we at the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages have had the opportunity to speak to many of you, and to connect and partner with various advocates and education stakeholders. I would like to thank all of you and all the professional education organizations with whom we collaborated. In particular, I offer special thanks to the members of OBEWL's ELL Leadership Council, the World Language Leadership Team, and the NYS Seal of Biliteracy Task Force for their hard work and dedication. We at OBEWL look forward to everyone's continued support and collaboration to advocate for a quality and equitable education to benefit all the students we serve.

It is your advocacy and support that affords our students the opportunities to find their truth, celebrate who they are and voice the beauty of their own history. We know with certainty, that our children are resilient, and educators inspire equity for students. Thank you for your passion, commitment, and courage.

In unity,

Elisa Alvarez

Aligning OBEWL Resources to NGLS

OBEWL has been working with multiple partners to ensure that we continue to align our multiple resources to the Next Generation Learning Standards (NGLS). OBEWL has worked with Bridges to Academic Success to ensure that the Students with Interrupted/ Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE) ELA and Foundational Low Literacy Curriculum does not only meet the needs of SIFE but it is also aligned to the NGLS. In addition, we are currently working with the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener (MLS) team to ensure that the Math portion of the screener is aligned to the NGLS.



We now also have a collection of classroom practices for educators that work with Multilingual Learners (MLs). These are a practical component intended to provide concrete samples of best practices that will assist educators of MLs in meeting the expectations set forth in the NGLS for English Language Arts. It is important to note that these are not a replacement for the New Language Arts Progressions (NLAP) and Home Language Arts Progressions (HLAP), but rather a resource to support teacher practice.

The NLAP and HLAP can continue to be useful to educators in planning instruction and when developing appropriate expectations for students at varying language and literacy levels. However, these resources will help describe the NGLS and will identify best instructional practices for assisting MLs in the classroom.

The resources have been divided into grade bands, similar to the 2017 New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), that will cover PreK–12th grade. While PreK is not part of the grade bands described by the NYSESLAT, teachers of language-diverse students in PreK play an instrumental role in developing students' background knowledge and oral language skills in the home language and in the new language.

The following outline describes the three tenets covered in these new resources:

- Emphasizing speaking and listening and its critical relationship to literacy development;
- Encouraging language and metalinguistic awareness;
- Grouping students in flexible partnerships (small and large groups, including whole-class groups).

OBEWL is currently working to release one grade band at a time as well any additional resources.



Resource for Parents of Emergent Multilingual Learners in Prekindergarten Programs

With over 200 languages spoken by children in our schools¹, NYS is home to one of the most diverse populations in our nation. Since the number of linguistically diverse families will likely continue to increase, it is critical for all educators of Emergent Multilingual Learners (EMLs)² to provide the necessary language supports and programs that will help address their needs and will build on the language assets our students bring. But they cannot do this alone! It is essential that parents see that the language they use at home is a treasure for all our diverse students.

In NYS, we want all families to value their home language as they support their children's growth and help them become bilingual or multilingual. Families may worry that their children's knowledge or skills cannot transfer if they do not speak English at home. This is an important concern. However, research shows that using the home language does not interfere with learning to speak, read, or write in English or learning a new language. Educators need to encourage families to use their home language as it helps with learning to read, write, and participate actively in discussions.

An informed, empowered family is critical to ensuring that our youngest scholars continue to build on their language skills in their home language as they grow and build on their learning. Therefore, the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages created a brochure to [Welcome Families of Emergent Multilingual Learners to Prekindergarten in New York State](#). The purpose of this brochure is to help parents see the value that using their home language has for our EMLs, and to help answer four common questions they might have: *Should we speak English at home?*; *How will my child be assessed?*; *Will my child get confused?*; and *How can I help?*

It is crucial that all our families see the importance of maintaining their home language and use it with their children. Please share this new resource with all the parents of EMLs. It has also been translated in the ten top languages of the state.

¹Source: NYS SIRS 2018-2019

²The Department recommends use of the term "Emergent Multilingual Learners (EMLs)" to refer to Prekindergarten students identified by the Emergent Multilingual Learners (EMLs) Language Profile for Prekindergarten Students.



Hudson Valley RBERN

The Hudson Valley RBERN provides support and technical assistance to educators of English language learners (ELL) and World Language students in 142 public school districts across the lower- and mid-Hudson region as well as to charter schools, non-public schools, and other organizations (universities, regional educational organizations, etc).



<https://www.hudsonvalleyrbern.org/>



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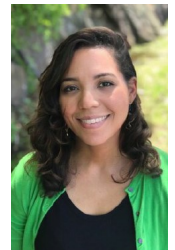
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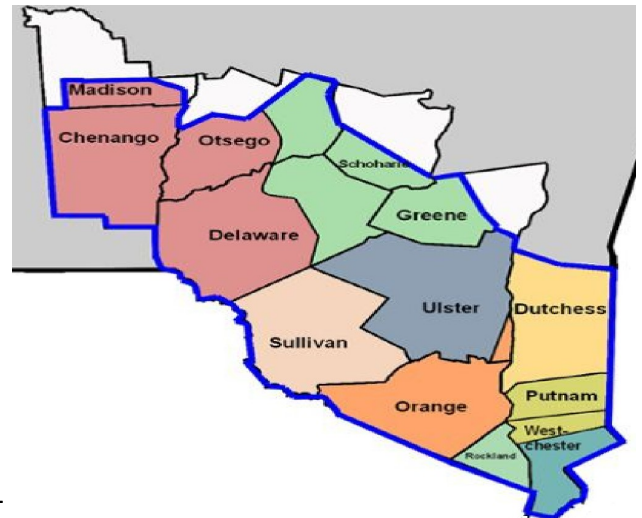
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Ossining Teacher Preparation Project

SUNY New Paltz's School of Education, in partnership with the Ossining Union Free School District and the Hudson Valley Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN), has become the latest site for the National Latino Education Research and Policy Project (NLERAPP). NLERAPP is a consortium of universities and community-based organizations that spearheads programming in Latinx communities to honor diversity in our schools <https://nlerapp.com/>. Through a multi-year partnership focused on building dual enrollments for high school students, SUNY New Paltz will support Ossining's continuing work to develop a Grow-Your-Own pipeline for Latinx students to pursue teaching degrees in bilingual education. Dean René Antrop González of the School of Education, Beth Clark-Gareca, Associate Professor and coordinator of the TESOL program, and David Mumper, Resource Specialist, worked closely with members of Ossining Bilingual and English as a New Language programs to develop a program and proposal to establish our region as a recognized NLERAPP site. We are thankful to our Ossining partners, the Director of Bilingual, English as a New Language & Funded Programs Nancy de la Cruz-Arroyo, High School Principal Stephen Hancock, Superintendent Ray Sanchez, and teacher Elizabeth Testa for their ongoing collaboration in this exciting work.



FAFSA Completion Events for ELLs

A student's determination to attend college cannot and will not be undermined by this pandemic; this notion has inspired our team at the NYC RBERN. The NYC RBERN at Fordham University is a vital part of the Center for Educational Partnerships, Graduate School of Education that operates under the stellar leadership of our Associate Dean, Anita Vazquez Batisti, PhD. This dynamic collaboration with the Fordham PDRC, NYS Language RBERN at NYU and the College Bridge Café will support our ELLs and former ELLs as they prepare to attend university in the forthcoming year.

Preparing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for college is a daunting process for all students and their families and is especially challenging for ELLs and former ELLs. It is our pleasure to meet with families as we advocate for students who want to continue with higher education. Our work this year will be virtual because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but we will continue to have access to information and increase opportunities for ELLs to pursue the financial assistance they need by effectively communicating in their own language. This is a critical initiative because of the drop in and underrepresentation of English Language Learners who want to attend college and who lack access to guidance counselors, teachers, resources, etc. as a result of the pandemic. As reported by CBS NEWS, the number of students filing for FAFSA for the first time is down 16% compared with a year ago, according to Bill DeBaun, director of data and evaluation at National College Attainment Network. "We risk losing an entire generation of underrepresented students on college campuses," he added. "Low-income students, students of color, first-generation students are much more likely to be derailed from this process, and there is no guarantee that if we don't support them early on in their senior years to get the FAFSA completed — it's unclear if they'll ever get back on track." However, the NYC RBERN at Fordham University and the NYS Language RBERN at NYU are persevering to change that course.

We have scheduled our meetings via Zoom for schools in Queens, Manhattan, and in the Bronx over the course of five different Saturdays. A few days prior to our Saturday meeting, we schedule a technology session. This is a Thursday session that ensures students and their parents can access the Zoom links and have the required application materials ready to go so they are prepared with all their valuable documents and login information. The initial session will guarantee that each student has the specific documents and/or information to assist with the completion of the FAFSA application on Saturday as we touch base with students via our initial phone calls by RBERN resource specialists.

It is important to remember that each student has different needs and particular situations that are usually not discoverable until they actually are met face to face with this often-perplexing situation. With this in mind, everyone is prepared to successfully complete the FAFSA in the comfort of their own home where students and parents meet with coordinators in "break-out" rooms as they are guided through this process. Parents have remarked that when they made independent attempts, the most difficult part of this process are the logins, tax reporting, and responding to the many on-screen prompts. We have been able to help them overcome these difficulties. The students and their families are very grateful for our assistance and sincerely praised our efforts.

For the past four years the NYC RBERN, under the leadership of Executive Director Eva Garcia, has spearheaded this FAFSA completion event with **College Goal New York** and now with **College Bridge Café** to provide cutting-edge assistance and technological connections for ELL families to fill out the essential FAFSA application. Our resource specialists and facilitators offer support in the family's home language to alleviate any confusion and reduce the anxiety level that may be triggered by this process and the current uncertainty of immigrant families. Additionally, our team of experts, including NYC school counselors, help to seamlessly connect our applicants to city agencies that advocate for them in this often-confusing process. At the end of the day, students and their parents complete the application process and are thrilled as they express their profound gratitude to all the volunteers who have given their personal time to address their concerns.

For more information on how to provide opportunities for ELL students and their families, please email us at nycrbern@fordham.edu, Isabel.pradas@collegebridgecafe.org or fsalazar@fordham.edu.



Revision of the Learning Standards for LOTE

On Monday, December 14th, Elisa Alvarez and Candace Black from OBEWL gave an informational presentation to the NYS Board of Regents on the proposed revisions to the NYS Learning Standards in Languages Other Than English (LOTE). Additional comments on the proposed revisions were offered by two members of the Standards Committees: Dr. Joanne O'Toole, professor of Modern Language Education and student teaching coordinator at SUNY Oswego in the department of Curriculum & Instruction and principal investigator of the NYSED-OBEWL World Languages Standards Initiative and Mrs. Rachael Wolfe, a Seneca language teacher from Salamanca High School.

The LOTE Standards were last revised more than 24 years ago, in 1996, as part of the NYS Compact for Learning initiative. These learning standards were based on principles and content set forth in the syllabus *Modern Languages for Communication*, adopted in 1986. The Department is now performing a standards review to ensure that the learning standards are rigorous, appropriate, and represent what a student should know and be able to do. Our goal in revising these standards is to update them, informed by the national standards to advance world language education in our state and better prepare students who are college, career, civic, and world ready. The review was led by the World Language Content Advisory Panel and included over 200 classroom teachers, administrators, higher education representatives, and other stakeholders.

The revised standards include four major shifts:

1. a name change in our discipline from LOTE to World Languages; [We will be coming back in February to ask the Board of Regents to consider adopting the regulatory change to transition from LOTE to World Languages.]
2. revised standards for Modern and Classical Languages informed by the national standards;

Anchor Standard: Communication	Learners communicate effectively in the target language in order to function in a variety of contexts and for multiple purposes.
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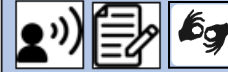
Standard 1: Interpretive Communication



Standard 2: Interpersonal Communication



Standard 3: Presentational Communication



Anchor Standard: Cultures	Learners use the target language to identify, describe, compare, and explain the practices, products, and perspectives of the cultures studied.
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Standard 4: Relating Cultural Practices & Products to Perspectives



Standard 5: Cultural Comparisons



3. updated curricular topics organized under four over-arching themes aligned to national programs such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate; and
4. benchmarked performance indicators aligned to national standards with target proficiency ranges for each checkpoint.

OBEWL will ask the NYS Board of Regents to vote to adopt the proposed revisions at their March meeting. If the Board votes to adopt the proposed revisions, schools will have until September of 2023 to begin implementing the revised standards to their 7th grade cohort and the first year of any elementary world language program. For any questions on the proposed revisions to the LOTE standards, please contact Candace Black via email at candace.black@nysed.gov.

Proficiency Ranges for World Languages

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) delineates four categories of languages based on the time needed for English-speakers to develop Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Level 2 proficiency (ACTFL Advanced Low). Category 1 and 2 languages include those that use a Roman-based alphabet, such as Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and more. Category 3 and 4 languages include Indigenous Languages (e.g., Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga, Mohawk, Seneca, Tuscarora) and those languages that are character-based or use non-Roman alphabets (e.g., Arabic, Chinese, Cyrillic, Greek, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese). As part of the revisions to the standards, care was taken to develop separate and reasonable proficiency ranges for Category 1-2 languages and Category 3-4 languages. In addition, a separate set of proficiency ranges broken out by modality was developed for Classical languages due to their strong focus on the Interpretive Reading mode.

Checkpoint	Proposed Proficiency Ranges for Category 1-2 Modern Languages
A	Novice Mid—Novice High
B	Intermediate Low—Intermediate Mid
C	Intermediate Mid—Intermediate High

Checkpoint	Proposed Proficiency Ranges for Category 3-4 Modern Languages
A	Novice Mid—Novice High
B	Novice High—Intermediate Low
C	Intermediate Low—Intermediate Mid

Proposed Proficiency Ranges for Classical Languages By Modality					
Checkpoint	Interpretive Reading	Interpretive Listening	Presentational Speaking	Presentational Writing	Interpersonal Speaking
A	Novice High—Intermediate Low	Novice Mid	Novice Mid	Novice Mid	Novice Mid
B	Intermediate Low—Intermediate Mid	Novice High	Novice High	Novice High	Novice Mid
C	Intermediate Mid—Intermediate High	Intermediate Low	Novice High	Intermediate Low	Novice High

Performance indicators are identified for each Standard at each checkpoint and aligned with the proficiency level of that checkpoint. These performance indicators are adapted from the 2017 NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, the result of collaboration between the National Council of State Supervisors for Languages (NCSSFL) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), and aligned to ACTFL proficiency sublevels: Novice Mid-High (Checkpoint A); Intermediate Low-Mid (Checkpoint B); and Intermediate Mid-High (Checkpoint C). More specifically, the performance indicators are aligned with the target range identified for each checkpoint, so all learners are appropriately challenged. However, it should also be noted that the developmental and spiraled nature of the Can-Do Statements, consistent with ACTFL’s Inverted Pyramid Model of Proficiency, makes differentiation manageable. This can be achieved through the use of proficiency-oriented analytic rubrics that contain qualitative and constructive feedback to accommodate a range of performance levels.

These performance indicators are written as instructional targets in order to accommodate the range of abilities represented in classes of learners at each checkpoint. They target the upper level of the range of proficiency that points to success at the end of each checkpoint. In planning instruction, teachers can differentiate both instructional

tasks and evaluation criteria to accommodate the range of abilities and achievement in any given group of learners. Successful growth is represented within a range of proficiency levels for each checkpoint. The goal is that all learners make continuous progress through each checkpoint and experience success that is only made possible in an extended sequence of learning opportunities.

Teachers can create unit and lesson-learning targets aligned with these performance indicators using the same language functions to describe student performance. Unit and lesson-learning targets can then be written in language that is easily understood by learners. While the learning targets written for students may sometimes look similar among checkpoints, the proficiency level expectation becomes progressively more challenging in terms of expected level of control of discourse type, function, context and accuracy. These expectations are best explained using well-crafted analytic rubrics to provide feedback on performance and proficiency assessment tasks. For more information on these [proficiency ranges and performance indicators](#), please visit our [LOTE Standards Review website](#).

Workshop Recording Now Available—Embedding Authentic Resources into Lesson Plans

Over 550 educators attended the Embedding Authentic Resources into Lesson Plans workshop presented by the New York State Association of World Language Administrators (NYSAWLA) and Leslie Grahn on January 20, 2021. The recording of the workshop can be accessed on the [OBEWL Professional Learning webpage dedicated to this workshop](#). Any NYS world language educator may earn two hours of CTLE credit by viewing the recording and earning a score of at least seven out of ten on a multiple-choice post-assessment, which is also available on the aforementioned webpage. Participants who do not receive the required score to earn CTLE credit on their first attempt will be able to take alternative versions of the post-assessment, the links for which are displayed at the end of the prior post-assessment. Please note, participants will not be given any credit for completing the same post-assessment more than once. Handouts from this workshop can be accessed using the following [link](#).



New York State Seal of Biliteracy (NYSSB) in 2020-21



Last school year (2019-20), there were 292 schools that awarded the NYSSB. In the current school year (2020-21), over 360 schools, including 86 new schools, have registered to offer the Seal. A reminder that the [NYSSB Guidance Toolkit](#) containing modules on how schools can start and improve upon their programs is available on our website.

Due to the challenges presented by COVID-19 related school closures and remote instruction, OBEWL will not be requiring schools offering the Seal to submit the Culminating Project Notification Form in the 2020-21 school year. Starting in the 2021-22 school year,

OBEWL will select a few schools from each of the seven regions of the state and schedule visits (either virtual or in-person where permitted) to observe NYSSB Culminating Project Presentations. The purpose of these visits will be to provide feedback and support to high schools offering this program. The [Culminating Project Notification form](#) will be submitted electronically via the following [link](#) by all high schools that use an essay, portfolio, or project to earn two points in a world language towards the NYSSB by no later than April 15th of each year, starting in 2022. For questions regarding the Seal or the Culminating Project, please contact Candace Black (candace.black@nysed.gov).

News from other NYSED offices

New York State Library Digital Equity Webinar Series - Digital equity is a complex set of conditions that requires that every New Yorker has access to affordable broadband, adequate devices, necessary software, digital literacy skills, and a community of support. Persistent digital divides exist in communities across New York; in fact, more than 25% of students in New York lack access to the Internet and/or appropriate devices to participate in remote online education. The challenges to student connectivity can't be considered in isolation, since they are part of larger systemic inequities disproportionately affecting people of color and people with lower incomes. This webinar series is intended to bring together stakeholders from across sectors to establish an understanding of the challenges to digital equity and develop a shared vision of how we can work together to achieve digital equity in New York. Access recordings and slides from the webinars [here](#).

Write on, NY! - *Write on, NY!* is a NYSED website and initiative that promotes and supports student writing in New York State. The initiative utilizes the Lifelong Practices for Readers and Writers to encourage students' engagement in writing. The [Write on, NY! webpage](#) highlights each practice, then links to key elements for writing, as well as classroom resources. NYSED thanks the many [teachers and educators](#) who are part of this partnership and continue to assist with the work. In an effort to promote this initiative, we invite students statewide to enter the [Write on, NY! Logo Design Contest](#). The contest is open to all New York State students in prekindergarten through grade 12. The deadline for entries is February 28, 2021. Winning logo designs will be announced in March 2021. The student's name, school, and district (if applicable) will be published with the design. Questions pertaining to the *Write on, NY!* initiative or the logo design contest can be directed to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at emscurric@nysed.gov or (518) 474-5922.

Parental Right to Decline Examination Waivers - The Department released information pertaining to the parental right to decline exemptions for students who, due to an exemption, are eligible to graduate in January 2021. Both the memo and sample form are available on the [Guidance for P-12 Schools](#) webpage of our COVID-19 site in the "Additional Memos and Resources from NYSED" section. Questions pertaining to exam exemptions and graduation requirements in light of COVID-19 cancellations can be directed to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at emscgradreq@nysed.gov or (518) 474-5922.

Flexibility in the 1,200 Minute Science Laboratory Requirement - The Office of State Assessment and the Office of Curriculum and Instruction have jointly released relief from the 1200-minute laboratory requirement for students enrolled in a Science course culminating in a Regents Examination. The memo, [Flexibility in the 1,200 Minute Science Laboratory Requirement](#), is posted on the [NYSED COVID-19 web page](#). Districts should still ensure that students are receiving quality science education that, to the greatest extent possible, includes laboratory experiences that prepare students for the performance components of the Regents exams. Questions may be directed to the Office of State Assessment at 518-474-8220 or emsctesting@nysed.gov, or to the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at emscurric@nysed.gov or (518) 474-5922.

Need local support? Contact your local RBERN!

The RBERNs support OBEWL's mission to ensure that all students' individual educational paths and socio-economical needs are met in multiple languages leading them to college, career, and civic readiness. They are NYSED's key providers of guidance, technical assistance, and support to New York State Districts, Charter Schools, Non-public Schools, and other organizations in the development of programs for MLs.

- [New York State Language RBERN \(statewide\)](#)
- [Capital District Region RBERN at Questar III BOCES](#)
- [Hudson Valley RBERN at SW BOCES](#)
- [Long Island RBERN at Eastern Suffolk BOCES](#)
- [Mid-State RBERN at OCM BOCES](#)
- [Mid-West RBERN at Monroe 2 - Orleans BOCES](#)
- [New York City RBERN at Fordham University](#)
- [West Region RBERN at Erie 1 BOCES](#)

[Resource Collection for ELLs](#)

[Resource Collection for World Language Students](#)

[NYSED Parent Newsletter](#)

[Calendar of Professional Learning Events for ELL Educators](#)

Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

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[World Languages website](#)

[NYS Seal of Biliteracy website](#)



The mission of the New York State Education Department's Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages is to ensure that all New York State English Language Learners (ELLs) attain the highest level of academic success and that all Multilingual Learners (MLs) – which include ELLs, Former/Ever ELLs, World Languages students, and heritage speakers of World Languages – achieve the highest level of language proficiency in English and in one or more other languages.

