

# Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

New York State Education Department

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February 2025 Newsletter



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## Greetings from Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez

Dear Colleagues,

As we strive together in our shared mission to nurture every student's potential, let us take a moment to celebrate the incredible strength and richness that English Language Learners (ELLs) bring to our classrooms and communities. These students are not simply learning a new language—they are navigating and mastering multiple linguistic and cultural landscapes. Their experiences offer us all a unique window into the beauty of diversity, resilience, and global understanding. In supporting them, we are not just teaching English; we are cultivating the leaders, thinkers, and innovators of a multilingual world.

Bilingualism and multilingualism are powerful assets, not limitations. Research consistently affirms that students who develop proficiency in more than one language demonstrate greater cognitive flexibility, problem-solving skills, and cultural empathy. More importantly, multilingual individuals serve as bridges across cultures, bringing people together in ways that monolingualism cannot. It is vital that we move beyond outdated beliefs that view English as the sole measure of success and instead embrace the truth that linguistic diversity strengthens both individuals and society.

Dual language immersion programs stand as a testament to the promise of equity and excellence for *all* students. These programs not only support ELLs in maintaining and developing their home languages but also provide native English speakers the opportunity to acquire a second language in meaningful, academic contexts. When implemented with care and intentionality, dual language education can serve as the great equalizer—where every child, regardless of background, has access to learning that is rigorous, culturally affirming, and that prepares them for success in the future.

Let us continue to advocate for systems and mindsets that value the full linguistic repertoires of our students. In doing so, we affirm their identities, unlock their full academic potential, and help shape a more inclusive, connected, and compassionate society. Together, we can ensure that every student's voice is not

only heard but celebrated in every language they speak.

As St. Stephen, the first King of Hungary wrote in a letter to his son, St. Emeric, in 1036 AD, "Make the strangers welcome in this land, let them keep their languages and customs, for weak and fragile is the realm which is based on a single language or on a single set of customs."

In Unity,

*Elisa Alvarez*



## Student Highlight: Katie Viviar-Monzón, Pomona Middle School

*“Me pregunto si las estrellas se iluminan con el fin de que algún día, cada uno pueda encontrar la suya”*

This quote from the masterpiece, *The Little Prince* written by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, may be a great illustration of the human search for that something that belongs to each of us that we need to feel happy and fulfilled. All students, together with their families and communities, are in search of the academic and personal success that we educators firmly believe belongs to them. This search and pursuit for the star of success requires many elements including determination, resilience, and dedication, and it also requires a network of supportive individuals that genuinely want to lift and help our students reach that shining star that is waiting for them to touch.

At a recent visit to the East Ramapo Central School District (ERCSD), OBEWL staff had the honor to meet Katie Viviar-Monzón. Katie is one of these students in the current pursuit of the academic and personal success that she views as belonging to her and the rest of her peers. ERCSD is a large school district in the Hudson Valley region with a student enrollment of over 10,000 students and over 5,700 English Language Learners. Katie became a member of the ERCSD school community as a Kindergartener from La Joya, El Salvador.



Currently a 7th-grade student at Pomona Middle School, Katie has excelled academically and developed many edifying relationships with her peers and teachers. Her hard work and resilience have led her to earn academic recognitions such as Student of the Month and to consistently make the Honor Roll. Beyond her academic achievements, Katie has demonstrated a genuine interest in supporting her peers' own pursuit for their own success through her participation in Girls Circle, a school mentoring program that provides students with an opportunity to experience personal growth and to develop teamwork skills.

Katie cherishes every enriching opportunity presented to her. She especially values the Sidekick program at Lime Kiln Elementary School, where she experienced trips to new places, broadening her horizons and sparking her curiosity about the world. While she has achieved much, Katie continues to look at the future with positivity and interest to grow. Before she leaves Pomona Middle School, Katie aspires to achieve placement on the Principal's List; she also wants to join the volleyball team and participate in Saturday trips to gain new experiences.

As she continues to look up to the celestial lights, Katie dreams of a future as either a pediatric doctor or a math teacher. Katie spoke to us about her passion for math and interest in robotics. She shared that this interest was fueled by a special teacher, Mr. Jonathan Bravo. Katie said that his engaging and fun style of teaching math has inspired her to continue to learn and strengthen her confidence in the subject.

OBEWL applauds Katie Viviar-Monzón, a student determined to rise to the highest levels of academic and personal success, paying honor to her parents, family and the community she represents. Her expressed goals and the visible confidence with which she expressed them reflect the empowerment a child can experience when a school community partners with the community at large, and works each day to creating a positive social and academic context that offers diverse opportunities for students to thrive.

## **OBEWL Represents at the 2025 NABE Conference in Atlanta**

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Language's (OBEWL) Associate in Bilingual Education, Austin Nojaim, represented the New York State Education Department (NYSED) at the 54th Annual National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) Conference, which was held in Atlanta, GA this February. This event provided a valuable platform to engage with educators, policymakers, and advocates committed to expanding bilingual education across the country.

Along with esteemed colleagues representing the NYS Language Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN), Alicja Winnicki, former NYCPS Superintendent, and Elsa Nunez, former NYCPS district administrator, Austin delivered a presentation on the lessons learned from the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Project with the United States Education Department's Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA). The session not only highlighted New York State's learning experiences but also provided a space to exchange ideas with other states on how to increase and strengthen DLI programs nationwide.

A key focus of the discussion was the [DLI Playbooks](#) developed by OELA, which serve as essential resources for districts seeking to implement and sustain high-quality dual language immersion programs. By sharing insights from New York's journey, we aimed to support other states in overcoming challenges and building more equitable, effective DLI programs within our education systems.

This experience reaffirmed the importance of collaboration in advancing bilingual education, and we are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to this ongoing work. Supporting the growth of DLI programs in New York and beyond remains a privilege and a passion, and we look forward to continuing these efforts to benefit multilingual learners.



*From left to right: Alicja Winnicki of the NYS Language RBERN, Austin Nojaim of OBEWL, and Elsa Nunez of the NYS Language RBERN*

## **Best Practices for Teaching Vocabulary to ELLs in Content Areas**

by Dr. Juanita Reyes and Kristen Vadnais, Capital District Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN)

Did you know that English Language Learners (ELLs) spend less than 2% of their school day in oral language development? In addition, when ELLs are speaking, it is often not about academic topics or content (Yildirim et. al., 2011). This highlights a significant gap in instructional practices that support language acquisition within the grade level content areas. Following is a brief description of some instructional practices that support ELLs' language proficiency.

**Effective vocabulary instruction** is essential for ELLs to access and engage with content-area subjects. Research emphasizes that vocabulary knowledge significantly predicts reading comprehension, particularly in expository texts, which are prevalent in academic subjects (Ateş, 2011). However, ELLs often struggle with academic language in disciplines such as science, math, and social studies, making explicit vocabulary instruction a necessity (Sedita, 2024). Studies suggest that interactive learning strategies, such as co-constructing meaning through discussion and multimodal representations, enable multilingual learners to develop their linguistic resources while deepening content understanding (Molle et. al., 2021). Additionally, structured vocabulary routines, such as pre-teaching essential words and incorporating visual representations, enhance ELLs' ability to retain and apply new terminology (TCLD, 2023).

**Language development portfolios** have emerged as a research-based tool for tracking ELLs' progress and providing meaningful, ongoing assessment (Soto-Hinman, 2011). The bilingual brain's cognitive flexibility allows learners to navigate multiple linguistic systems, and well-designed instruction can leverage this ability to enhance vocabulary acquisition (Abutalebi & Green, 2013). To increase academic oral language development, strategies like shadowing and active engagement in content discussions have proven effective in strengthening students' abilities to comprehend and use subject-specific vocabulary in meaningful ways (TCLD, 2023). By combining explicit instruction, interactive learning, and continuous assessment, educators can create a vocabulary-rich environment that empowers ELLs to thrive across all content areas.

Furthermore, language development portfolios can be used as a data point for informing decisions about placement and services. The purpose of these portfolios is to demonstrate ELLs' current language performance and growth. The portfolios will also help students to notice and discuss how their work has changed over time in terms of language development (Kray et. al., 2022). The portfolio, which can be co-constructed by both teachers and students, can create authentic and robust evidence of what students can do in their learning. This work requires all team members to share the responsibility of collecting, analyzing, and reflecting on the students' progress as well as the next steps in each student's growth and development in language (Kray et. al., 2022).

**Interactive learning** is a practice that is considered to be vital for multilingual learners' academic success by promoting equitable instructional practices, expanding students' content area knowledge and skills, supporting language development, and bolstering student engagement (Molle et. al., 2021). Interactive learning creates opportunities to express and clarify ideas, as well as to co-construct new understandings. It provides opportunities for ELLs and multilingual learners (MLs) to make meaning of texts with others by sharing ideas and developing their understanding through dialogue. Overall, this practice helps linguistically diverse students to better prepare how to express their ideas in writing. Interactive strategies is an integrated part of the learning process that can be embedded within students' work and assignments (Molle et. al., 2021).

**Response frames**, which are graphic organizing tools, can be used to support students in structuring a written or verbal response. The frame can model and clarify features of an accurate response, syntax, correct grammar, and precise vocabulary. In addition, this can help support students in articulating their thinking (Leon, 2024). These frames can also ignite conversations among students, allow them to share their ideas, and feel like they are a part of the classroom community, all while practicing the standard English language.

**Oral language development** is the foundation of literacy. Therefore, it is imperative that ELLs are given repeated and complex opportunities to speak about academic topics. The domains of listening and speaking are as important as reading and writing. For example, if ELLs are allowed to talk about the topic and assignment before completing the writing itself, their writing tends to be more detailed and coherent. When listening and reading are active processes, there will be greater comprehension (Yildirim et. al., 2011).

When **shadowing**, teachers become more aware of ELLs' academic oral language development needs. Shadowing allows educators to reflect on their own instructional practices, as well as be more purposeful in ways to embed more "academic talk" into their instructional design (Yildirim, K. et. al., 2011).

Development of vocabulary and oral language skills is a fundamental component of ELLs' academic success. By implementing explicit vocabulary instruction, interactive learning strategies, structured assessments, response frames, and oral language development educators can create an environment where ELLs and MLS thrive. Shadowing and language development portfolios further ensure that instruction is responsive and targeted to students' needs. As educators become more intentional in fostering academic discussions and integrating meaningful language activities, they empower ELLs to develop the linguistic skills necessary for success across all content areas. Investing in research-based strategies will not only enhance language acquisition but also support ELLs in becoming confident and competent communicators in academic and social contexts.

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## OBEWL at NYSABE 47th Annual Conference



The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) was well represented at the 47th Annual [New York State Association for Bilingual Education \(NYSABE\)](#) Conference. Four of our associates, alongside Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez, participated in the event, joining fellow educators, administrators, and advocates in this dynamic professional gathering.

This year's conference theme, "*Reaffirming Policy to Transform Practice and Action in Bilingual Education*," aligned considerably with OBEWL's mission. Associate Commissioner Alvarez made a significant contribution to the event, participating in two influential panels—one focused on leadership and the other on English Language Learners (ELLs) in Special Education.

The conference provided a much-needed space for like-minded educators to come together. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from six incredible keynote speakers representing diverse voices from across New York State. Among the highlights was Dr. Okhee Lee, Professor of Childhood Education at New York University and author of OBEWL's Integrating [Science and Language for All Students with a Focus on English Language Learners](#) topic briefs, who spoke about STEM and Language Integration. Dr. Lee's insights on engaging ELLs in science learning were both practical and inspiring. Dr. Hugh Burnam, member of the Wolf Clan of the Onondaga Nation, captivated the audience with a discussion on *Education Sovereignty in New York State*, followed by Andrea Cooke, who highlighted the Salamanca Central School District's vital efforts in preserving the Seneca language.

Dr. Trish Morita-Mullaney, author of *Lau v. Nichols and Chinese American Language Rights*, delivered a compelling presentation on her historical research for the book. Her presentation provided context into how the court case came to be.

In addition to these powerful keynotes, attendees had access to 66 breakout sessions over the three-day conference. These sessions covered a broad range of topics—including standards, instruction, co-teaching, assessment, data, translanguaging, and program expansion—offering a wealth of knowledge for all participants.

OBEWL extends a heartfelt thank you to NYSABE for providing such a rich and impactful professional learning experience. We look forward to continuing the important work of advancing bilingual education in New York State!



*OBEWL Associates: Maria Gil, Carissa Zuniga, and Austin Nojaim*



*Teachers and administrators represented the East Ramapo Central School District at NYSABE.*



*Associate Commissioner Alvarez with attendees at the Bilingual Special Education Panel*

## **Empowering Educators to Support LGBTQ+ English Language Learners and Immigrant Students**

This year, RBERN West resource specialist Anastasiya Titarenko, MSED, has facilitated multiple workshops on supporting LGBTQ+ English Language Learners (ELLs) and immigrant students. Nearly one in ten adolescent students in the United States identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community. For those who are also of immigrant background or are ELLs, the challenges they face are multifaceted, requiring the navigation of multiple cultural norms and languages in the exploration of their identity. In these sessions, Anastasiya provides educators with foundational knowledge to understand the nuanced experiences of this community and gain tangible ways to support the students in their care.

The sessions are grounded in research, and connect to the NYSED [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework \(CR-SE\)](#), the “Portrait of a Graduate” detailed in the NYS [Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures Report](#), and the NYSED legal update and best practices around [Creating a Safe, Supporting, and Affirming School Environment for Transgender and Gender Expansive Students](#). These workshops have been offered in various contexts and settings throughout the 24-25 school year, reaching over one hundred K-12 educators in teaching and administrative roles. The workshops cover multiple topics, including:

- **The unique challenges of LGBTQ+ ELL and immigrant students**
- **Creating inclusive and affirming environments**
- **Integrating LGBTQ+ perspectives into curriculum**
- **Responding effectively to student disclosures**
- **Supporting student social emotional well-being and mental health.**

In feedback from the most recent session, participants appreciated the tangible takeaways to apply in their own classroom context, the resources shared, the integration of research, the opportunity to reflect on their role and values as educators, and the chance to collaborate with colleagues in the field. These workshops highlight essential social emotional learning (SEL) principles, such as empathy, self-awareness, and relationship-building, which are crucial for creating a supportive educational environment where all students can thrive. Educators are encouraged to bring the CR-SE framework to life by fostering a sense of belonging and safety for all students and by recognizing students’ diverse identities as strengths and opportunities for enhancing instruction. Through ongoing professional learning and a commitment to reaching every student, we can ensure that our students feel valued, understood, and empowered to succeed.

This work is ongoing – to stay informed about future offerings, please visit the [RBERN West](#) website where our professional development offerings are updated.

## **World Language Chair from Nyack UFSD Receives International Award**

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages is proud to announce that Elcie Douce, Ed.D., Chair of the World Language Department at Nyack UFSD, was awarded the order of Chevalier in the Order of Academic Palmes earlier this month at the Villa Albertine in New York City.

The Order of Academic Palms (*L'Ordre des Palmes académiques*) is a national award bestowed by the French Republic on educators of distinction for their valuable service to education. The order was established by Emperor Napoleon in 1808 to honor and celebrate distinguished members of the University of Paris. Modified by President René Coty in 1955 and by President Charles de Gaulle in 1963, the order took on its present form with three grades: Knight (*Chevalier*), Officer (*Officier*), and Commander (*Commandeur*). A council presided by the Minister of National Education administers the nomination and promotions process, with the Prime Minister of France making the final decisions.



*Elcie Douce with her insignia*

Elcie shared that her passion for teaching French stems from her deep love for sharing her own culture and language with others. She explained, “Witnessing students communicate in French and understand and appreciate the practices and perspectives of diverse Francophone cultures has continually motivated me to expand their learning. My own experience of learning English as a second language was a significant challenge, which allows me to empathize with my students as they navigate the complexities of second language acquisition. This understanding has driven me to explore new teaching strategies and research effective methods to support their journey.” She went on to share that the true meaning of her work becomes evident when her students reach out years after having left her classroom to express their gratitude for the skills they gained and the confidence they built under her guidance.

At the ceremony hosted by the French Embassy, Elcie spoke about someone who had a strong positive impact on her career as a French teacher: Dr. Sarah Jourdain. Dr. Jourdain was her professor at Stony Brook, her mentor, and her friend. Elcie’s dedication to the French inspired her to strive for more outstanding excellence and proficiency. She explains, “Over time, I have realized that teaching a language involves more than imparting vocabulary and grammar; it is about shaping young minds to think critically and cultivate tolerance toward other cultures. This honor encourages me to expand my skills and knowledge further, preparing my students to become contributors and leaders in their fields.”

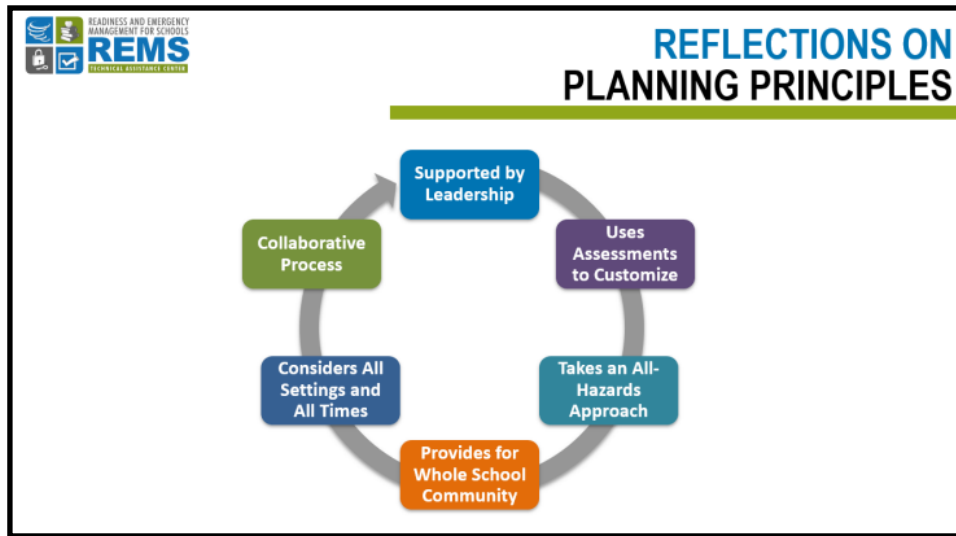
Elcie hopes to pass on her love of learning to future generations, as well as an appreciation for intercultural competence, both of which are essential for success in the 21st century. Please join us in congratulating Dr. Douce for her outstanding achievement and this prestigious award.



# Enhancing Inclusivity in School Safety Plans: Language Access as a Key Component of Trauma-Informed Care

by Melissa Duquette, Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) West

Creating a safe and inclusive environment in diverse schools is essential. This requires trauma-informed care and language access for English Language Learners, multilingual learners, and their families. Effective emergency communication requires information to be provided in multiple languages to build trust and keep everyone informed. By addressing these key areas, schools can foster a sense of security and belonging for all students and their families.



*Excerpt from NYSED [emergency response plan development resource packet](#) for districts and schools.*

Following are some considerations for implementing language access in school safety plans:

- **Identifying Language Needs**  
Has the district conducted a language audit to identify all languages spoken by families in your district?  
How do district employees access this information during an emergency?
- **Training Staff for Language Inclusivity**  
In what ways has the district informed staff about the significance of language access?
- **Multilingual Resources**  
What essential safety documents and procedures have been translated in the district?  
In what languages?  
Are there any additional languages that should be considered for translation?  
How will the district provide information for languages that lack translations?
- **Technology and Tools for Language Access**  
What tools and resources are available to district employees and families for effective multilingual communication during an emergency?
- **Integrating Language Access with Trauma-Informed Practices**  
How can the district's language access initiatives be integrated with trauma-informed practices?
- **Collaboration and Community Engagement**  
Have the multilingual voices of students and families been included in designing inclusive safety plans?  
What language support partnerships does the district have with the community?

Prioritizing linguistic inclusivity in school safety plans is a key component of creating a safe and welcoming environment for all students and their families. By integrating language access with trauma-informed practices, schools can effectively reduce language barriers, foster trust, and enhance the overall well-being and safety of our communities and our learning environments.

## Professional Learning for World Language Educators

### Creating Meaningful Communicative Contexts

Presenter: Mike Travers

*Tuesday, April 8, 2025, 4:00-5:00 pm, via Zoom*

In teaching, we talk about how everything we do in our classrooms needs to have a purpose. But is that purpose to practice language or to really get our students communicating about something that interests them? In this webinar, we will look at ways to transform lessons in the 3 modes of communication into tasks that compel students to learn and communicate in the target language. We will examine ways to construct prompts and scenarios to engage our learners and also simple changes that can be made to existing lessons to provide meaningful contexts that allow our students to communicate in the target language. **Click [here](#) to register.**



### **Save the date for our summer 2025 workshops**

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages is planning to offer two-day workshops in nine regions of New York this summer. All workshops will be from 9am to 2pm each day and participants must commit to attending both days. Eight (8) hours of CTLE credit will be offered. Registration is anticipated to open in April and will be found on the [OBEWL Professional Learning website for world languages](#). Please find the regions, dates, and locations below.

- Mid-West region, June 30th-July 1st, Monroe 2 BOCES
- Hudson Valley region, July 8th-9th, PNW BOCES
- Capital region, July 10th-11th, Questar III BOCES
- Long Island region, July 14th-15th, Sequoya HS (Eastern Suffolk BOCES)
- New York City region, July 16th-17th, Fordham University - Bronx Campus
- Mid-State region, July 22nd-23rd, OCM BOCES
- Northern NY region, July 24th-25th, Jefferson-Lewis BOCES
- Western NY region, August 5th-6th, Southside Elementary School (Buffalo City SD)
- Southern Tier region, August 7th-8th, Johnson City Learning Center

For more information on professional learning webinars for world language educators, please visit [our website](#).

## Celebrating Strength, Vision, and Resilience: Honoring Women's Contributions

Women's History Month is a powerful opportunity to reflect on the profound contributions of women throughout history, celebrate their resilience, and acknowledge the ongoing struggle for equality. Across cultures, industries, and generations, women have overcome obstacles to forge paths of progress. From political leadership to social justice, from scientific advancements to grassroots activism, women's achievements continue to shape our world. This year, we honor the transformative influence of women who have broken barriers and championed change. Their stories, diverse and inspiring, remind us that linguistic, cultural, and ethnic diversity is an asset that enriches global progress.

- **Rigoberta Menchú Tum (Guatemala):** A K'iche' Maya woman and human rights activist, Menchú Tum received the Nobel Peace Prize for her work advocating for the rights of Indigenous peoples. Her courage and resilience have inspired movements for social justice around the world. Her experiences of oppression and resistance during the Guatemalan Civil War led her to international activism. Menchú Tum brought attention to the struggles of Indigenous communities, highlighting the importance of cultural preservation and human rights.
- **Wangari Maathai (Kenya):** An environmental activist and the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, Maathai founded the Green Belt Movement, which empowered women to plant millions of trees, combating deforestation, and promoting sustainable development. Her activism emphasized the intersection of environmental conservation, gender equality, and sustainable development. Maathai's legacy continues to inspire global environmental movements.
- **Dolores Huerta (United States):** A labor leader and civil rights activist, Huerta co-founded the United Farm Workers with Cesar Chavez, fighting for the rights of farmworkers and advocating for social and economic justice. Dolores Huerta has been instrumental in championing labor rights, fair wages, and social justice. Her rallying cry, "Sí se puede" ("Yes, we can"), became a symbol of empowerment and collective action. Her lifelong activism underscores the importance of intersectionality in the fight for equality.

### **Women in Global Leadership: Expanding Horizons**

The world has witnessed a growing number of women assuming leadership roles in various sectors.

- **Claudia Sheinbaum (Mexico):** In October 2024 the country elected its first female president, a landmark achievement. Sheinbaum is an academic, scientist, and politician. Her election follows a trend of increasing female representation in Mexican politics, signifying a shift towards greater gender equality. As a Ph.D., Sheinbaum brings an academic and evidence-based approach to leadership. Her rise to power marks a significant moment for gender representation in Latin America.
- **Golda Meir (Israel):** Golda Meir, Israel's fourth prime minister, was a formidable leader who navigated a turbulent period in the nation's history. Born in Kyiv, Ukraine, she immigrated to Palestine in 1921, dedicating her life to the establishment and security of the Jewish state. Known for her unwavering determination and pragmatic approach, Meir played a crucial role in shaping Israel's foreign policy and strengthening its international standing. She proved that women could lead with strength and resolve in the face of adversity. Her resilience demonstrated that women could lead with both strength and compassion.
- **Indira Gandhi (India):** Indira Gandhi, India's first and only female prime minister, was a powerful and influential figure in 20th-century politics. Daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, she inherited a legacy of leadership and shaped the nation's destiny through her decisive actions. Gandhi's tenure was marked by significant social and economic reforms, as well as complex political challenges. Under her tenure, India saw significant economic and social reforms, space exploration advancements, and the Green Revolution, which bolstered agricultural productivity. Gandhi's leadership on the global stage proved that women could command the highest offices and lead with determination.
- **Margaret Thatcher (United Kingdom):** The "Iron Lady" of British politics, Margaret Thatcher, served as the United Kingdom's first female prime minister. Her strong convictions and decisive leadership shaped British politics and left a lasting impact on the global stage. While her policies were often controversial, her rise to power demonstrated that women could excel in traditionally male-dominated fields.

### **Beyond the Headlines: Everyday Heroines**

Women's History Month is not just about celebrating famous figures; it is also about recognizing the everyday heroines who make a difference in their communities. Teachers, nurses, mothers, activists, and countless others contribute to society in profound ways. Their contributions, though often unrecognized, are the foundation of our communities. Linguistic diversity plays a crucial role in amplifying their voices, ensuring that stories from all backgrounds are heard and valued.

### **Continuing the Journey: Towards Gender Equality**

While significant progress has been made, the fight for gender equality is far from over. Women continue to face challenges in areas such as equal pay, representation in leadership positions, and access to education and healthcare. By celebrating past achievements and fostering a more inclusive future, we can create a world where all women, regardless of language, ethnicity, or background, can reach their full potential. Let us honor their strength, vision, and resilience not just in March but every day.

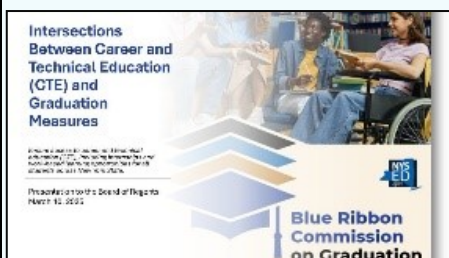
# NEWS

## FROM other DEPARTMENTS and AGENCIES



NYSED launched the New York State [My Sister's Keeper](#) (MSK) initiative. MSK works to eliminate gender disparities in STEM fields while supporting diversity and building leadership skills in future female leaders.

NYSED has proposed [regulatory amendments](#) relating to Teaching Assistant certification. The public comment period began 3/26/25.



Staff members from three BOCES (Erie 1, Erie 2, and Ulster) and the NYC Public Schools joined NYSED staff to present on [connections](#) and [intersections](#) between Graduation Measures and Career and Technical Education across New York at the March Board of Regents meeting.

Smiling faces and completed projects highlight the excitement of the [Archives Jr! Investigation Station](#)—where kids dive into history, analyze primary sources, and create hands-on projects that make the past come alive.



The Lycée Français de New York Cultural Center is organizing the French and Francophone cultural fair “*En Français, Oui But Why?*” on Saturday, April 26, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 505 East 75th Street, New York City. Information and a link to RSVP for the event are available on their [website](#).



## 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](#)

### Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

New York State Education Department

Albany office: 89 Washington Avenue – 301EB, Albany, NY 12234, (518) 474-8775

Batavia office: 2A Richmond Avenue, Park Lewis Hall, Batavia, NY 14020, (585) 344-2002

Brooklyn office: 55 Hanson Place, Rm 594, Brooklyn, NY 11217, (718) 722-2445

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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.

