

# 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

[OBEWL website](#)

October 2022 Newsletter



## In this issue:

- Letter from the Associate Commissioner .....1
- NYS Commissioner Rosa Honored for Her Leadership .....2
- Schenectady City School District Kicks off School Year with Celebration .....3
- Mid-West RBERN Hosts First Large In-Person Event .....4
- 4+1 Pathway Assessments in Additional Languages Approved .....5
- World Language Professional Learning Series for 2022 Continues .....5
- Creating Thematic Unit Plans for Checkpoint A .....6
- Countdown to the Launch of the Revised NYS Learning Standards for World Languages .....7
- Rubrics for NYS Learning Standards for World Languages .....8
- Preview of 2021-22 NYSSB Report .....9
- Celebrating Diversity in Our Learning Communities .....10
- Top 5 Data-Driven Strategies to Support English Language Learners (ELLs) .....11
- Beliefs and Actions for Equity: Resource Allocation for ENL Programs .....12
- Supporting Newly Arrived Students .....13
- News from Other NYSED Offices .....14

## Greetings from Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez



Dear Colleagues,

Labor Day, Indigenous Peoples' Day, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, National Baby Safety Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month all are important causes, days of celebration and reflection, where we take to pause and be grateful.

It is difficult to find enough time to honor all of our students' cultures and lives. But if we do not our students might feel feeling forgotten. Though we only have so many days together with them, we must do what we can to make sure that all feel valued and understand their self-worth.

As we commemorate the end of this year's Hispanic Heritage Month, we are fortunate that October is also National "Celebrating the Bilingual Child Month." It is a month that holds a special place in our hearts here at the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages.

Let's collectively celebrate the limitless light in each of our children's eyes. Emphasize these special days. If you so choose, create your own celebration, and ensure that every child is included and given the opportunity to shine.

To teachers, I applaud you and encourage you to share your knowledge and continue to work in reaching your students, while maintaining the integrity of our promise to all children. To administrators, I admire you for taking on the advancement of our mission to serve and provide a better future for each child that is second to none. To parents, I am forever grateful to you for trusting us, and our vision, to lead your children to educational success.

October in New York is a month of change. As the leaves start to fall, may our struggles, hardships, and roadblocks dissipate to provide room for the growth that is soon to come. It is a process of beauty, and I sincerely hope that October may be that for us all. Let us remain focused on what's important: our children and their future.

In unity,

*Elisa Alvarez*



## NYS Commissioner Rosa Honored for Her Leadership

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) congratulates Commissioner of Education, Dr. Betty Rosa, for being named New York State's third most influential Latino leader in *City & State's Power of Diversity: Latino 100*. Named alongside the likes of Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, this annual list identifies New York's preeminent Latinos, including government officials, business executives, labor leaders, academics, advocates and activists. Over decades of proving herself as an exceptional educator, district administrator, and state policy maker, Dr. Rosa has received numerous accolades, including the Champions of Education Leadership Award from the Alliance for Quality Education, the Woman of the Year Award from the New York League of Puerto Rican Women, the Leadership in Education Award from the Association of Dominican-American Supervisors and Administrators, and the Latina of the Year Award from the New York State Assembly and Senate's Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force.

This new honor is no surprise to those who have followed Dr. Rosa's career, which started in a New York City classroom as a bilingual paraprofessional. She quickly moved up the ranks to teacher and reading coordinator. As a principal, she introduced an integrated linguistic model while developing an inclusive multilingual/multicultural school and led the full-service community school, I.S. 218. Dr. Rosa served the students of District 8 in the Bronx as both a Superintendent and Senior Superintendent. Her legacy includes founding the NYC Office of Conflict Resolution for the Division of Special Education and The Maritime Academy for Science and Technology, which, under her leadership, became the top-ranked middle school in New York city.

Dr. Rosa served as Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents beginning in 2016 after her time as a Regent for the Twelfth Judicial District of Bronx County. Building on her lifetime of leadership, she became the first Latina woman to serve as New York State's Commissioner of Education. Congratulations to our venerated leader on this new recognition. We have no doubt more honors will be bestowed on this educational visionary and groundbreaking advocate for the students of New York.



*As an honored guest at the 2022 NYS Department of Civil Service's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, Dr. Rosa speaks of her "vision for a kinder, more inclusive world, where our cultural and linguistic differences bring us closer together rather than driving us apart."*

## Schenectady City School District Kicks off School Year with Celebration

The plan was in place and all school district faculty and staff were set to return for the annual back-to-school welcome. If you are thinking “same ‘ole,” keep reading. The first day back would turn out to be festive, fun and a celebration of inclusivity with a message to “be.”

On the morning of Thursday, September 1, nearly 2,000 Schenectady City School District employees came together in one location for the first time in at least three years, expecting the usual, but not actually knowing what the morning would offer. Turns out this first district staff meeting, the welcome back to the new school year, would be different than any before.



The event, themed “Celebrating Us,” turned out to be a festive celebration loaded with Latin music, dance, tons of laughing, photos of smiling employees, and happy and heartfelt memorable messages for faculty and staff to take with them as they were set to begin the new school year.



Coming off two challenging years for all who work in education, Schenectady leaders were determined to find a way to honor, recognize and express appreciation for the unwavering dedication, resiliency, empathy, hope, selflessness, and compassionate care that district employees showed day in and day out. It was time to say, “thank you” and shine a bright light on those who make a difference. It was also an opportunity to share key messages that strengthen the “us.”

The “welcome to 2022-2023” morning began with upbeat Latin music performed by Alex Torres and his Latin Orchestra. As district employees entered Proctors, the theatre where the gathering was held, they immediately began to smile and sway to the beat, even before finding a colleague or a seat. The energy in the room quickly became electrifying and the vibe was positive, for certain.

After everyone took their seats, the large screen displayed a phrase that would serve as a launchpad for what was to come. The screen read: “Diversity is being invited to the party; Inclusion is being asked to dance.”

Anyone and everyone in the room was then invited to take the stage and learn merengue dance. The offer was accepted, and the stage was full. The music started and Torres led the group with carefully crafted dance moves. Everyone on stage, including Superintendent Anibal Soler, Jr., was moving to the beat, smiling and laughing. The dancers were soon taking the hands of others: swirling, twirling, and enjoying the moment. Those still in their seats embraced the music as they moved to the beat and continued to watch the dancers closely. There was laughing, swaying, singing, and many, many smiles. This was the kick-off to what many said was the “best first day back” ever.



Schenectady’s slogan “Everybody Counts. Everybody Learns,” represents the district’s commitment to equity and making sure every student in the district has access to what is needed to be educationally successful. As such, the district’s commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is the foundation of every discussion, plan, and decision made in the district. Planning a special event to welcome back staff would be no different. As many know, the pandemic magnified the inequities that exist in systems and had a significant impact on

families in urban communities, including Schenectady. This year's kick off event emphasized the importance of moving past doing equity and moving to “being” equity.

The dance activity symbolizes synergy of efforts with the intention of modeling equity and opportunity while celebrating the district’s vibrant and diverse faculty and staff. The district shared the goal of achieving “One-Schenectady: Because we are better together.”

Presenters, which included a student speaker and three of the district’s previous Teachers of the Year, were inspirational, motivating, and touched on the message of the day. They celebrated educators and staff, shared their passion about teaching and what is important toward making a difference.

Superintendent Soler stressed that passionate people, are the district’s engine. They are those who learn and improve as guardians of equity and advocates for the district’s students. He provided a long list of accomplishments and reasons why district staff deserve to be celebrated. Among them were dedication to re-opening in-person last year, the community school initiative, which was launched last year, the secondary school redesign, providing access and opportunity, relaunching of “My Brother’s Keeper (MBK),” and a district Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policy. Soler also shared the African concept known as *ubuntu* which is translated as “I am because we are.”

Hundreds of photos were taken of staff, each holding a crafted frame celebrating opening day 2022 and #schenectadyrising, the district’s social media stamp symbolizing a commitment and dedication to redesigning, rebuilding, and reigniting.

“Amazing opening day celebration,” “Feeling excited and energetic about this upcoming year,” and “What an amazing way to get started with the new school year,” are just a few of the social media messages that were posted by the end of the day.

## **Mid-West RBERN Hosts First Large In-Person Event**

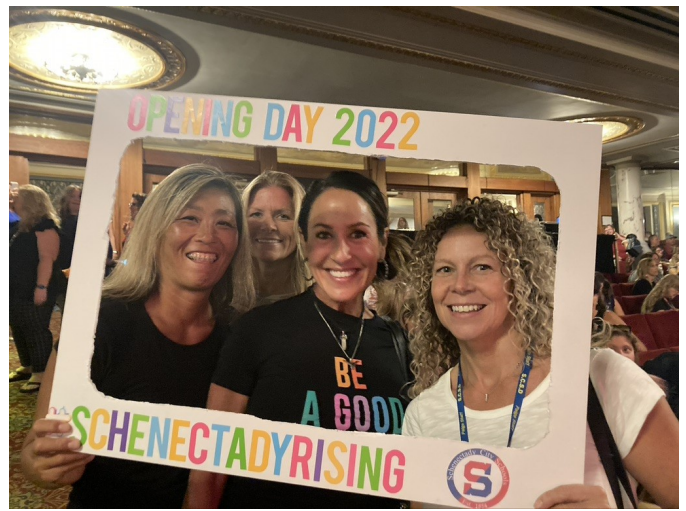
This summer, Mid-West RBERN proudly hosted their first large in-person event in over two years. Pathways to Participation was a two-day Summer Institute which focused on increasing access to grade level content and curriculum for Newcomer English Language Learners and Students with Interrupted Formal Education. The presenter, Annie Smith of Bright Minds Educational Consulting, walked participants through purposeful reading and writing scaffolds to support students developing ways they can use a new language to communicate their thoughts and ideas and be active participants in their own learning. The response to the Institute was overwhelmingly positive, as evidenced by the following quotes from participants:

*“This professional development was wonderful, and I am glad to take the information I learned back to my colleagues.”*

*“This was the best professional development I have ever attended. Thank you for bringing Annie to our region.”*

*“I’ve been waiting years for a workshop like this. Thank you for all of the practical and hands on strategies to teach our Newcomers.”*

Mid-West RBERN looks forward to continuing to support schools in creating learning environments that are accessible and responsive to all students.



## **4+1 Pathway Assessments in Additional Languages Approved**

Multiple pathways recognize the importance of engaging students in rigorous and relevant academic programs. The pathway options recognize students' interests in the Arts, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS), Civics, Humanities, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and World Languages by allowing an approved pathway to satisfy students' graduation requirements.

In September 2022, 4+1 Pathway Assessments in Italian, Korean, and Chinese (Mandarin) were added to the list of Department-Approved Pathway Assessments in World Languages. Students who are otherwise eligible to receive a high school diploma in June 2015 and thereafter must take and pass four required Regents Exams or Department-approved alternative assessments (one in each of the following subjects: English language arts, math, science, and social studies) and either pass a comparably rigorous assessment for a fifth required exam, or in lieu of a fifth exam, complete the requirements to earn the CDOS Commencement Credential. Students may complete the fifth assessment requirement for graduation by passing a Department-Approved Pathway Assessment in World Languages.

4+1 Pathway Assessments are available in the following languages:

- American Sign Language (OHM BOCES)
- Arabic (AAPPL, STAMP4S)
- Chinese (AAPPL, NYCDOE, OHM BOCES)
- French (AAPPL, NYCDOE, OHM BOCES)
- Italian (AAPPL, NYCDOE, OHM BOCES)
- Korean (AAPPL, NYCDOE)
- Spanish (NYCDOE, OHM BOCES, STAMP4S)

For more information on these 4+1 Pathway Assessments, please visit the [Multiple Pathways website](#). A full list of all Department-Approved Pathway Assessments in World Languages can be found [here](#).

## **World Language Professional Learning Series for 2022 Continues**

[Lesson Planning, Part 1: From Unit Plan to Lesson Plans: Putting the Pieces Together](#), 11/1/22

How can teachers create proficiency-based and standards-aligned lessons to enact a thematic unit plan? This session offers guidance and examples for how to create and sequence engaging lesson plans. Participants will learn how to develop lesson plans within a thematic unit that moves naturally from input to output to help students make continuous progress in developing their language proficiency and intercultural communication skills. Click [here](#) to register.



[Lesson Planning, Part 2: Lesson Planning Options for Thematic Units](#), 12/13/22

What can effective and engaging lessons look like in the context of a thematic unit? Lesson design and strategy selection can depend on the lesson focus, whether that be a single mode of communication, integrated modes of communication, a targeted language function, or a particular cultural context. In this session, participants will explore strategies that lend themselves well to different lesson designs to maximize student engagement and promote proficiency development. Click [here](#) to register.



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

## Creating Thematic Unit Plans for Checkpoint A

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) presents a virtual full-day workshop entitled **Creating Thematic Unit Plans for Checkpoint A on Tuesday, November 8th, 2022 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** This professional learning event is offered in anticipation of the September 2023 implementation of the NYS Learning Standards for World Languages (2021) with first-year Checkpoint A classes (Grade 7) and is free of charge for world language educators and administrators working or studying in New York State schools, colleges, universities, BOCES/RBERNs, or other educational institutions.



The focus of this full-day workshop is on developing rich thematic unit plans at the Checkpoint A level. It is designed so that **individual teachers as well as entire world language departments** can collaborate to develop an in-depth understanding of each section of the Thematic Unit Plan design template through alternating “input sessions” and “onsite tasks,” in which teachers will work with their departments. This workshop will be offered live via Zoom and will not be recorded for future viewing.

During the day, participants will:

- Analyze Checkpoint A proficiency targets and performance indicators;
- Develop engaging themes based on anchor topics;
- Write function-driven Can-Do Statements for each standard and identify acceptable evidence;
- Identify how language structures and vocabulary support language functions and context and are selected at Checkpoint A; and
- Apply concepts learned in the session to the NYS World Language unit plan template to design a standards-based thematic unit plan.

NYSED-OBEWL will provide digital materials to local building or district facilitators in advance of the workshop to maximize the active engagement of participants.

Registration process: All participants must be registered for this event. Registration will close by November 7th; there will be no same-day registrations. Only registered attendees will be eligible to receive a certificate documenting their attendance, including CTLE certificates. Click [here](#) to access the registration form.

When multiple educators from a single district, school, or organization are registered for this workshop, a facilitator for the workshop must be designated. The facilitator will be responsible for communicating information about the workshop to their departments, arranging for the printing of workshop materials and the technology necessary for departments to participate (computer, webcam, projector, screen), as well as confirming attendance of department members following the workshop. Departments will only need to communicate amongst themselves - they will not need to have individual devices, webcams, or microphones to communicate virtually with participants from other schools/regions.

Facilitators will be required to attend a pre-workshop meeting on **Wednesday, November 2nd from 3:15-3:45 p.m.** We will go over the facilitator responsibilities for before, during, and after the workshop. The Zoom link to this November 2nd meeting will be sent to the designated facilitator.

For any questions on this workshop or the registration process, please contact Candace Black via phone (518-473-7505) or email ([candace.black@nysed.gov](mailto:candace.black@nysed.gov)).

## Countdown to the Launch of the Revised NYS Learning Standards for World Languages

September 2023 will mark the beginning of the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) implementation of the revised New York State Learning Standards for World Languages for the entering Checkpoint A cohort. The first locally developed Checkpoint A assessments that measure the revised standards, and are supported by the assessment frameworks provided by NYSED, will be administered in June 2025.



With only one year remaining before the phase-in of the standards implementation begins, now is the time for all world language teachers to become familiar with the revised standards and the instructional shifts that underpin their successful implementation. Since the revised standards were adopted by the NYS Board of Regents in the Spring of 2021, the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) has been creating and disseminating professional learning and instructional planning resources and guidance.

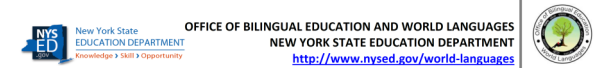
Many teachers across the state have already started creating thematic unit plans, and some departments have begun a comprehensive curriculum revision process to phase in the new standards at all three Checkpoints.

It's possible that, for one reason or another, there are teachers or departments that have not yet begun to learn about the revised standards or to consider making changes to their course maps to align with the proficiency-oriented goals outlined in the revised standards.

Here are some ways teachers and departments can get ready for a successful transition to the revised standards:

- Tour the [World Languages pages](#) of the OBEWL website for resources.
- Use department and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) meetings to view and discuss webinars in the [OBEWL Professional Learning Series](#).
- Collaborate as a department to conduct a curriculum audit.
- Participate in the upcoming webinars offered as part of the [OBEWL Professional Learning Series](#).
- Participate in the statewide full-day webinar on [Creating Thematic Units for Checkpoint A](#).
- Create an independent study plan to view webinars and earn CTLE credits.
- Follow a monthly study plan.

The full "Countdown" document will be published to our [Professional Learning webpage](#) soon.



### Countdown to the Launch of the Revised NYS Learning Standards for World Languages Beginning Implementation Date: September 2023

September 2023 will mark the beginning of the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) implementation of the revised NYS Learning Standards for World Languages for the entering Checkpoint A cohort. The first locally developed Checkpoint A assessments based on the revised standards, as well as the assessment frameworks provided by NYSED, will be administered in June 2025.

With only one year remaining before the phase-in of the standards implementation begins, now is the time for all world language teachers to become familiar with the revised standards and the instructional shifts that underpin their successful implementation. Since the revised standards were adopted by the NYS Board of Regents in the Spring of 2021, the [Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages \(OBEWL\)](#) has been creating and disseminating professional learning and instructional planning resources and guidance.

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Here are some ways teachers and departments can get ready for a successful transition to the revised standards:



Tour the [World Languages](#) pages of the OBEWL website to find standards [documents](#) and professional learning [resources](#).



Use [department and Professional Learning Communities \(PLC\) meetings](#) to view and discuss past [webinars](#) from the OBEWL Professional Learning Series along with the companion Facilitation Guides that accompany each webinar.



[Collaborate as a department to conduct a curriculum audit](#) to identify opportunities for revision to align with the revised NYS Learning Standards for World Languages. Superintendent's Conference Days are ideal times to complete these reviews.



Participate in the webinars offered as part of the [OBEWL Professional Learning Series](#). Those who attend OBEWL webinars or view the recordings and pass the post-assessments may earn Continuing Teacher Leader Education (CTLE) credit.

## Rubrics for NYS Learning Standards for World Languages

The World Language Executive Committee, in collaboration with the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL), has created a set of **master rubrics for each of the five NYS Learning Standards for World Languages**, for both modern languages and classical languages. These master rubrics are designed with two primary goals in mind: (1) to give teachers a basic structure from which to create rubrics customized to a given proficiency target and performance task, and (2) to provide learners feedback on their standards-based performances and proficiency development. Each master rubric consists of one or more dimensions associated with the given standard. Dimensions are elaborated with a learner-friendly question and subsequently described for each proficiency target using an “I Can” statement.

The master rubrics are analytic rubrics. Teachers may choose to use the master rubrics as they are presented; they may extract descriptors specific to a contiguous set of proficiency targets to create three- or four-point rubrics or a single proficiency target to create single-point rubrics; or they may aggregate the descriptors associated with a given proficiency target to create holistic rubrics. With the exception of holistic rubrics, student work is evaluated separately on each dimension. With holistic rubrics, student work is assigned a single score, similar to the Advanced Placement (AP) Exam task evaluation. Teachers should choose the rubric type appropriate for the performance task, the needs of learners, and the type of feedback desired.

To customize the rubrics, teachers can copy and paste the descriptors from the master rubrics directly into four-point, three-point, or single-point rubrics designed to provide learners with feedback on specific performance tasks. Areas shaded in gray in the master rubrics represent dimensions that do not need to be assessed at the indicated proficiency target. Teachers may also choose to add task-specific dimensions to rubrics. In addition, teachers can replace generic language in a descriptor with task-specific characteristics to give learners additional guidance and feedback in assessing their performance.

<b>Standard 1: Interpretive Communication</b>					
<b>Standard 1</b> - Interpretive Communication: Learners <b>understand</b> , <b>interpret</b> , and <b>analyze</b> what is <b>heard</b> , <b>read</b> , <b>received</b> , or <b>viewed</b> on a variety of topics, using a range of diverse texts, including authentic resources.					
<b>Proficiency Ranges for Modern Languages (Category 1-2)</b> Checkpoint A: Novice Mid - Novice High Checkpoint B: Intermediate Low - Intermediate Mid Checkpoint C: Intermediate Mid - Intermediate High			<b>Proficiency Ranges for Modern Languages (Category 3-4)</b> Checkpoint A: Novice Mid - Novice High Checkpoint B: Novice High - Intermediate Low Checkpoint C: Intermediate Low - Intermediate Mid		
Dimensions	NOVICE MID <i>I can...</i>	NOVICE HIGH <i>I can...</i>	INTERMEDIATE LOW <i>I can...</i>	INTERMEDIATE MID <i>I can...</i>	INTERMEDIATE HIGH <i>I can...</i>
<b>Understanding</b> - What can I understand?	identify some isolated facts from a short print text, sound clip, video or image about a very familiar topic using visual support when present.	identify the topic and some isolated facts from a short print text, sound clip, video, or image on a familiar topic.	identify the topic and related details from a short print text, sound clip, video, or image on a familiar topic.	identify the main idea and some supporting details from a short, straightforward print text, sound clip, video, or image on a mostly familiar topic.	identify the main idea and many supporting details from a print text, sound clip, video or image on a mostly familiar topic written in various time frames.
<b>Vocabulary</b> - What words can I recognize and make meaning from?	identify words I've learned and some cognates using visual supports when present.	identify words and phrases I've learned and some cognates.	identify words and phrases I've learned, determine the meaning of most cognates, and infer the meaning of some unfamiliar words in context.	identify words and phrases I've learned, determine the meaning of cognates, and infer the meaning of several unfamiliar words in context.	identify words and phrases I've learned, determine the meaning of cognates, and infer the meaning of most unfamiliar words in context.
<b>Communicator's Purpose</b> - How well can I infer the communicator's intent?				make some inferences about the intent of the communicator's choices (e.g., word, content).	make inferences about the intent of the communicator's choices (e.g., word, content).
<b>Text Organization</b> - How well can I infer the organization and presentation of the text?				make some inferences about the organization and presentation of a print text, sound clip, video, or image.	make inferences about the organization and presentation of a print text, sound clip, video, or image.

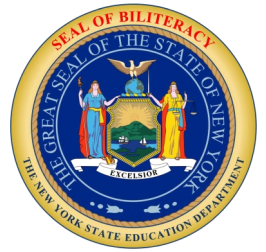
*Screenshot of the master rubric for modern languages for Standard 1: Interpretive Communication*

To download these master rubrics, templates and single-, three-, and four-point rubrics for both modern or classical languages, visit the [OBEWL “Standards and Guidelines” website](#) and look for “Resources for Teachers to support the transition to the revised NYS Learning Standards for World Languages (2021).”



## The New York State Seal of Biliteracy

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages is hard at work preparing the 2021-22 Annual Report for the New York State Seal of Biliteracy. This report will summarize facts and figures, such as the number of students who have earned the Seal and the number of schools that have offered it in the most recent year. In anticipation of its release, we are sharing the following overall statistics on the Seal:



374 schools in NYS offered the Seal of Biliteracy in 2021-22, an increase of 15% over last year. The regions with the greatest increase in the number of schools offering this program were the Western region (up 32%) and New York City (up 21%).



Over 7,000 students earned the New York State Seal of Biliteracy in 2021-22, up by 29% since the previous year.

Seal earners in each eligible subgroup increased:



- English Language Learners (ELLs) who earned the Seal increased by 70%.
- Former ELLs who earned the Seal increased by 31%.
- Never ELLs whose home language is English who earned the Seal increased by 22%.
- Never ELLs whose home language is other than English who earned the Seal increased by 39%.



- Students earned the Seal in 67 different languages in 2021-22.

The vast majority of students who earn the Seal do so in English and one other world language. In 2021-22, the following special honors were bestowed.



- 178 students earned the Seal in English and **two** world languages.
- 11 students earned the Seal in English and **three** world languages.
- 1 student earned the Seal in English and **four** world languages. (See the article in the [May-June 2022 newsletter](#) for more information.)

Now is the perfect time to start a New York State Seal of Biliteracy program at your school. For more information on how to do this, please consult our [website](#) and the [NYSSB Guidance Toolkit—Module 1: Getting Started](#). The deadline to submit the [NYSSB School Notification Form](#) is December 1st.

## **Celebrating Diversity in Our Learning Communities**

*by Heather Rubin, Administrative Coordinator, NYSED Long Island RBERN at Eastern Suffolk BOCES*

One of the best parts of a new school year is getting to know our students. As educators we are experts at recognizing the unique strengths that every student brings to our classroom. It is our superpower! Throughout the school year, we invest our time in getting to know our students as individuals and as learners. As we learn about the variety of skills and experiences that our students possess, we reflect on the different ways that we can celebrate the complex diversity of our students and then use this knowledge to personalize instruction. This includes celebrating the cultural and linguistic diversity of our English Language Learners (ELLs) and Multilingual Learners (MLs).

The NYSED Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CR-SE) Framework (2019) guides us in celebrating cultural and linguistic diversity. All stakeholders in the learning community can engage in practices to: *“Help educators create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices and empower students as agents of social change.”*

As you think about ways to celebrate the cultural and linguistic diversity within your learning community, there are many aspects to consider. Here are just a few ways to get started on this journey:

- **Create student-centered learning environments:**
  - View diversity as a strength and promote the use of multiple languages in the classroom.
  - Increase personal relevance by allowing students to have voice and choice in their classroom assignments.
- **Affirm racial, linguistic, and cultural Identities:**
  - Design physical spaces to reflect the diversity of your learning community.
  - Engage in culturally dynamic conversations that challenge dominant narratives.
- **Prepare students for rigor and independent learning:**
  - Provide students with options for demonstrating mastery through multiple modalities.
  - Design activities that allow students to construct knowledge and make meaning of their world.
- **Develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference:**
  - Cultivate a safe space that reduces stress and anxiety and allows students to share their histories, traditions, knowledge and experiences.
  - Include ELL/ML students as leaders in group activities and other peer interactions.
- **Elevate historically marginalized voices:**
  - Use resources with multiple perspectives.
  - Tap into the cultural capital of the families within your learning community.
- **Empower students as agents of social change:**
  - Use project-based learning to engage students in active citizenship, authentic problem-solving, and social justice issues.
  - Encourage students to express their own values and ideals.

As educators, we know that creating a welcoming and affirming environment is an essential part of what we do each and every day and the above list is just a sample of the many different ways that we can ensure that our culturally and linguistically diverse students are celebrated and recognized.

***Heather Rubin** is the Administrative Coordinator for the NYSED Long Island Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (LI RBERN) at Eastern Suffolk BOCES. She has over 20 years of experience supporting academic achievement and equity for English Language Learners in K-12 and higher education settings. She presents at regional, national, and international conferences such as ISTE, TESOL, WIDA, and NYSTESOL and is the lead author of *Digital Age Teaching for English Learners: A Guide to Equitable Learning for All Students, 2ed* (Corwin 2022).*

## **Top 5 Data-Driven Strategies to Support English Language Learners**

Data-driven instruction has become a widely discussed concept across school districts. According to research by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences, evidence for the efficacy of data-driven instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs) is “strong.” In fact, research by Stanford University’s Kenji Hakuta showed that school districts that extensively used data to improve instruction and student learning had higher achievement outcomes for ELLs than those that did not. But how does the research relate to supporting ELLs, and what are the best approaches? Based on current, evidenced-based practices, here are five data-driven strategies that districts, and schools can use to support ELL instruction:



### **Strategy #1: Utilize key assessment data to monitor ELL progress.**

By looking at snapshots of ELL academic performance throughout the year, growth can be tracked, and at-risk students identified. Key assessment data includes English language proficiency assessment results (e.g., New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners), interim assessments, and content assessment results.

### **Strategy #2: Perform side-by-side analysis of assessment and demographic data to determine the performance of ELL subgroups.**

Schools and districts can review assessment and demographic data to identify gaps and gain a better understanding of subgroups. ELL subgroups include newcomers, students with limited or interrupted/inconsistent formal education, long-term ELLs, and ELL students with disabilities.

### **Strategy #3: Determine patterns in ELL performance data.**

Schools and districts can analyze language proficiency results to determine areas of need and support. This can allow educators to identify areas of strength and leverage best practice to support ELLs. As the year progresses, interim assessments and formative assessments can provide more data points to help further refine and differentiate instruction.

### **Strategy #4: Conduct item analysis using interim assessments and formative assessments for ELLs.**

By conducting an item analysis, ELL educators will gain more insight into ELL performance and identify potential linguistic and conceptual misunderstandings that ELL students may face. Additionally, by reviewing ELL responses educators are able to identify areas of improvement and address potential gaps.

### **Strategy #5: Creating professional learning communities within districts and schools that utilize ELL data.**

Allowing educators to collaborate and have rich discussions of what the ELL data shows is critical in informing instructional practices. Creating effective professional learning communities that utilize ELL data is a powerful tool for meeting the needs of ELL students and for informing and improving instructional practices.

## **Beliefs and Actions for Equity: Resource Allocation for English as a New Language (ENL) Programs**

English Language Learners (ELLs), especially in districts with small ELL populations, are worthy of the equity of opportunity in New York State school districts. While regulations give recommendations for providing equitable opportunities for ELLs, regulations do not address how leaders must make decisions to allocate resources effectively for this population.

Research has shown that leadership is critical at all levels in school districts, and making decisions based on leadership beliefs must be equitable for all populations, including ELLs. Research includes the actions of leaders at different levels, how initiatives must be connected to district mission and core values, how leadership impacts student achievement, and how leaders make critical decisions for allocating resources. In short, leaders must make resource allocations that are equitable for all students, even small populations such as ELLs. Many districts include terms such as “equity” in mission statements; leaders must stay true to these claims and ensure decisions for resource allocation are equitable for all students.

A qualitative, comparative case study was conducted with four districts with small ELL populations (less than 5%), two of which came from the average needs/resource ratio category, and two from low needs/resource ratio category. 16 interviews were conducted with leaders at all levels: four superintendents, four district leaders who oversee ENL programs, four building leaders with ELLs in their building, and four ENL teacher leaders. A document review protocol checklist was used to examine artifacts from district public-facing websites including mission/vision statement and board of education minutes and recordings between July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022. Themes were identified and aligned with Sinek’s (2011) Golden Circle framework.

Key findings for this study included the critical role of the ENL teacher. Educators must be highly qualified and well-trained, as did all participants in this study mentioned the importance of staff in serving the diverse needs of ELLs. A key finding related to considerations for scheduling and time, especially in districts with small ELL populations, was prioritizing ELL scheduling needs before the average student ensured that ELLs were a priority for receiving the services necessary for their academic success. Also, analyzing regular ELL academic progress data, such as progress monitoring data, helps leaders evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions for resource allocation. Lastly, leaders believed in the equity of opportunity related to the critical decisions for resource allocation for meeting ELL needs.

Conclusions and recommendations for leaders with small ELL populations included the importance of leaders’ belief in the potential of ELLs while ensuring an educational environment that provides equitable opportunities for them. Leaders might perform equity audits to ensure ELLs have these opportunities. Also, key resources necessary for implementing/maintaining a successful ENL program include highly qualified staff, effective and inclusive schedules, material resources, and parent/community engagement. These resources should be evaluated using regular academic points more frequently than the annual NYSESLAT to ensure resource effectiveness. Professional development is critical for building staff capacity and it is the responsibility of all educators (at all leadership levels) to provide effective support for ELLs (Blueprint for ELL Success, 2014). Leaders might benefit from using Sinek’s (2011) Golden Circle framework to align their beliefs and actions (such as district mission statements and resource allocation decisions) as they evaluate decisions for resources for ENL programs. In summary, leaders must be agents of equity and advocacy, ensure all learners receive exactly what they need, and yet advocate for their diverse needs not being met, if equity does not yet exist.

To learn more about this research, don’t miss the full presentation on November 5th at the [52nd annual NYS TESOL conference](#) in White Plains, NY!

## **Supporting Newly Arrived Students**

As migrant families continue to seek refuge in communities throughout the state, schools can play a vital role in supporting newcomers. When welcoming newly arrived students, be sure to keep in mind the following legal and regulatory requirements:

**Enrollment:** Under Commissioner’s Regulation 100.2(y), school districts are prohibited from requesting Social Security cards or numbers or any information, including visas, that would tend to reveal the immigration status of the child or the child’s parents. Districts must also enroll students within one school day, regardless of the availability of registration documents, and allow families to submit alternatives to such official records as birth certificates and leases or deeds in meeting age and residency requirements. If educational records are not immediately available, schools must still enroll the student and place them provisionally based on age pending determination of educational history and academic level.

**ELL/SIFE Identification:** As a subpopulation of English Language Learners under Commissioner’s Regulation 154-2.3, newcomers must be screened for ELL program placement via the Home Language Questionnaire and an individual interview followed, as appropriate, by the New York State Identification Test for ELLs. In addition, if a newcomer is identified as a potential Student with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE), a tool such as the Oral Interview Questionnaire, writing screener, or Multilingual Literacy SIFE screener (MLS) must be administered to determine their educational history and literacy level so that appropriate academic interventions can be offered.

**Temporarily Housed Newcomers:** Migrant students residing in temporary housing, whether through the shelter system or doubled up in the homes of others, must be provided with full and equal access to academic and extracurricular activities. In addition, district liaisons must ensure that they receive all educational services for which they are eligible, including special education/early intervention and Head Start or other preschool programs administered by the school district. They should also ensure that temporarily housed newcomers and their families receive referrals to health care, dental, mental health, substance abuse, housing, and other appropriate services. It should be noted that all migrant students are automatically eligible for free school meals.

**Newly Arrived Unaccompanied Youth:** Children under 18 who enter the US without a parent or guardian are ordinarily reunified with a family member “sponsor;” those for whom a sponsor cannot be identified are placed in foster care. For purposes of residency determinations, a sponsor need not establish custody through a formal guardianship proceeding, and a lack of evidence of formal guardianship should not delay enrollment. As youth who are not in the physical custody of their parents or a legal guardian, recently arrived unaccompanied minors should also receive the services and accommodations for students in temporary housing referenced above.

**Testing Exemptions:** Although schools must administer the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) to recently arrived students as well as non-newcomers to measure their progress in attaining English language proficiency, students who have been enrolled in school in the US for under 12 months are eligible for a one-time exemption from the New York State English Language Arts Exam.

**Newcomer Programs:** To ease the transition to a new educational system, districts may offer specialized newcomer programs for recently arrived students. In addition to helping students begin to acquire English language skills and develop mastery of core content areas, these programs acculturate newcomers to the US school system in a safe and supportive environment. To comply with federal civil rights law, however, programs must take care to avoid unnecessary segregation and must provide equal access to the district’s standard grade-level curriculum. While programs can vary in length, they should ideally last for no longer than one year and should offer opportunities for integration with non-newcomer peers during nonacademic subjects, lunchtime, and recess.

Please feel free to contact your Regional Bilingual Resource Education Network ([RBERN](#)) for more information regarding supports for newly arrived students.

[Guide to School Registration Rules](#)

[Student Registration Guidance](#)

[SIFE Identification and Teaching Resources](#)

[Practice Brief: Migrant Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)

[Provision of Educational Services for Recently Arrived Unaccompanied Children and Youth](#)

[Innovative Solutions for Including Recently Arrived English Learners in State Accountability Systems](#)

[Resource Guide: Accountability for English Learners under the ESEA](#)

[U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights: English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents U.S.](#)

[Department of Education Newcomer Toolkit](#)

### **News from Other NYSED Offices**

In recognition of [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#), the State Education Department is honoring 75 businesses across the state that do an outstanding job of employing individuals with disabilities. This year's theme, "Disability: Part of the Equity Equation," recognizes the crucial role people with disabilities play in a diverse and inclusive workforce. Virtual events will be held throughout the month to recognize the employers.

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) approved the State Education Department's plan to restart the federally required accountability system for the 2022-23 school year based upon 2021-22 school year results. The accountability plan addresses disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and modifies accountability indicators and processes to best support New York's schools. The full text of the accountability plan are posted on NYSED's school and district accountability webpage. Comments on the proposed regulations will be accepted through December 19, 2022, and may be emailed to [REGCOMMENTS@nysed.gov](mailto:REGCOMMENTS@nysed.gov).

Raise awareness of bullying and promote inclusion at your school. Use this [Student Participation Toolkit](#) to begin conversations about how you can help prevent bullying.

The Librarian Toolkit makes it easy to add NOVELny resources and information to your library website. Librarians can download database icons, social media templates, and vendor-created marketing materials and teaching tools. Help spread the word about NOVELny! To get started, click [here](#).

The New York State Office of Information Technology Services K-12 Kids Safe Online NYS Poster Contest is open! Help your child create an entry while learning about internet safety. Details are available [here](#).

NYSED announced the members of the New York State Graduation Measures Blue Ribbon Commission. The 64 members of the Blue Ribbon Commission will undertake a thoughtful and inclusive process to explore what a state diploma should signify to ensure educational excellence and equity for every student in New York State. Commission members represent a diverse cross-section of stakeholders, including educators, administrators, researchers, school counselors, professionals from business and higher education, parents, and students. The full list of Blue Ribbon Commission members is available on [NYSED's website](#).

At the September 2022 Board of Regents meeting, the Board honored William "Billy" Green, the 2023 New York State Teacher of the Year. Mr. Green, a high school chemistry teacher at A. Philip Randolph Campus High School in Manhattan, has found his true calling in the classroom. He imparts an impassioned love for life-long learning and inspires his students to take charge of their personal and academic responsibilities. Congratulations, Mr. Green! Finalists for the 2023 New York State Teacher of the Year are...

- Zachary Arenz, music teacher, Rochester City School District;
- Lori Atkinson, grade 9-12 English teacher, Copenhagen Central School District;
- Andi Cammer, K-6 reading teacher, Jefferson Central School District; and
- Vanessa Jackson, health teacher, Plainview Old Bethpage Central School District.

## 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)

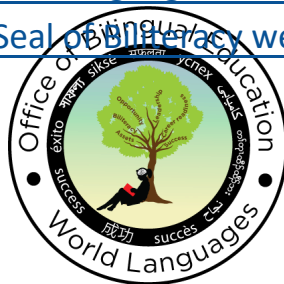
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[World Languages website](#)

[NYS Seal of Bilingual Proficiency 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.

