

Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages

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September 2023 Newsletter



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Greetings from Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez

Dear Educators and Advocates,



The sun seems to set a little sooner these days and the colors of the leaves are beginning to convey the feeling of autumn—all signs that we are beginning a new academic school year. Our heartfelt greetings to each of you who dedicate your days to shaping the minds and hearts of our next generation. The challenges and triumphs of the past have paved the way for an exciting journey ahead, one that centers on the diversity of our learners. Across the state of New York, we stand and witness a growing population of English Language Learners (ELLs) as a testament to the ever-evolving cultural richness in our communities. In this edition of our newsletter, we explore the ways in which we can collectively champion the rights of all students to a fair and equitable education, particularly in light of the recent arrivals of asylum seekers searching for peace and safety within our borders.

As we enter into this new school year, we ask for your help in making certain the academic potential of our ELLs is recognized and that their unique stories and backgrounds are honored in all classrooms. This year, our pursuit of educational excellence is well represented as we commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month during September 15<sup>th</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup>. It is an occasion to celebrate the invaluable contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities to our society. According to [Hispanic Star](#), Hispanics are the largest minority in the country; they are critical to the US economy with a gross domestic product of \$2.7 trillion in 2022; their voter population is expected to grow by 18% by 2036; and, as a testament to your work, Hispanic college enrollment will increase by 26% between 2015 and 2026.

Our hope is that this newsletter empowers you to continue to create classrooms, schools and districts where language barriers become bridges to understanding. We will address the evolving needs of our students and equip you with the tools to ensure that every child, regardless of their background can thrive. Together, we can build a foundation that not only embraces the potential of every ELL in New York State but also upholds the principles of a just and equitable education. Your dedication and passion provide the

possibilities of a bright future. We are excited to initiate this new school year alongside of you.

Let us continue to inspire and transform one another for the good of our children.

In Unity,

Elisa Alvarez

## **New York State Education Department (NYSED) Support for Asylum Seekers**

Over the past year, more than 107,000 asylum seekers have been relocated to New York State from other US states. NYSED has provided the following guidance and policy flexibilities to support districts and schools working to absorb this influx of unexpected enrollees.

- **Statement from Attorney General Letitia James and New York State Education Department Commissioner Betty Rosa Affirming That Every New York Student Has the Right to a Free Public Education**

This joint statement affirms that all “all children and youth in New York between the ages of 5 and 21 have the right to a free public-school education, regardless of immigration status, language proficiency, or whether the student is living in a shelter, migrant camp, or other temporary housing.” School administrators are advised to work with students and families to ensure that their children receive the education to which they are entitled and to immediately welcome students in the classroom even if additional time is needed to establish residency. This statement is provided in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) to ensure that both schools and parents are informed of these rights.

- **New York State Education Department Statement on Rights of Newly Arrived Immigrants**

The NYSED Office of Counsel has issued a [statement](#) to “remind school districts that they are legally required to treat all students equally. This means that new enrollees are entitled to equal access to all school programs and services offered to district students, including programs required for graduation.”

- **Flexibility: English Language Learner (ELL) Identification and Placement for Recently Arrived Children and Youth**

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) released a [memo on August 16](#) announcing available flexibility to the ELL Identification and Placement timeline for districts that lack the capacity to complete this process within 10 school days due to enrollment of recently arrived asylum seekers. Districts seeking to use this flexibility complete and submit the “Attestation in Support of Waiver of the ELL Identification and Placement Timeline for Recently Arrived Children and Youth” form through the [NYSED Business Portal](#). The NYS Board of Regents approved this flexibility at their September 2023 meeting.

- **Flexibility: Supplementary Certificate and Supplementary Bilingual Education Extension Requirements**

The NYS Board of Regents has [approved flexibility](#) that will allow educators to expeditiously obtain a Supplementary certificate or a Supplementary Bilingual Education extension. This flexibility provides currently-certified educators the ability to earn a Supplementary certificate in a new content area (including English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)) by passing that area’s Content Specialty Test, or to earn a Supplementary Bilingual Extension by passing the Bilingual Education Assessment (BEA), without the need to have earned credits in a teacher preparation program in that area. The Supplementary certificate is valid for five years and may be earned by current content area teachers seeking ESOL certification or by current ESOL teachers seeking certification in a new area that would allow them to provide Integrated ENL and content area instruction in the same class. The Supplementary Bilingual Extension is valid for three years; however, the flexibility also provides educators who earn this Supplementary extension through the BEA with a one-time renewal for an additional three years if the educators has, by that time, enrolled and completed at least three semester hours in a approved subject areas of a Bilingual Education teacher preparation program.

- **Supplementary Title III Allocation**

NYSED intends to allocate available supplementary Title III Part A Immigrant funds to those LEAs that are experiencing the most significant changes in enrollment of recently arrived, asylum-seeking students. In order to calculate this allocation, NYSED will require accurate data to be reported to the Department via the Student Information Repository System (SIRS). In order to be counted towards this allocation, students will need to be reported with both the Immigrant Program Service code and one of the “Crisis/Disaster Student Displacement Codes” (natural, civil, health, or other) in their source Student Management System (SMS). Data must be reported to NYSED by October 13 and any corrections to inaccurate student level data must be revised and pushed to the L1 Reporting Center no later than October 20, 2023. OBEWL and the Office of Information Reporting Services will soon issue a memo providing guidance on this data collection. A memo providing details on this data collection will be sent to superintendents, school leaders, Bilingual/ELL administrators, and RIC Directors and L1 Data Warehouse Project Managers. Once collected, OBEWL will analyze the data to determine the most number of districts that are able to receive awards of sufficient size and scope to carry out a program effective in meeting the purposes of Title III.

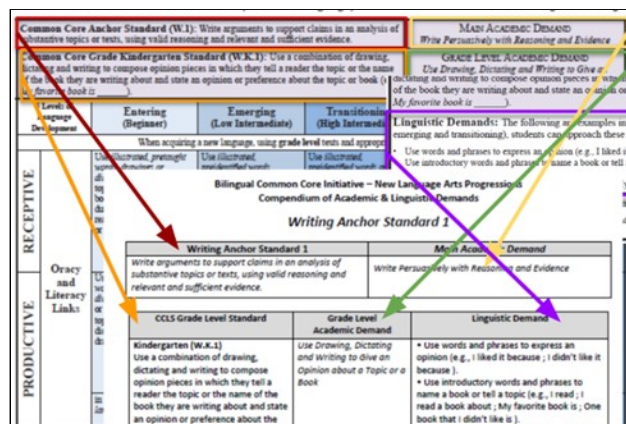
# Coming Soon! Academic and Linguistic Demands of the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts in Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening

by Christa Stevenson, Executive Director, Long Island Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN)

In September 2017, the New York State Board of Regents adopted the [New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards](#) (NGLS) as part of the strategy to continually improve the learning standards that guide education for all students in New York State (NYS). Recognizing the importance of providing equitable resources to teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs), the Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) endeavored to create a set of tools to support implementation of the newly adopted NGLS in ELL instruction. The result of that endeavor is a resource entitled, *Academic and Linguistic Demands of the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts in Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening* ("Academic and Linguistic Demands" or "ALDs").

Building upon guidance delivered for the previous learning standards through the Bilingual Common Core Progressions (BCCP), an extensive and systematic process was developed to ensure that the ALDs are consistent, aligned to the NGLS, directly applicable to English language instruction of ELLs, and were developed with the direct involvement of NYS educators.

The *Academic and Linguistic Demands* resulted from that process. The tools contained within the document are intended for all teachers who instruct ELLs, ELLs with disabilities, Former/Ever ELLs, heritage language speakers, Dual Language students, and other multilingual



Excerpt of Academic and Linguistic Demands of the NGLS Reading Standard 2

Academic and Linguistic Demands of the NGLS ELA Standards Reading Standard 2			
NGLS Reading Anchor Standard 2		Main Academic Demand	
Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.		Analyze central ideas or themes and summarize details and ideas.	
NGLS Grade Level Standard	Grade Level Academic Demand	Linguistic Demands	
The following examples are provided to suggest possible linguistic demands presented by the NGLS ELA standards for English Language Learners.			
KR2: Retell stories or share key details from a text.	Retell stories or share key details in a text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify key words that appear throughout the text (e.g., nouns and/or verbs) to identify key events and details.</li><li>Identify and use sequencing words (e.g., first, next, then) to support understanding of the sequence of events.</li></ul>	
1R2: Identify a main topic or idea in a text and relate important details.	Identify main topic and relate key details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify key words that appear throughout the text (e.g., nouns and related pronouns, adjectives and/or verbs) to identify the main topic and key details.</li><li>Use key words and transitional words (e.g., when, then, after, most) to recount key details.</li></ul>	
2R2: Identify a main topic or central idea and relate key details in a text; summarize portions of a text.	Identify main topic and key details and summarize text; retell key details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify key words that appear throughout the text (e.g., nouns and related pronouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs) to retell the main topic and key details.</li><li>Use key words and synonyms of key words to summarize a text in student's own words.</li><li>Identify and use transition words (e.g., therefore, finally) to summarize key details in the text.</li></ul>	
3R2: Determine a theme or central idea and explain how it is supported by key details in a text; summarize portions of a text.	Summarize portions of a text and determine theme or central idea along with supporting key details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify words or ideas that appear throughout the text (e.g., synonyms, imagery) that help to identify the theme or central idea.</li><li>Use words and phrases to summarize the central ideas of the text (e.g., The main idea is... The important points the author makes are...).</li><li>Use words and phrases to explain the theme or central idea along with supporting details (e.g., The author wants us to think... I know this because the text says...).</li></ul>	

resources presenting a comprehensive, unifying site for ELL instruction. The following resources and tools are integrated as part of the ALDs to help teachers implement best instructional practices for ELLs:

- [NYS Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education \(CRSE\) Framework](#)
- [Advanced Literacies: Linguistically Diverse Learners and the NYS Next Generation P-12 Learning Standards Topic Briefs](#)
- [Classroom Practices for Multilingual Learners and English Language Learners and the Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards](#)
- [Strengthening English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners Instruction Strategy 1-Using Translations as a Support Not a Solution \(One-page Reference\)](#)
- [Strengthening English Language Learners & Multilingual Learners \(ELLs & MLs\) Instruction: Topic 1: Using Translations as a Support Not a Solution \(Presentation\)](#)
- [Conventions of Academic English/Language for Learning \(see Appendix A\)](#)
- [Instructional Scaffolds Framework \(see next page\)](#)



# Instructional Scaffolding Framework

Grade Level Standard	Grade Level Academic Demand	Linguistic Demands
SR2: Determine a theme or central idea and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text.	Summarize <u>text</u> and determine a theme or central idea along with supporting details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify words and phrases that appear throughout the text (e.g., imagery, analogies, metaphors) that help to identify a theme or central idea.</li> <li>Use words and phrases to <b>summarize the central ideas of the text</b> (e.g., "The main points are..."; "The key points the author makes are...").</li> <li>Use words and phrases to <b>explain a theme or central idea along with how those ideas are supported by key details</b> (e.g., "The author relates ..."; "This idea is supported by ...").</li> </ul>

## UDHR Article 1 Lesson

		Entering	Emerging	Transitioning	Expanding	Commanding
R E C E P T I V E  S K I L L S	L	<p>Pre-teach words and phrases that appear throughout the text, using images (<i>Human, Equal, Brotherhood, Rights, Conscience</i>).</p> <p>Listen to Article 1 Read Aloud (can use a <a href="#">video with translations</a> or <a href="#">English video with translated captions</a>)</p> <p>After listening, organize pre-taught keywords on a graphic organizer/listening guide to identify the main idea..</p>	<p>Pre-Reading: Pre-identify words and phrases that appear throughout the text (<i>Human, Equal, Brotherhood, Rights, Conscience</i>). Identify cognates.</p> <p>Listen to Article 1 Read Aloud (can use a <a href="#">video with translations</a> or <a href="#">English video with translated captions</a>)</p> <p>After listening, organize pre-identified keywords on a graphic organizer/listening guide, to identify the main idea.</p>	<p>Pre-Reading: Preview words and phrases that appear throughout the text (<i>Brotherhood, Rights, Conscience, Violated</i>)</p> <p>Listen to Article 1 Read Aloud. After listening, list important words or phrases that signify the main idea on a graphic organizer.</p>	<p>Pre-Reading: Preview words and phrases that appear throughout the text (<i>Brotherhood, Conscience, Violated</i>)</p> <p>Listen to Article 1 Read Aloud. After listening, jot down information from the <u>read aloud</u> that helps summarize the main idea, using a provided graphic organizer.</p>	<p>Pre-Reading: Preview words and phrases that appear throughout the text (<i>Conscience, Violated</i>)</p> <p>Listen to Article 1 Read Aloud. After listening, jot down information from the <u>read aloud</u> that helps summarize the main idea.</p>
	R	<p>Ask students to identify cognates in Article 1 of the UDHR.</p> <p>Read Article 1 slowly, underlining key vocabulary and annotating in the Home Language and/or English.</p>	<p>Ask students to identify cognates in Article 1 of the UDHR.</p> <p>Read Article 1 slowly, underlining key vocabulary and annotating in the Home Language and/or English.</p>	<p>Pre-identify cognates in Article 1 of the UDHR, when necessary.</p> <p>Read Article 1, underlining key vocabulary and annotating what this Article means, and why it is important.</p>	<p>Read Article 1, Answer the comprehension question, "What is the universal right that is described in this article?" using the provided graphic organizer.</p>	<p>Read Article 1, Answer the comprehension question, "What is the universal right that is described in this article?"</p>

E X P R E S S I V E  S K I L L S	W	<p>Complete a cloze that summarizes the main idea. List the keywords that help explain the main idea. Draw a non-linguistic representation of UDHR Article 1.</p>	<p>Complete a sentence starter that summarizes the main idea. Use the keyword bank to formulate your answer. Draw a non-linguistic representation of UDHR Article 1.</p>	<p>Summarize the main idea using the sentence starter "The main idea of Article 1 is..." and a word bank.</p> <p>Think of one example of how this right might be violated and describe it.</p>	<p>Write a summary of the main idea. Think of one example of how this right might be violated and describe it.</p>	<p>Write a summary of the main idea of Article 1. Think of 1-2 examples of how this right might be violated and describe it.</p>
	S	<p>In partnerships or a teacher-led think/pair/share, Students will practice oral summarization of Article 1, using the pre-taught sentence frame, "The main idea of UDHR Article _ is..." with the previously taught vocabulary.</p>	<p>In partnerships using think/pair/share, students will orally summarize UDHR Article 1, using the pre-identified sentence frame, "The main idea of UDHR Article _ is..." and a word bank of previously taught vocabulary.</p>	<p>In partnerships using think/pair/share, students will orally summarize UDHR Article 1, using the sentence frame, "The main idea of UDHR Article _ is..." and a glossary of vocabulary. Students will orally brainstorm ways this right may be violated, using the sentence frame "One way this right may be violated is..."</p>	<p>In partnerships using think/pair/share, Students will orally summarize UDHR Article 1, using the sentence frame, "The main idea of UDHR Article _ is..." Students will orally brainstorm ways this right may be violated.</p>	<p>In partnerships using think/pair/share, Students will orally summarize UDHR Article 1. Students will orally brainstorm ways this right may be violated.</p>

Intentionally aligned and developed standards-based instruction that incorporates high interest, grade appropriate text will promote student engagement, enhance content comprehension, and foster academic growth and achievement. The *Academic and Linguistic Demands of the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts in Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening* will help all teachers across the State create equitable and inclusive learning experiences for ELLs.

# **Optimal Approaches for Engaging Recently Arrived Students and Caregivers**

by Beverly Guity, Resource Specialist — Hudson Valley Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN)

Recently arrived students (sometimes described as “newcomers”) exhibit distinct emotional, social, and academic needs. Effectively integrating these students and their families into school communities requires unique support. As we embark on a new academic year, here are some things to consider for engaging recently arrived students and their families.

## **Classroom Strategies**

**Inclusive and Responsive Classroom Environment:** Cultivate an inclusive classroom atmosphere that celebrates the diversity of all students. Thoughtfully assess the visual elements within your classroom, including posters, flags, images, and representations of individuals. Reflect upon whether these elements authentically represent the backgrounds and experiences of your English Language Learners (ELLs). Ensure that every student feels their identity is acknowledged and respected.

**Relevant Curriculum:** Enrich the curriculum by seamlessly integrating narratives, readings, and viewpoints that revolve around themes such as history, immigration, and community into their teaching modules. This approach opens avenues to incorporate personal stories into the classroom, enabling students to appreciate that their lives are an intrinsic part of the United States' intricate history.

**Diverse Teaching Methods:** Employ a wide array of teaching techniques to engage all students. Strategies such as movement-based activities, call-and-response, clapping, stomping, chants, and cheers, among others, prove effective in rendering the curriculum more accessible and fostering enduring connections to the subject matter. Additionally, integrate tools such as graphic organizers, sentence stems, Visual Thinking Strategies, and journals to further facilitate comprehension.

**Cultural Awareness:** Invest time in acquainting yourself with your students' cultural norms and nuances. For example, recognize that expressions of respect may manifest differently across diverse cultural backgrounds. Approach students without presumptions about their behavior and actively seek information regarding the messages their actions may convey.

## **School Strategies:**

**Holistic Integration:** Recently arrived students frequently grapple with disruptions in their educational journey. It is imperative that schools implement comprehensive onboarding processes that assess students' academic, emotional, and social needs to facilitate a smoother transition into the new learning environment. Consistently engaging in meaningful communication with caregivers and students can provide valuable insight to enrich the social-emotional and wellness supports delivered for these students throughout the school year.

**Addressing Trauma:** Schools should understand that many recently arrived students may have endured trauma and provide supports to address these students' needs. Such supports could include:

- Providing educators with training in trauma-informed practices.
- Offering counseling and psychological services tailored to recently arrived students' unique experiences.
- Creating safe spaces where students can willingly share and process their experiences.

**Flexible Communication Channels:** As recently arrived students may face potential language and technological hurdles, schools should ensure that they provide a variety of communication avenues for these students and their families. This may include multilingual support, translated materials, and designated staff liaisons.

**Community Support Networks:** Collaborate with local community-based organizations and organizations dedicated to the needs of recently arrived families. This collaboration can provide supplementary layers of support and wraparound services.

**Family/Caregiver Engagement:** Recognize that the academic success of recently arrived students is closely intertwined with the well-being and integration of their families and caregivers:

- Conduct workshops for families on navigating the educational system.
- Provide resources outlining available community services.
- Foster opportunities for families to actively participate in school activities, ensuring they feel embraced and valued.

**Continuous Feedback Loop:** Regularly solicit feedback from recently arrived students and their families. This ongoing dialogue and partnership enables an understanding of these students’ evolving needs, allowing for the adjustment of strategies as necessary.

**Professional Learning:** Ensure that educators are equipped with the requisite tools and training to address the unique challenges confronting recently arrived students. This encompasses understanding migration-related stresses, implementing trauma-informed teaching practices, and employing strategies for facilitating English language development.

**Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE) Supports:** Be aware of the potential need some of these students may have for SIFE supports. OBEWL sponsors free resources to help schools identify and instruct their SIFE students including the [Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener](#) , a program of the City University of New York’s Research Institute for the Study of Language in Urban Society and [Bridges to Academic Success](#), a program of the CUNY Graduate Center. For more information on these resources please see the articles on pages 11 and 12 of this newsletter.

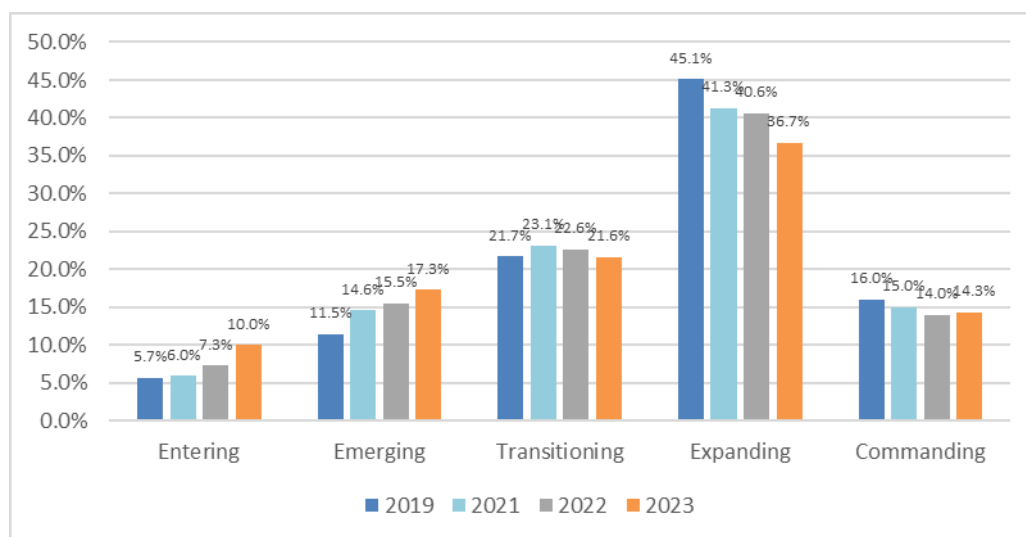
During the 2022-2023 academic year, each Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN) had the opportunity to collaborate in developing resources for educators supporting recently arrived students across New York State. One of these resources is titled "An Introduction to Education in the United States: Supporting Our Immigrant Students with Resources, Supports, and Guides." This collection of resources will serve as a central resource hub, offering educators, families, and communities a wealth of information to assist in supporting our newcomer students.

The primary objectives of this collection are twofold:

- provide valuable insights into the specific needs of our newcomer populations and;
- equip those directly serving this demographic with knowledge of the support mechanisms and resources accessible to their students and families.

The resource is in its final stages of review and will be shared in the coming months. For more information and support, please reach out to your local [Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network](#).

## Release of 2023 NYSESLAT Scores



The New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) is administered in grades K through 12 to all English Language Learners (ELLs). The purpose of the NYSESLAT is to annually assess the English language proficiency level of ELLs enrolled in Grades K–12 in New York State schools. The test gives the state, schools, parents, and teachers important information about the English language development of ELLs. A guide to this assessment can be found [here](#).

On the 2023 NYSESLAT the percentage of ELLs achieving proficiency (as defined by the Commanding level) has increased slightly from 14.0% in 2022 to 14.3% in 2023. At 36.7%, more students scored at the Expanding level last year than any other. The percentage of ELLs scoring at the Entering level also increased from 7.3% in 2022 to 10% in 2023. For more information on your districts NYSESLAT ELL performance please visit the NYSED data portal [here](#). Information on how districts/schools can access NYSESLAT results is available in the [NYSESLAT School Administrators’ Manual](#) (SAM).

## **Extending Professional Learning for NYS Language Teachers Internationally**

The Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL) continues work to extend professional learning opportunities for its bilingual and world language teachers. Working through international embassies and consulates, OBEWL has sought out cost-free opportunities offered by different countries for our teachers.

Working with Education Attaché at the Spanish Embassy, we were able to secure a spot for Dilenny Cisnero, a bilingual teacher from New York City, to attend Spain's prestigious "Training for Spanish Teachers Abroad" program. The program, sponsored by Spain's Ministry of Education and Vocation, provided for a one-week learning experience at the Campus de las Llamas in Santander, Spain. The program provided classes and cultural activities, along with lodging and meals, at no expense to the participant.

Ms. Cisnero describes the most valuable part of her experience as the ability to "share stories, strategies, content, lessons, and to engage with 25 teachers from around the world." Through this training, she has come to understand that "despite living in different continents, speaking different languages, and working in different school settings, teachers are facing similar challenges."

In addition to the summer "Training for Spanish Teachers Abroad" program, OBEWL has secured a number of slots for Spanish bilingual and world language teachers to receive grants that allow them to participate in a series of fall online sessions sponsored by the Ministry's Education Council.

OBEWL continues to look to resources from other countries to enhance the teaching of our bilingual and world language teachers. Most recently at the end of July, OBEWL Associate Commissioner Elisa Alvarez and representatives from the New York State Language Regional Education Resource Network (RBERN) met with the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland, and the director and representatives from Poland's Institute for the Development of the Polish Language. Discussions focused on expanding and supporting Polish dual language programs in New York State, including the provision of professional learning opportunities and the identification of available instructional resources.



## **New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers (NYSAFLT) Summer Institute 2023**

The 2023 NYSAFLT Summer Institute took place virtually from July 31<sup>st</sup> to August 3<sup>rd</sup>. This multi-day event, whose theme was "Sailing with East into the Revised Standards", welcomed teachers from across the state to attend up to 13 sessions designed around innovative teaching techniques and preparing teachers to implement the revised NYS Learning Standards for World Languages. More than 20 presenters from the regional, state, and national levels offered their expertise in this professional learning summit. Congratulations to conference chair, Alexis Thornton, and the whole NYSAFLT team for another successful Summer Institute. For more information on this organization and their other professional learning events, please visit their [website](#).





## **4+1 Pathway Assessment Added in Modern Greek**

In 1972, the New York State Department of Education approved the Checkpoint B Comprehensive Regents Examination in Modern Greek. The inclusion of the Modern Greek examination in the state's educational system was a landmark achievement as it was the first such assessment offered for a non-Romance language. This decision recognized the significance of the Greek language and its rich culture, encouraging students to explore and embrace Greek as part of their education.

Following the transition of world language summative assessments to locally developed exams in the 2009-10 school year, an alternative examination method was necessitated. The District Office of Education of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese stepped in to ensure that the Greek language continued to be represented within New York State's educational system, by obtaining permission to offer a Checkpoint B exam in Modern Greek, enabling students to showcase their proficiency in this language.

Over the past 50 years, the Greek Language Examination has not only served as an assessment tool but has also fostered a sense of pride and cultural identity within the Greek community. It has allowed students to connect with their heritage, maintain their linguistic skills, and further their understanding of Greek literature, history, and culture. As of the beginning of the 2023-24 school year, this exam is approved as a 4+1 Pathway Assessment, enabling students to use it as a Checkpoint B exam in partial fulfillment of the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation, and also to apply it to their diploma requirements equivalent to the fifth Regents Exam required to graduate with a Regents Diploma. For information on this exam, please visit the NYSED [Multiple Pathways website](#) or contact the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese's Associate Director of Greek Education, Ms. Athina Filippou at [afilippou@goarch.org](mailto:afilippou@goarch.org).



The District Office of Education's dedication to the Greek language examination is a testament to the enduring value and significance of language education. Through their efforts, they have ensured that Greek-speaking students have the opportunity to showcase their language proficiency and that the Greek language continues to be an integral part of New York's diverse educational tapestry.



## **Career Booster Europe – September 30, 2023**

Calling all students who speak or study German, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Czech, Romanian, Estonian, Greek, or any other language spoken in the EU or on the European continent! Career Booster Europe, an information and networking fair, will take place on Saturday, September 30th, 2023 from 10am to 5pm at Fordham University (Lincoln Center Campus) for all students interested in exploring how they can weave the languages they study into their education or future career. This event will provide ideas and hands-on examples of how to “boost” your future career, as well as give students the opportunity to meet and network with representatives of EU companies in the US, universities, funding institutions, consulates, study abroad organizations, vocational training schools and others. This free event is geared towards high school students, undergraduate- and graduate students, teachers, parents and anyone interested in a future with world languages. For more information, click [here](#).



## Leadership Summit with Rochester City School District

In a vibrant demonstration of unity and aspiration, district leaders, principals, and state representatives came together on the first day of the Leadership Summit for the Rochester City School District (RCSD) on Monday, August 14th, 2023. Just a few weeks ahead of the commencement of the 2023-24 school year, the first session, which was meticulously curated to set the tone for the year, was dedicated to addressing the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) and other multilingual learners (MLs) which include, but are not limited to, Former/Ever ELLs, heritage speakers of world languages, and dual language students. This insightful session was facilitated by the Rochester City School District's (RCSD) Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (BEWL), underscoring the district's commitment to providing inclusive and effective education for all students.



The BEWL office hosted an engaging session for school principals and other administrators, diving deep into the intricacies of Commissioner's Regulation (CR) Part-154. This regulation offers guidance for English Language Learners to ensure that school districts provide equal treatment for all students, including new enrollees who have full access to all school programs and services.

The room buzzed with energy, amplified by the participation of teams from the NYSED Office of Bilingual Education and World Language (OBEWL) and three of New York's Regional Bilingual Education Resource Networks (RBERNs) – West, Mid-West, and Mid-State. The commitment to supporting ELLs' and MLs' receipt of equitable instruction and services that was displayed by these representatives of regional and statewide offices significantly enriched the first day's session.

receipt of equitable instruction and services that was displayed by these representatives of regional and statewide offices significantly enriched the first day's session.

The heart of the session's triumph lay in four captivating scenarios, each revolving around the regulations for ELLs. Principal teams charged into these challenges with fervor, igniting vibrant discussions that drew upon pivotal documents such as the Blueprint [for English Language Learner/Multilingual Learner Success](#), the [Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education \(CRSE\) Framework](#), the [School Administrator's Manual \(SAM\)](#) for the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), and an array of district resources, including in-house translation and interpreting services.

However, the information shared at this event extended beyond regulations; it encompassed a collective endeavor to nurture an environment where each student's potential could flourish. The scenarios served as a launchpad for collaborative and constructive dialogues, emphasizing an unwavering dedication to delivering a responsive and inclusive education.



This session symbolized an ongoing partnership between OBEWL and RCSD, fueled by a shared ambition for educational excellence among our ELLs and MLs. It marked a significant stride toward creating an environment where students are nurtured, guided, and empowered to unlock their full potential.

As we reflect on the Leadership Summit, gratitude wells up for the unwavering dedication displayed by all participants. The first day was not just a gathering; it was a celebration of a collective vision, boundless potential, and an unyielding commitment to sculpting a brighter future through education and collaboration.

As we press forward on our journey, it's crucial to remember that every collaborative effort, each exchange of ideas, and every spark of inspiration plays a pivotal role in reshaping our educational landscape. The RCSD Leadership Summit stands as a resounding testament to the remarkable achievements possible through unity, reaffirming our unwavering faith in education's transformative power to mold a brighter future.

## **Overview of Bridges to Academic Success Programs**

Bridges to Academic Success (Bridges), a project of the Research Foundation of CUNY and the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center, designs and implements innovative curriculum and professional development for teachers, school leaders, and district leaders that is targeted to ensure equitable learning access for recently arrived English Language Learners (ELLs) who face a high risk of dropout. It is funded by the New York State Education Department Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages (OBEWL). Bridges provides NYS schools with free resources designed to support the instruction and language development of Students with Inconsistent/Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) as they progress towards grade level.

### **English Language Arts (ELA)/English as a New Language (ENL) Program for SIFE**

Bridges has designed two courses that work together to help SIFE develop language, foundational literacy, and academic content and to reinforce their specific strengths, such as often multilingual and motivated to learn; and having acquired much life experience and pragmatic knowledge. (1) Integrated ENL/ELA is a language-arts-based curriculum of rich thematic units, where students read stretch texts with support. (2) Stand-alone ENL is a centers-based class designed to target the language and literacy levels of each student, using a developmental framework and leveled texts. More information about this program is available [here](#).

### **Spanish Home Language Arts (HLA) Program for SIFE and Newcomers**

The Spanish HLA supports are targeted to the needs of newcomer multilingual learners at 6th grade Spanish or below. These resources are aligned to the Integrated ENL/ELA curriculum in order to promote biliteracy and bilingualism for Spanish-speaking SIFE and Entering/ Emerging newcomers. The program also includes a similar theme on identity as the Integrated ENL/ELA curriculum and draws upon similar instructional protocols to build academic routines and thinking across subject areas. More information about this program is available [here](#).

### **Math Programs for SIFE and Newcomers**

The Bridges Math supports are built on a centers-based model in order to provide differentiated math and language instruction for SIFE and newcomer multilingual learners. These resources enact the Next Generation Mathematics Learning Standards shifts and call upon students to actively construct knowledge in mathematics by providing students with rich mathematical tasks and investigations that require them to describe, explore, solve, represent, and justify their thinking in preparation for a transition into the mainstream Algebra I program. More information about this program is available [here](#).

### **Online Survey Course for Co-Teaching Teams**

Our survey course, Developing Responsive Classroom Communities for SIFE & Newcomer Learners trains school teams of English as a New Language (ENL), content-area teachers and administrators on instructional and social-emotional learning strategies that can be applied to a variety of classroom environments.

The goal of the course is to promote ELL learning equity at the school and district level by providing best practices, concrete tools, and a model for a professional learning community. This has proved vital as many schools have experienced historic growth in enrollment of ELLs in recent years, but are unprepared to serve their social-emotional and language development needs with mainstream curricula. Download the course flyer [here](#).

For more information please visit the [Bridges to Academic Success web site](#) or email [info@bridges-sifeproject.com](mailto:info@bridges-sifeproject.com). Sign up for an orientation [here](#).



*Accelerating language, academic, and social-emotional learning for newcomer multilingual students.*

# Home Language Assessments for Intake of Students with Interrupted/Inconsistent Formal Education (SIFE) and Designing Responsive Instruction

by Dr. Jennifer Chard, Project Director of the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener

We know you want to provide responsive instruction for newcomer students. But if a student speaks little to no English, doesn't come with transcripts from previous schools, and/or reports inconsistencies or interruptions in education, how do you know what academic skills and abilities they bring to the classroom? That is the question that the Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener (MLS) seeks to answer. The MLS is a home language assessment tool free to all schools and districts in New York State. Over 17,000 students at more than 900 schools across New York State have used the MLS since 2016.

## Key Characteristics of the MLS

- Includes reading comprehension and math assessments in 18 languages. The MLS should be administered in the language students learned to read and have seen textbooks.
- The MLS is a computerized assessment that can be used on desktop or laptop computers, and tablets.
- Students experience everything in the target language of the assessment. Audio instructions explain the purpose of the assessment and provide instructions in the target language.
- All assessments are designed to be culturally and linguistically responsive to the original home regions of our SIFE.
- Reading comprehension texts and multiple-choice questions are developed based on home country curricula, norms, and standards.
- Math questions are aligned to the New York State Next Generation Learning Standards.
- The assessment is semi-adaptive, so students see questions targeted to their level.
- A student performance report is automatically generated upon completion of each assessment. Reports describe students' home language skills and abilities.



## Learn More!

Sign up for one of our web trainings at [mls.slalab.org](https://mls.slalab.org).



We'll cover:

- Using the MLS as part of SIFE identification
- Understanding the tests
  - How to sign up
  - How to use the MLS
- Student Performance Reports

MLS Languages	
Reading Comprehension and Math	
Arabic	Maay-Maay
Bangla / Bengali	Nepali
Burmese	Pashto
Chinese (Simplified; Mandarin)	Russian
<span>Aug. 2023</span> Dari	S'gaw Karen
English	Somali
French	Spanish (Latin America)
Fula / Fulani	Ki-Swahili / Swahili
Kreyòl / Haitian Creole	Urdu

## New Features of the MLS

In response to feedback from schools and districts, the MLS team is always improving the screener's tools! Over the last 5 years key updates have been made to the to the MLS' website and assessments.

In 2022 the team released updated reading comprehension and math assessments in Spanish including features such as:

- Expanded content in the reading comprehension assessment (now covering Grades K-9 in reading comprehension and Grades 1-9 in math).
- More detailed Student Performance Reports aligned to NGLS standard by grade level.
- Improved algorithm to decrease test-taking time These features are now available in Arabic, English, Spanish, and, as of August 2023, in Dari and Pashto.

If you're new to the MLS or haven't used it in a while, please consider joining the program's new user training. The program offers sessions monthly. [Sign up here!](#) Contact the MLS team any time at [mls.email.server@gmail.com](mailto:mls.email.server@gmail.com).

## **News from Other NYSED Offices**

The New York State Library announces its upcoming programming for September, including various webinars relating to National and State history. The following upcoming free programming requires registration. <https://www.nysed.gov/news/2023/new-york-state-library-announces-september-public-programs>

New York Attorney General Letitia James and New York State Education Department (NYSED) Commissioner Betty A. Rosa released “[Know Your Rights](#)” guidance. The guidance details schools’ responsibilities in accepting new students and warns against the implementation of policies or requirements that would prevent noncitizens, undocumented students, and families without a lease from registering for school.

Applications are now available for schools and programs interested in participating as a PLAN Pilot School. Visit [Applying to Become a PLAN Pilot School webpage](#) for information and guidance, including the application timeline. The PLAN Program is studying how best to support networks of schools and educators in shifting their instructional practices and improving school culture in a way that better prepares and supports ALL students for college, career, and civic readiness. The application deadline is December 8, 2023.

Learn about the New York State Board of Regents [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy statement, framework, and call to action](#).

The 2023-2024 application cycle for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching is now open. Nominate an exceptional [#STEM](#) teacher in grades K-6 today! The nomination form is found [here](#). Nominations close on January 8, 2024.

### **Join the Conversation!**

If your school or community would like to share a story to include in a future edition of this newsletter, please email photos and news items to [OBEWL@nysed.gov](mailto:OBEWL@nysed.gov).



## 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

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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 Home Page](#)

[Bilingual Education website](#)

[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.

