

Language and Culture Newsletter

a sporadic gathering of tips and information about working with English Language Learners

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Athol-Royalston ELL

Contact:
Beth Gospodarek

office :
Riverbend Library

phone: 978-249-2430
leave a message

e-mail:
bgospodarek@arrsd.org

ELL dates to remember:

November 4 and 10
QMA training
Room 114 AHS
perks: 12 pdps
the state requires this
“category 3” training of all
teachers who work with
ELLs.

Want student led multi-cultural presentations?

ARMS students have made power point presentations about their home cultures: Mexico, China, Puerto Rico and Uruguay. These students may be available to show their slide shows and serve as experts in your classes, particularly at the elementary level. Just ask.

What is this newsletter?

This newsletter is a revival of a newsletter written for teachers, staff and administrators by my predecessor, Lea Monte. It will recycle some of her excellent materials as well as discuss current research, policies, strategies and issues involved in teaching and learning English language learners. If readers have specific questions appropriate to a newsletter forum, please contact me so they may be addressed in future newsletters. The hope is that this newsletter will serve as a resource as well as foster understanding of the difficulties our ELL students may face socially, culturally and academically.

Who Are the English Language Learners in this District?

Currently, there are 24 ELLs, aged 3 - 18 in the district. They attend every school except RCS. First languages spoken include Spanish, Chinese, Kiswahili, Vietnamese, Polish, French, and Portuguese. Right now, there are no beginners, and most students are at the transitioning level, which means they have mastered social English. but still have difficulty with academic language. (Of course, distribution and leveling can change overnight as families move in and out of our region.)

What Are All These Acronyms?

There are many terms used to talk about students who speak a native language(s) other than English and their instruction.

Here are a few of the most commonly encountered:

(ELL) English Language Learners - this term is most common in the field of language acquisition that honors the reality that students may come into schools speaking one or more languages and are now learning English.

(LEP) Limited English Proficient - this term is used by No Child Left Behind and also in many Massachusetts Department of

Education documents to describe English Language Learners.

(ESL) English as Second Language - this term is often used to describe courses or programs that teach English Language Learners.

(SEI) Sheltered English Instruction: the teaching of English Language Learners in such a way that both content areas and language acquisition are addressed (the use of scaffolding, visuals, explicit vocabulary instruction, and modifying curriculum are examples of SEI techniques.)