

- The first week of May was Teacher Appreciation week and the Department celebrated in a number of ways, including posting a special video message to teachers.

School Nurse Day

- May 11 was National School Nurse Day, and the Department marked the occasion in a number of ways to acknowledge, celebrate, and honor the invaluable care provided by Maine's school nurses.
- News Center hosted a special conversation with school nurses to discuss their work on the frontlines during the pandemic. The DOE's own Emily Poland was part of that panel conversation.

Ch 115

- Last week, the State Board of Education voted in favor of final adoption of Rule Chapter 115: The Credentialing of Education Personnel.
- Today begins a three-part webinar series to help the field learn more about the new rule.
- Thank you to the certification team who is underway with the adjustments to our systems that will be needed to make this more flexible approach to certification operational.

130th short session Ended

- Thank you Megan Welter, Danielle McKay, Jaci Holmes and Chelsey Fortin-Trimble, and to all DOE staff who helped with the report backs, the inquiries, the testimony and the joy that is legislative session.
- The emergency preamble of short session bills was not stripped off of any of our major substantive rules and the education and cultural affairs committee will be coming back in a couple of weeks for a day of report outs and other business, so there will not be much of an "off season" but more like playoffs.

Adult Education Team Hosts Showcase of First 'Teaching the Skills That Matter' Training Program

- The Adult Education team recently brought together 23 educators from adult education programs across Maine at the UMA-Lewiston campus to celebrate their capstone presentations for Teaching Skills that Matter in Adult Education. The event was the culmination of a 7-month training provided by Maine DOE's Adult Education Team.

Political Season

- As anticipated, the attacks on our educators and our department are underway in the political disparaging of our education system nationally.
- I wanted you to be aware that an ad campaign was released today, attacking our MOOSE platform.

- MOOSE was developed as a resource, and is not required in any way, for and by teachers during the emergency that was the pandemic.
- It was designed by a team of Maine teachers and overseen by members of DOE's early childhood and innovation teams.
- The ad focuses on a module from the first year about the freedom holidays in summer, including Pride Month.
- The video in question includes one inartful sentence in which the teacher is explaining what LGBT stands for. The ad is focusing on this one sentence of one lesson inside one unit of more than 400 learning modules.
- 2020-2021 MOOSE content was already under review for updates or removal, given the growing library of modules on the platform. We have temporarily taken down the lesson in question and are determining if it should be updated or removed.
- We will continue to be an organization that welcomes and acknowledges our LGBTQ community members, and we will continue to support schools in ensuring that all staff, students and family members are welcome and safe, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.
- If anyone reaches out to you on this, please direct them to Marcus.
- PLACING ALL OF THIS IN A BROADER CONTEXT – we have to stand firm against hate. 2 years ago we were all shocked to witness the murder of George Floyd, this weekend 10 people were murdered in Buffalo because of their race. Our work in education is more important than ever to end this cycle of violence and hate.

Strategic Planning

- Margaret Brownlee will be sharing her draft plan for leading the DEI work of our DOE team, and we will be engaging in ongoing conversations and inviting everyone who wishes to provide input into our DEI specific goals.
- Commissioner Makin is also reaching out to connect with various team members have expressed an interest in sharing their thoughts.
- The overall strategic priorities of the department will be reviewed and revised in the coming months with input from the DOE team and external stakeholders. More to come!

Kelli Deseaux (she/her)

Associate Commissioner of Public Education

207-624-6747