

## **Celebrating Diversity Throughout the Year Elementary Classroom Community**

“Books can make a difference in dispelling prejudice and building community: not with role models and recipes, not with noble messages, but with stories that make us imagine the lives of others.” ~Hazel Rochman, *Against Borders: Promoting Books for a Multicultural World*

**About Equity & Diversity within the Classroom Community:** We believe that the inclusion of multiple voices is multi-pronged. As we revise Shared Literacy, we seek to include titles within each unit that represent the myriad of voices that make up our global society. In addition, we believe that we can also celebrate diversity through the nationally designated months to shine a spotlight on the contributions that have often been left out.

As an educational institution, we value curiosity around cultures, celebrations, and traditions that make up the complexity of our global society. As a public education institution, we are mindful that we want learners to be well-rounded and aware of the complexity of our global society. Because of this, the equity team has designed the following principles to guide decision-making around activities within the learning environment and school community. We are also mindful that the celebration of any one tradition should not outweigh the traditions and celebrations of others. We want every person in the organization to feel welcomed, seen, and safe at school. All belong here; when we embrace the diversity of our community, we add to the collective experience, thus creating joyful learning opportunities for all.

In District 129, we are guided by the following principles when deciding on activities:

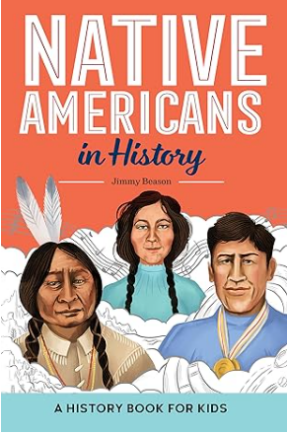
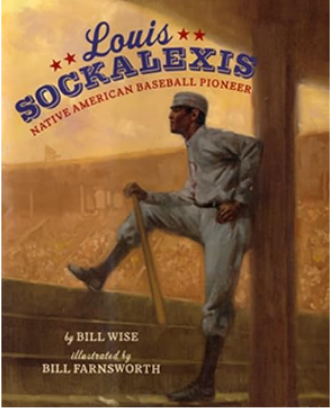
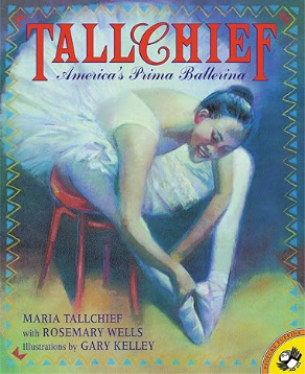
- We believe that all learners have the right to and deserve to be included, accepted, and to contribute unique perspectives and experiences.
- We value the creation of a school community where each individual is accepted and embraced for who and what they bring to the learning space.
- We believe that a sense of belonging involves the acceptance, care for the needs, and growth of all learners.
- We believe that every individual is shaped and influenced by multiple factors that add to an educational community's rich tapestry.

“Let's invite one another in. Maybe then we can begin to fear less, to make fewer wrong assumptions, to let go of the biases and stereotypes that unnecessarily divide us.”

~Michelle Obama, *Becoming*

"In diversity there is beauty and there is strength." ~Maya Angelou

## Native American Heritage Month - November

<p><a href="#"><u>Native Americans in History</u></a> By Jimmy Beason 978-1648762888</p> 	<p>From every background and tribal nation, native people are a vital part of history. This collection of Native American stories for kids explores 15 Native Americans and some of the incredible things they achieved. Kids will explore the ways each of these people used their talents and beliefs to stand up for what's right and stay true to themselves and their community.</p> <p>Becoming a leader—Learn how Sitting Bull led with spiritual guidance and a strong will, and how Tecumseh inspired warriors to protect their communities from white American hostility.</p> <p>Staying strong—Discover athletes like Maria Tallchief, who broke barriers in ballet, and Jim Thorpe, who showed the world that a native man could win Olympic gold.</p> <p>Fighting for change—Find out how Deb Haaland and Suzan Harjo use their activism to raise awareness about Native American issues today.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Louis Sockalexis</u></a> By Bill Wise 978-1600604287</p> 	<p>On a Maine summer day in 1884, twelve-year-old Penobscot Indian Louis Sockalexis, first fell in love with baseball. As he grew up, Louis honed his skills and dreamed of one day joining a major league team. Louis encountered opposition at every turn—from the jeers of teammates and the taunts of spectators who thought he had no place in a "white man's sport" to the disapproval of his father, who wanted Louis to focus on tribal life. Louis finally made it to the major league Cleveland Spiders, but racism followed him, until one momentous day in June 1897 at New York's Polo Grounds. Facing off against the most feared pitcher in baseball, Louis proved he belonged in the sport. Here is the inspiring story of a boy who dared make his dream a reality. With determination, courage, and quiet dignity, Louis Sockalexis smashed racial barriers and home runs, leaving an indelible mark on America's favorite sport.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Tallchief</u></a> By Maria Tallchief 978-0142300183</p> 	<p>Growing up on the Osage Indian reservation, Maria Tallchief was a gifted pianist and dancer. According to Osage tradition, women are not permitted to dance, but Maria's parents recognized her gifts and allowed her to break the rule. Then when Maria reached the age of twelve, her father told her it was time to choose between her two loves. Maria chose ballet. It was a decision that would change not only the course of her life, but the face of classical ballet in America. The fascinating story of Maria Tallchief's rise to become America's prima ballerina will captivate young readers.</p>
<p><a href="#"><u>Wilma's Way Home</u></a> By Doreen Rappaport 978-1484747186</p>	<p>As a child in Oklahoma, Wilma Mankiller experienced the Cherokee practice of Gadugi, helping each other, even when times were hard for everyone. But in 1956, the federal government uprooted her family and moved them to California, wrenching them from</p>



their home, friends, and traditions. Separated from her community and everything she knew, Wilma felt utterly lost until she found refuge in the Indian Center in San Francisco. There, she worked to build and develop the local Native community and championed Native political activists. She took her two children to visit tribal communities in the state, and as she introduced them to the traditions of their heritage, she felt a longing for home.

Returning to Oklahoma with her daughters, Wilma took part in Cherokee government. Despite many obstacles, from resistance to female leadership to a life-threatening accident, Wilma's courageous dedication to serving her people led to her election as the first female chief of the Cherokee Nation. As leader and advocate, she reinvigorated her constituency by empowering them to identify and solve community problems.

This beautiful addition to the Big Words series will inspire future leaders to persevere in empathy and thoughtful problem-solving, reaching beyond themselves to help those around them. Moving prose by award-winning author Doreen Rappaport is interwoven with Wilma's own words in this expertly researched biography, illustrated with warmth and vivacity by Linda Kukuk.