

# Professional Learning Meeting Agenda – 10/20

- MEVA Mission and Vision Review.
- Panorama School Climate Survey Action Plan and Progress.
- Win over the student initiative.
- State Testing Update – Stephanie Emery.
- FAFSA and Early College Updates – Heather Tyler.
- Maine Through Year Blueprints – Dr. Christina O’Grady.
- Curriculum Mapping – Dr. Christina O’Grady.
- Book Study – Dr. Christina O’Grady.
- Other and next Professional Learning (PL) Meeting on Monday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 pm. (3:00 pm, November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> are faculty work times for catch up, curriculum mapping, grading, etc.)

# MEVA Mission and Vision

## School Mission:

Maine Virtual Academy's (MEVA) mission is to develop **each** student's full potential with learner-centered instruction, research-based curriculum and educational tools and resources to provide a high-quality learning experience for grade 7-12 students who are in need of **alternative educational options**. MEVA will develop an **Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)** with specific learning goals to meet each student's needs. MEVA's **rigorous** curriculum is **aligned** to the eight Maine content areas, the **Maine Learning Results, the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards**.

## School Vision:

MEVA will be a leading 21st century public charter school in Maine and will improve student learning outcomes through **individualized instruction**, as evidenced by **student academic proficiency, student academic growth, post-secondary readiness, and the demonstration of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-direction**. MEVA will empower students to acquire the academic and life skills needed to succeed in **post-secondary education and career opportunities**. Our graduates will be **prepared** for college or other postsecondary career training opportunities.

# SY-2025/2026 Panorama Survey Action Plan

- Target Rigorous Expectations (Students): Overall, how high are teachers' expectations of you?
- **Action Plan (Students): Have a healthy competition in class.** From Panorama Playbook "Creating a competition around issues such as homework completion, note-taking, or talking during class is an effective way to motivate students to change behavior for the better. This move works to establish routines and increase engagement in what might otherwise be less-exciting activities."
- Target School Climate (Teachers): On most days how enthusiastic are students about being at school?
- **Action Plan (Teachers): Increase training on how to encourage student engagement in the virtual setting.**
- Target Feedback and Coaching (Teachers): How often do you receive feedback on your teaching? How much feedback do you receive on your teaching? How much do you learn from the teacher evaluation processes at your school?
- **Action Plan (Teachers): Increase teacher/peer observations and feedback through peer observations and presentations at department meetings.**
- Target Professional Learning (Teachers): Through working at your school, how many new strategies for your job have you learned?
- **Action Plan (Teachers): Increase targeted professional learning/training at weekly Professional Learning (PL) Meetings (formerly Process Improvement Meetings).**

# Win Over the Student!

*Thoughtful and consistent communication is the foundation on building successful rapport with our families and students.*

Immediate intervention has been recognized as the most effective method in student retention. Every role within the school plays an important part in this effort.

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Without our Students there would be no MEVA!

# Win Over & Rapport

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- **Win Over**: is a proactive approach/mindset. Win “back” is more reactive and is also needed in some cases, like in progress withdrawals as an example.
- **Rapport Definition**:
  - The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines Rapport as; *a friendly, harmonious relationship especially: a relationship characterized by agreement, mutual understanding, or empathy that makes communication possible or easy.*
- **Google Dictionary - Examples of Further Meaning**;
  - 1. Rapport is a good sense of understanding and trust.
  - 2. A close and harmonious relationship in which the people or groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas and communicate well. Example, *"she was able to establish a good rapport with the children"*

# Communication

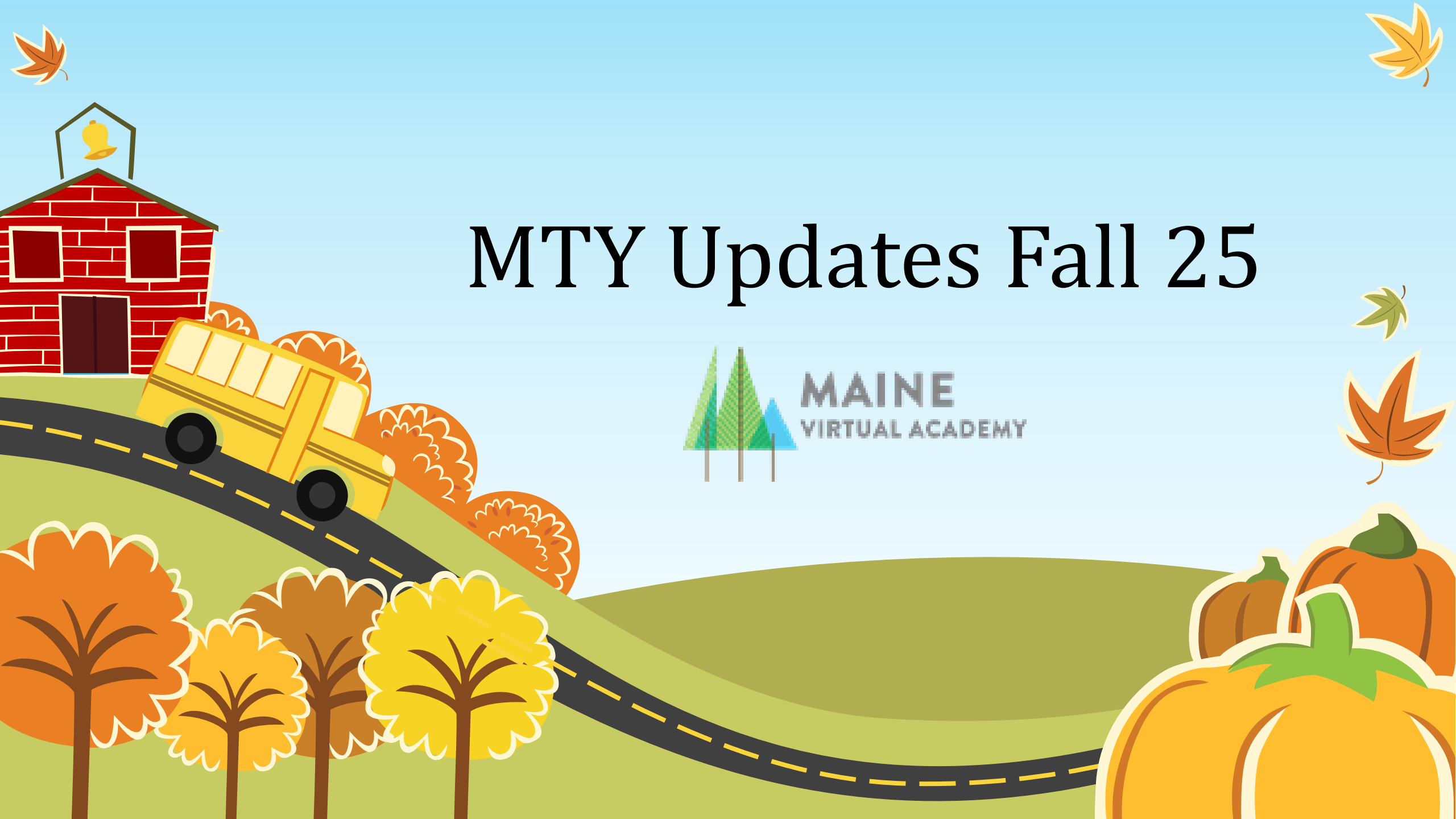
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- In ALL Cases;
  - Communication should always exhibit compassion, empathy and kindness.
  - Be an effective communicator, timely and responsive.
  - Exhibit a willingness to help and serve our families well.
  - Never forget to share the vast opportunities we have at MEVA to support our students!

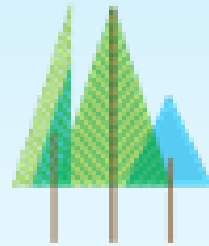
# Withdrawal Mitigation Process

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- **Ask why?** - Use phrases like, “*Before* you withdraw, tell me about your reason. There may be something we can do for you.”
- **Listen for keywords;** lack of support, socialization, motivation challenges, tech or navigation challenges and so forth.
- **As you listen, empathize** - Understand their position and their feelings. Many times, families or students have been thinking about withdrawal for a while.
- **Advocate for MEVA’s programs** - Share information on our clubs, self-paced options, and student support opportunities. See if they are willing to have a team meeting to talk over work credit options, early college opportunities, and so much more. Some students may qualify for early graduation.
- **Document, document, document** - your mitigation efforts in contact logs within Infinite Campus, then *submit a “Rapid Response” form below*. Familiarize yourself with the form selections to be aware of the kinds of barriers that lead to withdrawals.
- **Link to the form:** [24-25 Rapid Response \(Intervention\) Form](#)



# MTY Updates Fall 25



MAINE  
VIRTUAL ACADEMY

# MTY Participation as of 10/20/25

| MTY OVERALL         | 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade | Grand Total |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Completed           | 19                    | 62                    | 82                     | 163         |
| OPT OUT             | 1                     | 3                     | 5                      | 9           |
| Travel - Completed  | 3                     | 3                     | 17                     | 23          |
| Travel - Not Tested | 1                     |                       | 2                      | 3           |
| Grand Total         | 24                    | 68                    | 106                    | 198         |

|                       |        |        |        |         |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Tested/Needed to Test | 22/24  | 65/68  | 99/106 | 186/198 |
| Participation %       | 91.66% | 95.58% | 93.39% | 93.93%  |

*We need the last 3 students to test to achieve 95.45% participation*



# Fall 25-26 Travel Team



- *Travel Team will wrap up testing for 26 Students in total, with only 3 left to do this week!*
  - *Projection - Of the 189 students who will participate in testing, 14% needed our travel team accommodation.*





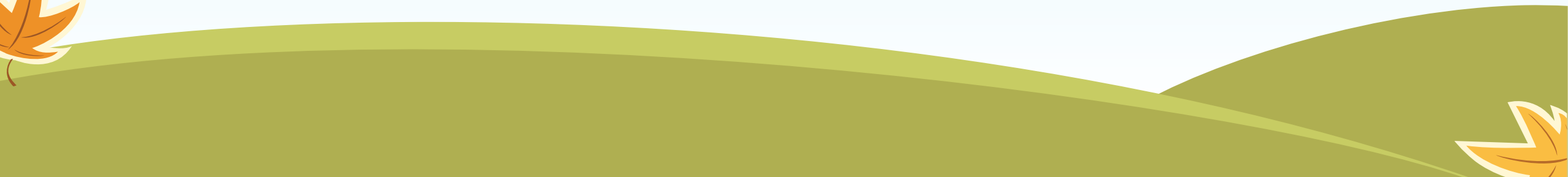
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## Fall 24-25 SY Comparison

- *Travel Team tested 26 Students in Total.*
- *Of the 177 students who participated in testing, 15% needed our travel team accommodation.*

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## Fall 23-24 SY Comparison

- *Travel Team tested 30 Students in Total.*
  - *Out of 169 participants, Approximately 18% needed travel team support.*
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# We Need Your Feedback!

If you haven't done so already, please complete the  
[Proctor Survey](#)

*(ANY staff member can complete this form if you have helped in some way.)*

This information helps Coordinators greatly.





# Proctors/Support Proctors/Travel Team, Office Team, & Coordinator Team!

Virtual schools are harshly scrutinized and pressured the hardest in the Charter & DOE world. It is because of YOU that we are demonstrating consistent growth and perseverance.

We are continuing to see a positive shift in various perspectives and mindsets out there!

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**THANK YOU ALL** for your willingness, your time, and your collaboration.

Your dedication to MEVA and the Students, rings loud and clear!

Again, it is because of **YOU**, that MEVA can succeed in meeting State testing expectations year over year!

***Cheers to another successful assessment season!***



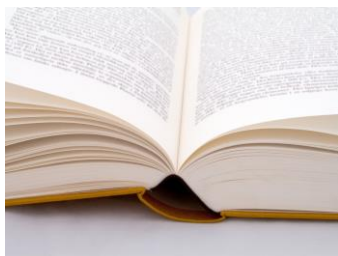
# Guidance Update 10/20/25



## FAFSA Update!



- 31 students in the class of '25 completed the FAFSA.
- We are aiming higher this year!
- The application opened early this year!
- We strongly recommend all seniors and early grads complete the FAFSA even if they are not thinking about attending college. This will open doors in the event they decide they want to apply to college.
- What are we doing to increase this # for the class of '26?
  - Communications- newsletter, emails, Brightspace.
  - FAME (Finance Authority of Maine) presentation for Senior Advisory 10/6.
  - FAME resources for families including Help Sessions.



## Early College Update!



- **Over 30 students are taking early college classes!**
- **Some classes are: English, Psychology, College Algebra, Criminal Justice, Statistics, Sociology, American Military History, Music Appreciation, Creative Writing, Nutrition, and Medical Terminology.**
- **There are over 100 different subjects students can choose from, with multiple classes being offered in each subject.**



# Curriculum Fidelity & Review Process

## *Why Curriculum Review Matters*

- Ensures curriculum maps are being followed with fidelity
- Aligns instruction to state standards and MEVA learning goals
- Promotes consistency and equity across courses
- Provides structured feedback and coaching opportunities

*Our goal: every student experiences a coherent, high-quality curriculum in every class.*

## *When Reviews Happen*

- **Weeks 1-2:** Baseline setup audit
- **Weeks 3-4:** Unit 1 fidelity check
- **Weeks 9:** Midterm summary
- **Weeks 10-15:** Observation/LMS Review
- **Weeks 16-17:** End-of-semester close-out & teacher reflection



*Consistent, predictable structure supports proactive coaching.*

## *Collaborative, Not Evaluative*

- Focus on *growth and consistency*, not compliance
- Feedback shared within one week of review
- Coaching and planning sessions available as needed
- Follow-up checks scheduled within 4-6 weeks

*Goal: continuous improvement, not “gotcha” evaluation.*

## *What Happens Next*

We are about mid-way through semester 1 and will be jumping in at:

- Mid-semester: Fidelity checks & feedback meetings (if needed)
- End of semester: Teacher reflection & Summary report

# Beyond Respect

*Dignity is not something we earn – it is our birthright as human beings*

## Session Overview

This session explores the critical distinction between respect and dignity, and how recognizing inherent human worth transforms educational practice.

### What You'll Learn:

- Distinguish between respect (earned) and dignity (inherent)
- Identify dignity distortions in educational systems
- Understand the dignity-belonging connection
- Apply dignity-affirming practices in daily work
- Measure progress toward dignity-centered environments

**Content Notice:** This session addresses systemic inequities and discriminatory practices in education. The content may challenge existing beliefs and practices. Please engage at your own pace and take breaks as needed.

# Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Define and distinguish</b> between respect (conditional, earned) and dignity (unconditional, inherent) with specific examples |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Identify dignity distortions</b> - normalized practices that diminish human worth - in your educational context               |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Explain the progressive relationship</b> between dignity recognition, safety, belonging, and achievement                      |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Analyze current practices</b> using the dignity-affirming vs. dignity-denying framework                                       |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Apply measurement indicators</b> to assess progress toward dignity-centered culture   |

# Reflection: Your Prior Learning

## Share Your Experience

What did you learn by collecting stories from your students about belonging and exclusion?

### Reflection Prompts (choose what resonates):

- What patterns emerged in the stories you collected?
- What surprised you most about student experiences?
- How did student perceptions differ from your own?
- What specific cultural elements contributed to belonging or exclusion?

### Sharing Options:

- Small group discussion (3-4 people)
- Partner conversation
- Written reflection in journal
- Visual map of themes
- Silent reflection with notes

*If you didn't complete the prior assignment, reflect on a time you witnessed or experienced belonging vs. exclusion.*

# Key Terms

## **Respect**

A feeling of admiration for someone based on their actions, achievements, or qualities. Respect is earned through behavior and can be gained or lost over time. It varies by context and culture.

## **Dignity**

The inherent worth and value of every human being, regardless of actions, status, or characteristics. Dignity cannot be earned or lost - it is permanent and universal. It exists simply because someone is human.

## **Dignity Distortions**

Normalized practices, policies, and attitudes in systems that diminish or deny the inherent dignity of individuals or groups. These distortions become “just the way things are” and go unquestioned.

## **Dignity-Affirming Practices**

Intentional actions, policies, and interactions that recognize, honor, and protect each person’s inherent human worth in daily practice.

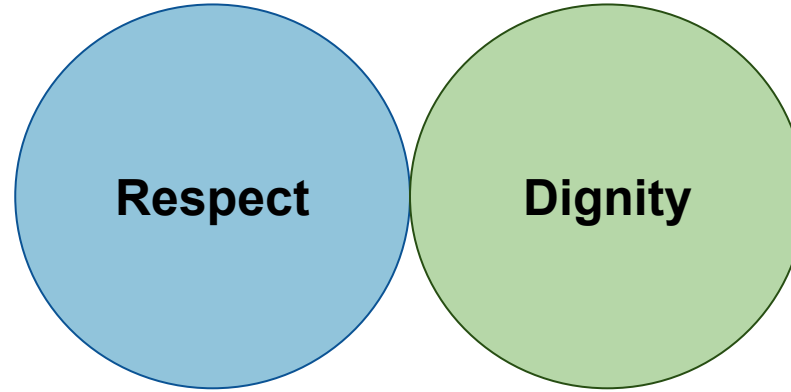
# Respect vs. Dignity: A Critical Distinction

**Core Principle:** Unlike respect, which must be earned, dignity is inherent to every human being.

| Respect   | Dignity   |
|---|---|
|   |   |
| Can be gained or lost<br>Example: Losing respect through harmful actions  | Unconditional and permanent<br>Example: Even those who harm others retain dignity |
|   |   |
| Varies by context<br>Example: Different cultures show respect differently | Universal and constant<br>Example: Human rights are based on universal dignity    |

**Educational Example:** A student who disrupts class may lose respect from peers and teachers based on their behavior. However, that student never loses their dignity - their inherent worth as a human being remains intact. Dignity-centered discipline addresses behavior while honoring the person.

# Understanding the Relationship



Earned · Conditional

Inherent · Unconditional

## When We Focus Only on Respect

- Student must “earn” humane treatment
- Behavior determines worth
- Punishment aims to shame
- Some students never measure up
- Creates hierarchies of value

## When We Lead with Dignity

- All students receive humane treatment
- Worth is unconditional
- Discipline teaches and restores
- Every student has full value
- Creates equity in practice

## Quick Check: Your Perspective

In my current educational setting, dignity (not just respect) is consistently honored for all students, families, and staff.

**Agree**

**Disagree**

**Unsure**

### Why This Matters:

Being honest about current reality is the first step toward change. There's no judgement in your response - this is about building awareness of where we are so we can move toward where we want to be.

*Your response is for personal reflection. The goal is to notice patterns, not to judge yourself or others.*

# Dignity Distortions in Education

## Dignity Distortions

Normalized practices, policies, and attitudes in systems that diminish or deny the inherent dignity of individuals or groups. These distortions become “just the way things are” and go unquestioned.

## Common Examples in Schools:

### Deficit Thinking

**What it is:** Viewing students and families through a lens of what they lack rather than what they bring.

**Looks like:** “These students don’t have support at home” instead of “These students navigate multiple responsibilities and demonstrate resilience.”

### Cultural Dismissal

**What it is:** Devaluing home languages, traditions, cultural practices, and lived experiences that differ from dominant norms.

**Looks like:** Discouraging students from speaking their home language, not incorporating diverse cultural perspectives in curriculum, or treating cultural practices as less legitimate.

### Punitive Discipline

**What it is:** Discipline systems designed to shame, exclude, or punish rather than teach, repair, and restore relationships.

**Looks like:** Zero-tolerance policies, public shaming, suspension as first response, or discipline that removes students from learning without addressing root causes.

## Dignity Distortions (continued)

### Tracking Systems

**What it is:** Rigid ability grouping that limits opportunities based on perceived potential, often reinforcing existing inequities.

**Looks like:** Permanent “low” and “high” groups with different curriculum, teacher quality, or expectations. Students rarely move between tracks regardless of growth.

### Microaggressions

**What it is:** Brief, common, daily indignities that communicate hostility, derogatory, or negative messages about someone’s identity. Individual incidents seem small but accumulate into significant harm.

**Looks like:** Assuming a student of color is in the wrong class, touching Black students’ hair without permission, mispronouncing names repeatedly without effort to learn, or expressing surprise at a student’s intelligence based on their background.

**Important Note:** Recognizing dignity distortions doesn’t mean you’re a “bad” educator if you’ve participated in these practices. These are systemic issues we’ve all been trained into. Awareness is the first step toward change - for ourselves and our systems.

# The Dignity-Belonging Connection

**Essential Truth:** Without dignity, there can be no authentic belonging.

## The Progressive Relationship:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | <b>Dignity Recognized:</b> Students' inherent worth is acknowledged and actively protected in policies, practices, and daily interactions. Every person is treated as fully human regardless of behavior, background, or performance.                                      |
| 2 | <b>Safety Established:</b> Students feel emotionally and culturally safe to be themselves. They can express their identities, share their perspectives, take risks in learning, and make mistakes without fear of shame or diminishment.                                   |
| 3 | <b>Belonging Fostered:</b> Students experience authentic acceptance and inclusion. They feel valued as their full selves - not despite their identities but including them. They know they are genuinely wanted and needed in the community.                               |
| 4 | <b>Achievement Unlocked:</b> Learning and growth flourish in dignified environments. When students feel safe and belong, they can devote cognitive and emotional energy to learning rather than self-protection. Academic, social, and emotional achievement all increase. |

**Critical Insight:** This is a sequential relationship - each step build on the previous one. You cannot skip dignity and jump to belonging. Attempts to create belonging without first establishing dignity result in superficial inclusion that doesn't address root causes of exclusion.

# Dignity in Educational Practice

Concrete examples of dignity-affirming and dignity-denying practices in daily educational work:

## Dignity- Affirming

- **Learning and using students' names correctly** - asking how to pronounce, practicing, correcting yourself when wrong
- **Valuing home languages and cultures** - incorporating them into curriculum, inviting them into classroom space
- **Implementing restorative rather than punitive discipline** - focusing on repair, learning, and relationship-building
- **Provide multiple pathways to success** - recognizing different strengths, offering choices, flexible assessment
- **Listening to and acting on student voice** - soliciting input, taking it seriously, making visible changes.
- **Addressing bias proactively** - naming it when it happens, examining systems, making changes

## Dignity-Denying

- **Mispronouncing or changing student names** - giving nicknames without permission, not making effort to learn correct pronunciation
- **Prohibiting cultural expressions** - banning languages, hairstyles, clothing, or cultural practices
- **Zero-tolerance policies that exclude** - automatic suspension/expulsion without considering context or root causes
- **Rigid, one-size-fits-all approaches** - single pathway to success that advantages some while marginalizing others
- **Dismissing student perspectives** - telling students how they should feel, ignoring feedback, maintaining adult-only decision-making
- **Ignoring discriminatory incidents** - not addressing bias, racism, or harassment when it occurs

# Personal Reflection: Your Practice

## Guided Self-Reflection

Take a few minutes to honestly reflect on these questions. You don't need to share your responses - this is for your own learning and growth.

### Question 1: Daily Interactions

How do your daily interactions either affirm or diminish dignity? Think of specific moments from this week.

### Question 2: Personal Experience

When have you felt your own dignity was threatened or honored? What did that experience teach you about the importance of dignity?

### Question 3: Patterns and Gaps

Looking at the dignity-affirming practices, which ones are strengths in your current practice? Which ones represent growth areas?

## Reflection Methods - Choose What Works for You:

- Written journaling
- Voice recording your thoughts
- Drawing or visual mapping
- Discussion with a trusted colleague
- Silent contemplation during a walk

*Remember: Self-awareness and honesty are acts of courage. Recognizing areas for growth is a strength, not a weakness.*

# Measuring Progress Toward Dignity

How do we know if we're making progress? Here are key indicators of a dignity-centered school:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Climate Surveys</b><br/>Students, families, and staff report feeling valued and respected across all demographic groups. Disaggregate data to ensure dignity is experienced equitably, not just by some.</p> | <p><b>Discipline Data</b><br/>Reduced suspensions and expulsions, increased use of restorative practices, and elimination of disparities in discipline by race, disability, or other identities.</p> |
| <p><b>Academic Engagement</b><br/>Higher participation, attendance, and achievement across all student groups. Reduction in opportunity gaps and increased access to advanced coursework.</p>                      | <p><b>Staff Retention</b><br/>Educators feel supported, valued, and want to remain. Particularly important: retention of educators from historically marginalized backgrounds.</p>                   |
| <p><b>Family Involvement</b><br/>Increased meaningful participation from diverse families. Families feel welcomed, heard, and see themselves reflected in school practices and decisions.</p>                      | <p><b>Student Voice</b><br/>Regular, authentic opportunities for student leadership and input. Student perspectives actively shape policies, practices, and decision-making.</p>                     |

**Critical Analysis Tip:** Always disaggregate your data. If overall numbers look good but certain groups are excluded from positive outcomes, dignity is not being honored equitably. True dignity-centered practice means dignity for ALL, not dignity for most.

# Application Activities: Choose Your Path

Select at least one activity to deepen your understanding and application. Choose the approach that best fits your learning style and context.

## Option 1: Bias Audit

Time: 30-45 minutes

Identify personal biases that might impact how you perceive student dignity. Use a reflective journal or talk with a trusted colleague. Consider: What assumptions do I make? Whose dignity might I overlook?

## Option 2: Student Voice Inquiry

Time: 20-30 minutes + conversation

Ask 5-10 students about when they feel most valued and respected at school - and when they don't. Listen without defensiveness. Look for patterns in their responses.

## Option 3: Practice Observation

Time: 30 minutes

Observe interactions in your school for 30 minutes, documenting examples of dignity-affirming and dignity-denying practices. Notice patterns: Who receives dignity consistently? Who doesn't?

## Option 4: Policy Analysis

Time: 45-60 minutes

Review one school policy (discipline, attendance, grading, etc.) through a dignity lens. Where is dignity explicitly protected? Where is it implicitly denied? Draft specific revisions.

## Option 5: Data Deep Dive

Time: 45-60 minutes

Examine discipline, achievement, or climate survey data disaggregated by race, disability, language, etc. Where are dignity indicators strong? Where do they reveal inequities?

## Option 6: Practice Design

Time: 45-60 minutes

Design one concrete change you can implement immediately to affirm dignity. Create a detailed plan: What will you do? When? How will you know it's working?

# Key Takeaways

**Bottom Line Up Front:** Dignity is not earned through behavior or achievement - it is the birthright of every human being. Educational systems shift from respect-based (conditional) to dignity-centered (unconditional) approaches to create authentic belonging and equitable outcomes.

## Essential Principles:

1. **Respect vs. Dignity:** Respect is earned and conditional; dignity is inherent and unconditional. Both matter, but dignity must come first.
2. **Dignity Distortions are Systemic:** Practices like deficit thinking, cultural dismissal, punitive discipline, rigid tracking, and microaggressions become normalized but actively deny dignity.
3. **Dignity Enables Belonging:** Without dignity recognition, authentic belonging is impossible. The sequence matters: dignity → safety → belonging → achievement.
4. **Practice Must Shift:** Move from dignity-denying practices (name-changing, cultural prohibitions, exclusionary discipline) to dignity-affirming practices (name-honoring, cultural celebration, restorative approaches).
5. **Progress is Measurable:** Use climate surveys, discipline data, engagement metrics, retention, family involvement, and student voice to assess whether dignity is being honored equitably for all.

# Other

- Other topics and/or questions?
- Next Professional Learning (PL) Meeting on **Monday, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 3:00 pm.** (3:00 pm, November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> are faculty work times for catch up, curriculum mapping, grading, etc.)
- Veterans Day is on **Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>** and **Thanksgiving Break is November 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup>.** Please cancel your live sessions.
- MEVA virtual high school graduation on **Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm.** MEVA virtual eighth grade recognition ceremony on **Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am.**
- Looking ahead, the Last Day of School is **June 12<sup>th</sup>.**
- PL Meeting Materials are posted at: <https://www.mainevirtualacademy.org/essaesserlaulresources/meva-professional-learning-pl-meeting-materials>
- Thank you for all that you do to support your colleagues, your students, and their families.

# SY2025/2026 Updated Assessment Calendar

| Assessment Type             | Fall Dates   | Winter Dates   | Spring Dates   |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>NWEA</b>                 | September 16, 17, 18, 2025<br>(Makeup Day - September 19, 2025)  | January 13, 14, 15, 2026 (Makeup Day - January 16, 2026) | May 5, 6, 7, 2026 (Makeup Day - May 8, 2026)   |
| <b>MEA (ELA &amp; Math)</b> | October 6-17, 2025   | NA   | April 6-17, 2026   |
| <b>MEA (Science)</b>        | NA   | NA   | April 6-17, 2026 (HS)<br><br>May 11-22, 2026 (8 <sup>th</sup> Grade)                           |
| <b>ACCUPLACER</b>           | September 16, 17, 18, 2025, with makeup days scheduled throughout the year   | Ongoing  | Ongoing  |
| <b>i-Ready Diagnostic</b>   | <b>ALL 7th - 11th-grade students will complete math &amp; Reading.</b><br><br>August 25 - September 9, 2025, during Math & English classes, with makeups held during FOX Time and HelpDesk | January 13-15, 2026<br><br>(For mid-year enrollees only) | May 26-29, 2026, during Math & English classes, with makeups held during FOX Time and HelpDesk |