

Professional Learning Meeting Agenda – 1/5

- MEVA Mission and Vision Review.
- What's up in January at MEVA.
- Win over the student initiative.
- Teacher Presentation: Student Choice Boards.
- Teacher Presentation: Wabanaki Studies.
- NWEA Proctor Training.
- Other and next Professional Learning (PL) Meeting on Monday, January 12th, 3:00 pm.

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.

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.

Without our Students there would be no MEVA!

Win Over & Rapport

- **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

- 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

- **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](#)

Student Choice Boards

Formative and Summative Assessment Choices



Instructions

Please pick ONE activity to complete. You *may* choose to do more than one if you want to.

Art Option: Create a Skeleton Creek-inspired art piece (collage, sculpture, drawing...etc.) that includes elements from the book. It can be 2D or 3D.

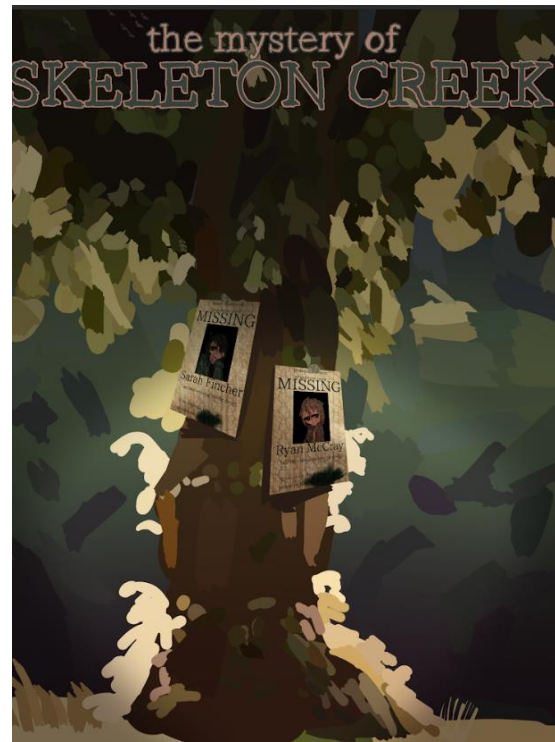
Video Option: Take us, your viewers, on a mystery adventure. Film and edit a 1-3 minute video that is suspenseful, but class appropriate. Use some of the suspense strategies that we have talked about during this book.

Journal Option: Keep a journal inspired by Ryan's journal, in the "stream of consciousness" (in the moment) style for at least one day. Try to make your readers feel like they are standing right beside you, watching events unfold. You can pretend to solve your own mysteries like, "What does my cat/dog do in the middle of the night when they are roaming around the house?"

Music Option: Create a playlist for at least two scenes of the book. Which songs might be playing in the background? Be prepared to explain why. Songs must not contain explicit language.

Multiple Choice Quiz: <https://forms.gle/8txTf6vNkB3piTqKA>

Suspense Unit Final



Student Work Examples

Wednesday September 10, 7:30 am

I wake up (earlier than I would like to), and I walk out of my room for about 30 minutes.

Wednesday September 10 8:00 am

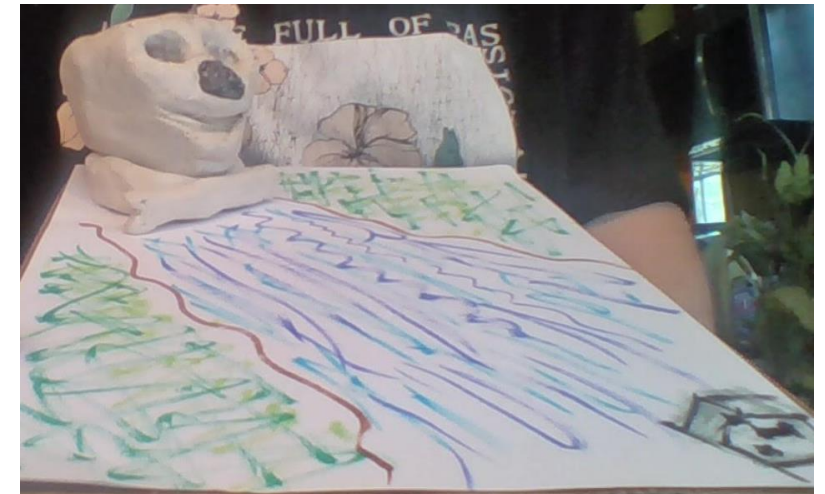
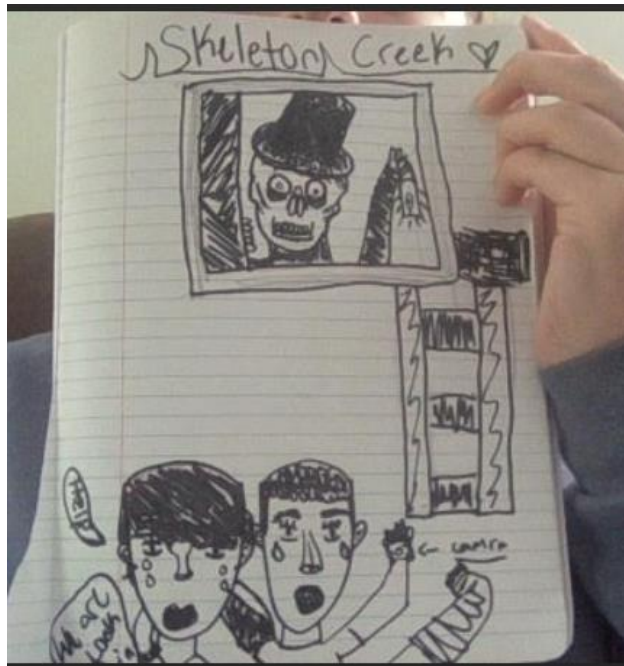
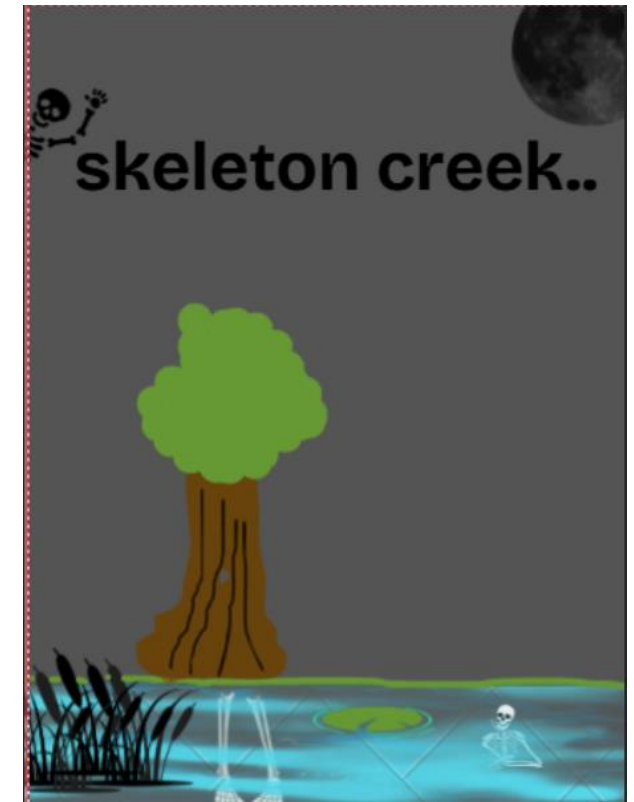
I walk to my desk in my living room. I put up my Border wall thingy And I sat down on my Spinnny chair and I opened my computer to find it had done an Update done while I was sleeping so Everything had to be like refreshed at 8:10 I went into morning meeting at 8:20 i Finished morning meeting. Before I start class I go and make breakfast hot Pockets.

Wednesday September 10 8:30

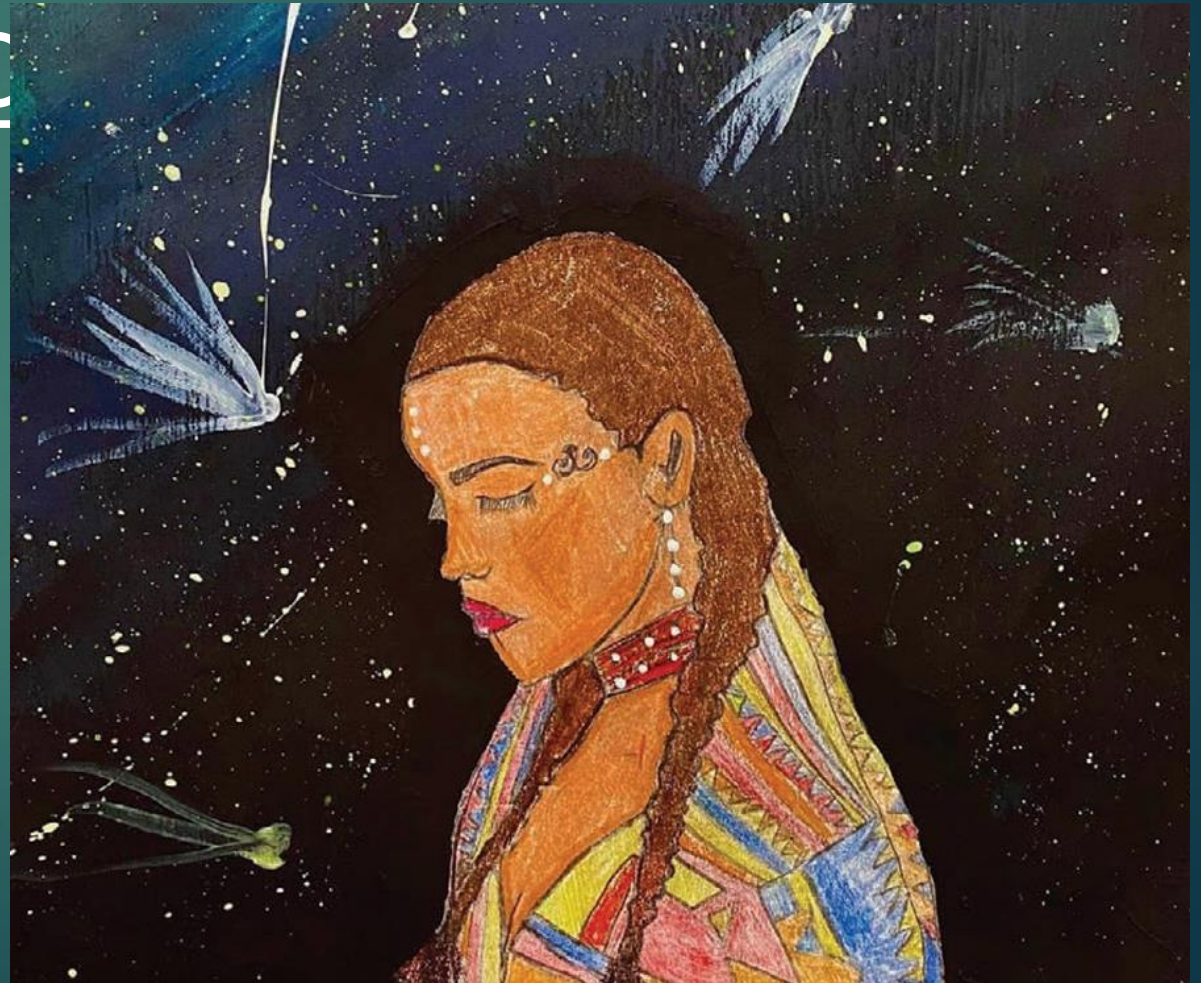
I begin the first class of the day history class we A video on Revolutionary business back in the like late 1800s at 9:20 that class ends and at 9:30 math class start we Learned and reviewed math(go Figure) and we We're reviewing Stuff for a test at 10:20 that class ends.

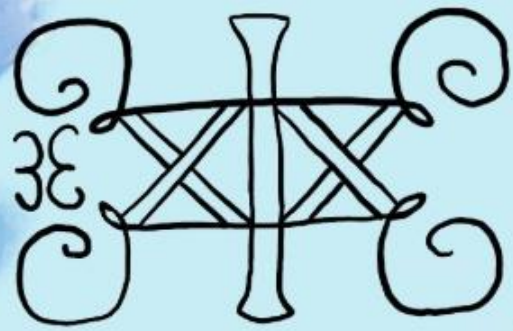
Wednesday September 10 10:30

We begin my Favorite class Language arts we Finish our book called skeleton Creek (Great book) We finish out by watching a really creenv video



Recounting on my experience taking the Wabanaki Studies MicroC





A bènaki
ah-ben-ak-ee

Panawahpskek
ban-nuh-wub-skek

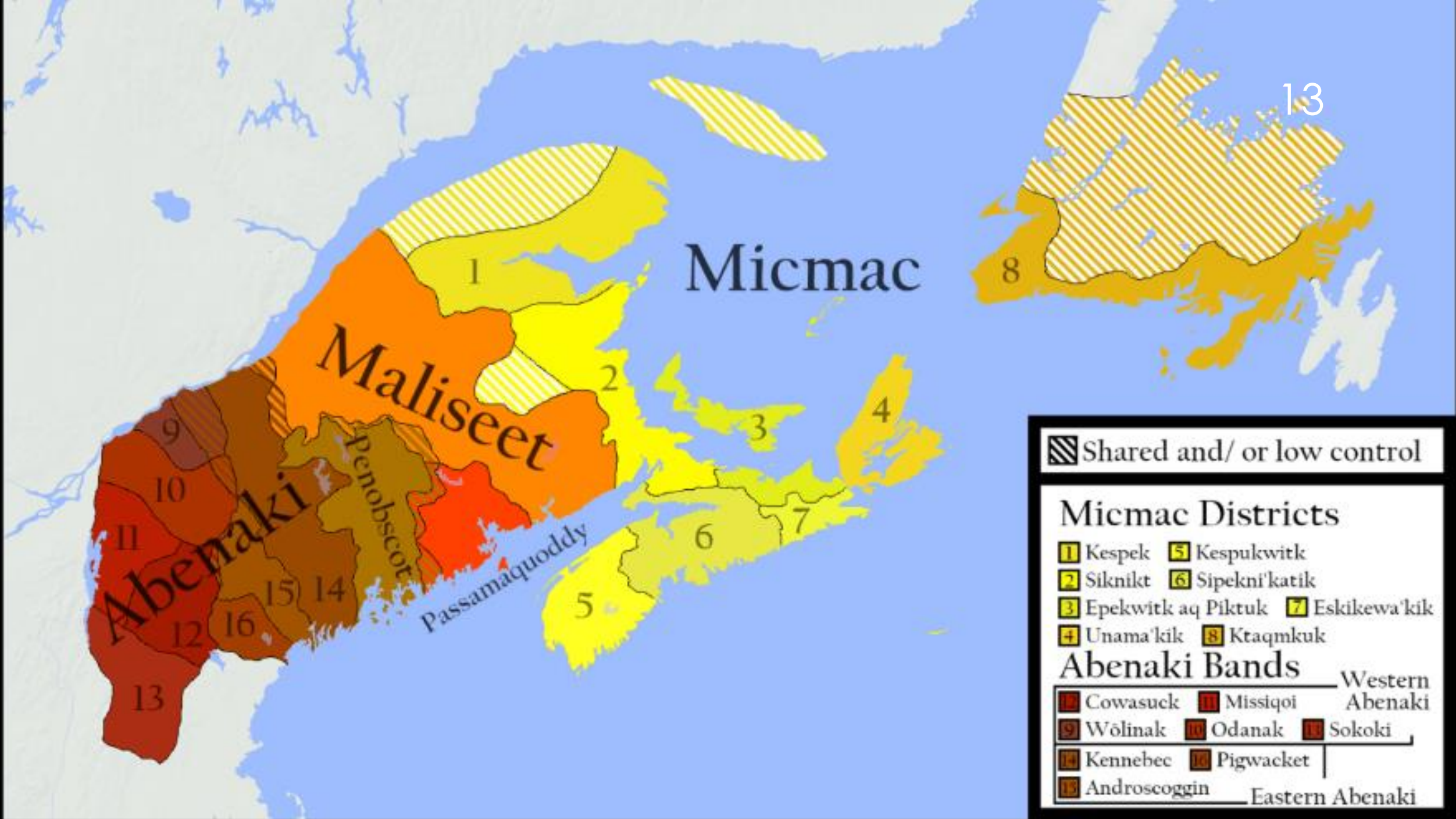
Peskotomuhkatiyik
beska-dim-oo-kud-ee-ig

Wolastogiyik
Woh-lahst-tuk-ee-ig

Mikmaq
meeg-muck

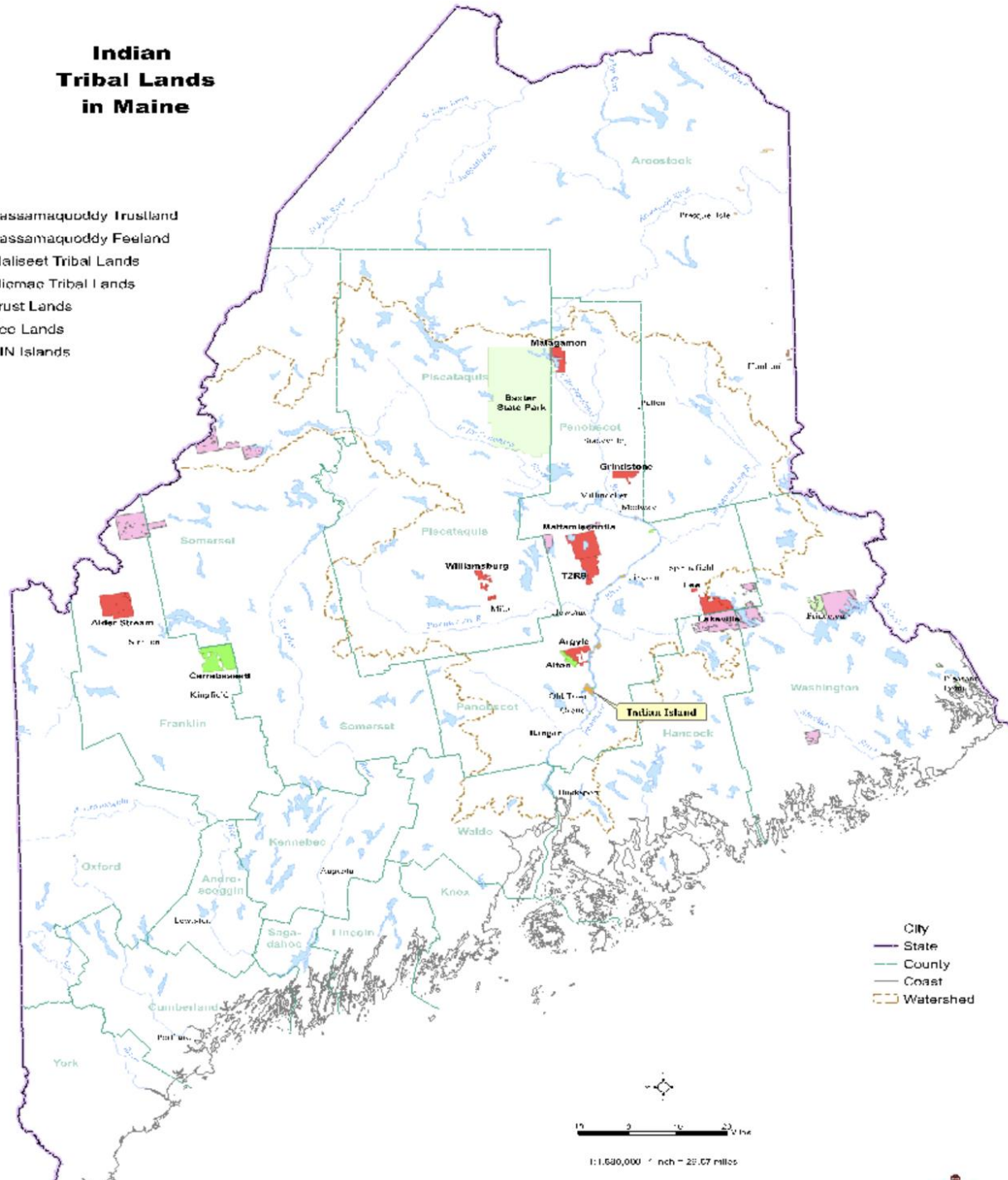
“Although Maine is often referred to as the ‘whitest’ state in the country, that label masks the significant representation of Indigenous people in Maine. As a percentage of population, the proportion of people who identify as Indigenous in Maine is higher than any of its neighboring states, ranking Maine as 21st out of 50 states in the percentage of Indigenous people in the population.”

Despite genocide, epidemics, colonization, and forced removal of children, the Wabanaki tribes have endured through creativity and perseverance as sovereign and self-determining peoples, with distinct and diverse languages, cultures, governments, and economic structures. Donna Loring, a citizen of the Penobscot Nation, was the lead sponsor of the Wabanaki Studies bill while she served as the Penobscot Tribal Representative in the Maine Legislature.³³ Loring explained, at a summit celebrating twenty years of the Wabanaki Studies bill’s legislation, that the trauma from this history runs deep and is suffered both by Native people and the governments who inflicted it.³⁴ “We fix it with truth—truth and education about history, truth about current events. Truth must overcome the lies.”³⁵ Secretary Haaland, whose great-grandfather was a survivor of the Carlisle residential school, has similarly explained that “only by acknowledging the past can we work toward a future that we’re all proud to embrace.”³⁶



Indian Tribal Lands in Maine

- Passamaquoddy Trustland
- Passamaquoddy Fee Land
- Maliseet Tribal Lands
- Miqmac Tribal Lands
- Trust Lands
- Fee Lands
- PIN Islands



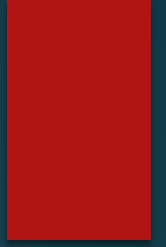
The Law

- ▶ LD 291 mandates that both public and private elementary and secondary schools include comprehensive instruction in American history, Maine studies, and Wabanaki history and culture. Under this law, American history must cover topics such as the U.S. Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, voting, and the responsibilities of citizenship, and it is required for graduation across all elementary and secondary schools in Maine. Additionally, a course in Maine studies, which includes Maine's geography, environment, natural resources, and cultural heritage, must be taught in grades 6 through 8, with related content integrated into high school curricula.

The Law (cont.)

- ▶ The law further emphasizes that Wabanaki history and culture should be part of the educational curriculum in both elementary and secondary schools. This includes integrating Wabanaki history into multiple subjects, including social studies and languages. “Maine Native American history and culture must be included in, but is not limited to, the areas of social studies and modern and classical languages.” (LD291)

You may be thinking... that's a little tepid
to be a law... And you're not the only one.



Expanding the Law

5. LD 1474: An Act to Strengthen the Teaching of Wabanaki Studies in Maine Schools

LD 1474 was introduced to the 132nd Legislature at the beginning of 2025. This bill aimed to extend the efforts of past bills like LD 2001, in a space focused solely on Wabanaki Studies. Noted below are the key points that it strived to target:

- Teaching Wabanaki Studies is the law. LD 291, the bill requiring that all Maine schools teach Wabanaki Studies, was passed in 2001, yet many of Maine's schools are still implementing little to no Wabanaki Studies instruction into their curriculum.
- This bill would have expanded ongoing progress to create and provide quality Wabanaki Studies resources for all. Currently, a Wabanaki citizen holds the significant position of Wabanaki Studies Specialist within the Maine DOE. This bill would establish the position of Wabanaki Studies Specialist in the Department of Education to ensure the inclusion of the mandated Wabanaki Studies in the parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements.
- Wabanaki voices are integral. This bill also would have required the Department to continue funding for contracted Wabanaki advisors to honor Wabanaki voices across the State, including more specifically the creating and implementing of microcourses for professional development.
- Maine is behind the curve as far as Indigenous studies goes. Many states (like [Montana](#), [Oregon](#), and [Minnesota](#), among many others) have strong teams of state-funded employees working to support statewide instruction of Indigenous studies. While we as a state have yet to establish a full Indigenous Studies department, creating a permanent position for one Wabanaki Studies Specialist and ensuring proper compensation for the contracted work of a group of Wabanaki advisors would be a meaningful beginning step towards the benchmark.

This bill received an outpouring of support from the Maine education community, leading to more than 150 letters written in favor of the bill and sent to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. Despite this unusually large showing of support, LD 1474 only narrowly made it out of committee, with a 7-6 vote. The bill was then sent to the House (which also voted narrowly to pass the bill) then to the Senate. The Senate then sent LD 1474 to the Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs to approve its fiscal note (in order to fund what was outlined in the bill), but in a rushed final week of the 132nd Legislature, the AFA Committee did not make a decision on this bill, leaving it on the table to be picked up again at the start of the next legislative season in January at the earliest.

WHY SHOULD YOU SUPPORT LD 1474?

Teaching Wabanaki Studies is the law.

A law was passed in 2001 **requiring Wabanaki Studies** to be taught in **all Maine schools**, yet it is still **not being taught** in many districts across the state. This bill aims to change that by strengthening the **support** surrounding **Wabanaki Studies education** through **Wabanaki-led efforts**.

It secures direct support from within the DOE.

Currently, a Wabanaki citizen holds the significant position of **Wabanaki Studies Specialist** within the Maine DOE. This bill confirms this position within the law so that **all Maine educators and students** may be adequately **supported** through quality, accurate **resources**, and **learning opportunities**.

Wabanaki voices are integral.

In recent years, the DOE has funded the contracted work of various **Wabanaki advisors** to collaborate with **educators** and create **free, quality resources** for use across the state. This bill ensures that these **crucial voices** continue to be **represented**, as well as **compensated justly**.

Why ignorance is harmful

- ▶ Perpetuates Historical Injustice and Erasure (components of genocide).
- ▶ It harms Indigenous Students (Identity, Achievement Gap, Loss of Knowledge).
- ▶ Miseducates ALL students (False narratives, Perpetuates stereotypes and civic incompetence)
- ▶ Obscures (in some cases denies) Contemporary Realities
- ▶ Undermines Truth, Reconciliation, and Democracy (Barriers to Justice, Prevents an informed Citizen, and hampers cross-cultural understanding).



The importance of Representation

“Any student who does not see people like him or herself represented in the school curriculum is likely to feel marginalized and de-valued. This is particularly true of students in categories that have been oppressed and demeaned traditionally.”

“Although the Maine Department of Education has attempted to incorporate Wabanaki Studies into the Maine Learning Results, it has done so at a level of generality that fails to provide sufficient guidance to schools across the state. This is a missed opportunity to implement and enforce the Wabanaki Studies Law.”

The importance of Representation

- ▶ Validates Indigenous identity
- ▶ Fosters belonging and community
- ▶ Promotes academic success by reflecting Indigenous cultures, history, and values
- ▶ Counters historical erasure
- ▶ Combats negative psychological effects of invisibility and misrepresentation.
- ▶ Affirms Indigenous sense of self and creates a culturally rich, supportive learning environment.



Breaking Through Stereotypes

- ▶ Center contemporary Indigenous voices and sovereignty (move beyond the past, understand sovereignty).
- ▶ Audit Existing Curriculum: Is what we're teaching harmful? (For example, the textbook we use in Maine History is written by settlers without much consultation from Indigenous people).
- ▶ Incorporate multidisciplinary disciplines in your class where possible.
- ▶ Cultivate critical thinking and media literacy.
- ▶ Foster authentic relationships and collaboration while creating inclusive and respectful classroom environments.



Implementing the Law

- ▶ Legislation alone cannot yield change.
- ▶ Right now, it's up to us to incorporate Wabanaki Studies into our content.
- ▶ According to the Maine Department of Education website, "Schools and districts are responsible for implementing Maine Native Studies at all grade spans.
- ▶ The state must step and follow through with the suggestions Wabanaki People have made, like a Wabanaki Studies Commission to generate lessons, content, answer questions of implementation, etc.

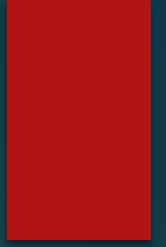
Maine Learning Results

- ▶ Maine Learning Results actually do cover Wabanaki studies, but it's almost exclusively in the realm of social studies.
- ▶ Another issue is that it provides no guidance to teachers. Even well-meaning teachers may find themselves unable to know where to start due to their biased educational upbringing.
- ▶ “For example, the Civics and Government standard for first grade states only that “[s]tudents understand Maine Native Americans by explaining their traditions and customs,” without providing any further detail. This offers nothing more than a partial restatement of the law, without providing any meaningful guidance on standards and concepts that students should understand. This is particularly problematic because, as discussed below, teachers are not required to have pre-service or in-service training on Wabanaki Studies, despite being required by state law to teach it.”

Maine Learning Results (cont.)

- ▶ For example, the Civics and Government standard for Grades 6–8 requires students to understand “political and civic aspects of cultural diversity by ... [d]escribing the political structures and civic responsibilities of the diverse historic and current cultures of Maine, including Maine Native Americans.” In another example, the Maine Learning Results simply add “Maine Native Americans” to a longer list, e.g., “historical and recent immigrant groups in Maine, United States, and the world.” These references simply tack on “Maine Native Americans” to a broader theme of diversity, which, as the Department’s social studies coordinator, Joe Schmidt, acknowledged, can feel like an “addon” without meaningful guidance.

But, how do you incorporate Wabanaki Studies into your class while being respectful and not perpetuating harmful stereotypes you were likely taught as children?



Universal Advice for all disciplines.

- ▶ Seek out indigenous perspectives on your discipline, up to and including inviting indigenous people when/where appropriate (In Portland teachers use ready-made lessons from Maliseet Tribes of New Brunswick).
- ▶ Consider indigenous perspectives during lesson planning, not after.
- ▶ Seek out supplemental materials: Wabanaki Studies books, articles, and videos, including picture books, reference books, traditional stories, YA historical fiction novels, higher-level reads, articles, films, and videos

Social Studies

- ▶ Study the historical and contemporary perspectives of the Wabanaki, including their pre-contact history, colonization, treaty rights, and contemporary issues.
- ▶ Explore the governance structures, political systems, and sovereignty of the Wabanaki, including their traditional governance practices and contemporary efforts towards self-governance and sovereignty.
- ▶ Examine the treaty rights and land claims of the Wabanaki, including the treaties signed between the Wabanaki nations and European powers or the United States government.
- ▶ Highlight the historical and contemporary contributions of the Wabanaki to various fields, including art, literature, education, politics, and activism.

Social Studies (cont.)

- ▶ Learn about the local Wabanaki history and contemporary presence of the Wabanaki peoples in the region where the school is located.
- ▶ Compare and contrast the experiences, histories, and cultures of the Wabanaki with other indigenous peoples around the world.
- ▶ Employ critical literacy with US history textbooks having students seek primary source documents and high-quality secondary sources in an effort to portray various points of view with greater accuracy.
- ▶ Connect great historical fiction by Indigenous authors whenever you can to promote love of story.
- ▶ When teaching current events, be sure to include articles and stories about nations/ tribes and contemporary issues (e.g. court decisions regarding treaties, commentary and debate regarding Indigenous mascots, tribal hunting and fishing rights, etc.).

English

- ▶ Include traditional stories, contemporary fiction, poetry, and non-fiction works by Wabanaki authors.
- ▶ Develop grade level selections as a team and determine what texts will be used at what grades and which may warrant using more than once, but in different ways moving up the grades.
- ▶ Swap out materials, when possible, for materials that carry Wabanaki Studies (WS) content and practice shifting perspectives.
- ▶ Explore the oral traditions and storytelling practices of the Wabanaki, including their traditional stories, legends, and oral histories.

English (cont.)

- ▶ Discuss the importance of language revitalization and preservation efforts among the Wabanaki, including their efforts to revive and maintain their languages.
- ▶ Discuss the historical and contemporary issues faced by the Wabanaki, including colonization, land dispossession, cultural assimilation, and ongoing struggles for sovereignty and self-determination.
- ▶ Explore the unique perspectives, worldviews, and values of the Wabanaki through their literature, oral traditions, and contemporary voices.
- ▶ Discuss the issue of cultural appropriation and representation of Indigenous cultures, including the Wabanaki, in literature, media, and popular culture.
- ▶ Encourage students to engage with local Wabanaki communities, cultural organizations, or Indigenous scholars to learn from and engage with Wabanaki perspectives and initiatives.

Math

- ▶ Introduce Indigenous perspectives on geometry by exploring Wabanaki craftsmanship (basket weaving, wigwam building, and beadwork).
- ▶ Integrate Indigenous knowledge of land-based practices (measuring, charting, mapping, calculating distance using celestial navigation techniques, learn about seasonal calendars and lunar cycles and explore their relationship with time, distance, measurement).
- ▶ Explore how Wabanaki knowledge can be integrated into statistics (tracking wildlife migration, observing weather patterns, monitoring water quality).
- ▶ Explore ethnomathematics (compare and contrast Indigenous mathematical practices to western mathematical practices)

Science

- ▶ Explore traditional uses of plants by Wabanaki people (medicinal, cultural, culinary).
- ▶ Explore Wabanaki traditional practices (sustainable harvesting, fire management, resource stewardship) can help make ecological lessons more impactful.
- ▶ Learn about traditional fishing and aquacultural practices of the Wabanaki (eel weirs, fishing traps, etc.)
- ▶ Discuss how environmental issues affect Wabanaki people (land conservation, water quality, climate change, etc).
- ▶ Analyze and explore Wabanaki technology and innovation (birchbark canoes, snowshoes, traditional stone/obsidian tools).
- ▶ Highlight indigenous scientists, researchers, and educators.

Physical Education

- ▶ Did you know that Lacrosse (called Stickball) is a game that indigenous people played? While we don't have a typical PE structure like brick and mortar, you can build in discussions about things like "How do you think indigenous people played the game? Are the rules the same as today?"
- ▶ Interesting fact: Lacrosse and other games were used to settle inter-tribal and interpersonal disputes between leaders.
- ▶ Indigenous games like Snovsnake (sliding sharpened sticks across the snow), test accuracy, power, and technique.
- ▶ Kneel Jump was an Inuit game where they did things like jumping as far as they could from their knees.
- ▶ Spotighting games and showing students how they were played and why they were culturally important is a great way to abide by the law and integrate Wabanaki Studes into PE curriculum.

World Languages

- ▶ Many Wabanaki languages are endangered, and incorporating Wabanaki Studies into world language classes can help raise awareness and support language revitalization efforts. Students can learn basic Wabanaki vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, and engage in activities that promote speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in the Wabanaki language.
- ▶ Wabanaki cultures have a rich tradition of oral storytelling, which plays a significant role in passing down cultural knowledge, values, and history. Students can explore Wabanaki oral traditions and learn about the different genres of stories, such as creation stories, legends, or historical narratives, and their cultural significance.
- ▶ Incorporate comparative studies between Wabanaki cultures and the cultures of the language being studied in the world language classes.

More resources to come for Special Ed teachers and Ed Techs...

- ▶ Explore Wabanaki's deep connection to environment and importance of mindfulness.
- ▶ Analyze traditional Wabanaki healing practices (herbal medicine, sweat lodge, holistic healing practices).
- ▶ Discuss challenges Wabanaki people face (cultural identity, pride, resilience on overall well-being and social-emotional health).
- ▶ Provide opportunities for students to express their feelings about Wabanaki studies through art, writing, and other creative outlets.

Any remaining advice:

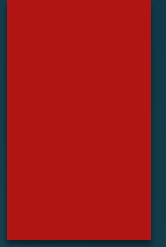
- ▶ Wabanaki Studies FAQs:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GN9ObVAxn_b0BiS16ZjS34EZtACMyJcpGbLnrYnKNxc/edit?tab=t.0

- ▶ Cultural Appropriation vs. Cultural Appreciation?

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zfFEjkhslm0fvIhLfy3FIQP3maxigDFzuJegmV1Xz4/edit?usp=sharing>

What more can we be doing as teachers
to be more informed about the law?



What to watch for:

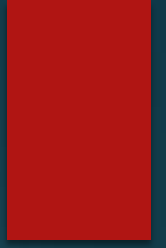
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Any questions, concerns, or comments?



The end

- ▶ I want to say that I know this is hard. Growing up in America, many of us have been misinformed to say the least.
- ▶ There's no point pointing fingers, but it makes our task more difficult. We not only have to learn a lot to be inclusive, better teachers, but we have to unlearn the harmful things we were taught.
- ▶ This is not something one training fixes. This is a *process*. Feel free to reach out anytime for resources. I will help you however I can.
- ▶ Thank you.

NWEA Proctor Training

The background is a stylized winter scene. It features snow-covered mountains in shades of light blue and white. In the foreground, there are several evergreen trees of varying sizes, some with dark green foliage and others that are bare. A body of water in the lower right reflects the trees and the sky. The overall color palette is cool, dominated by blues, whites, and greys.

Released in Vector.
Make announcements,
emails, and calendar invites
by **Wednesday, January
8th**

Other

- Other topics and/or questions?
- Next Professional Learning (PL) Meeting on **Monday, January 12th, 3:00 pm.**
- **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is January 19th.** Please cancel all your live sessions.
- MEVA virtual high school graduation on **Friday, June 5th at 2:00 pm.** MEVA virtual eighth grade recognition ceremony on **Friday, June 12th at 11:00 am.**
- Looking ahead, the Last Day of School is **June 12th.**
- PL Meeting Materials are posted at:
<https://www.mainevirtualacademy.org/essaesserlau-elresources/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 |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|
| NWEA | September 16, 17, 18, 2025 (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) |
| MEA (ELA & Math) | October 6-17, 2025 | NA | April 6-17, 2026 |
| MEA (Science) | NA | NA | April 6-17, 2026 (HS) May 11-22, 2026 (8 th Grade) |
| ACCUPLACER | September 16, 17, 18, 2025, with makeup days scheduled throughout the year | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| i-Ready Diagnostic | ALL 7th - 11th-grade students will complete math & Reading. August 25 - September 9, 2025, during Math & English classes, with makeups held during FOX Time and HelpDesk | January 13-15, 2026 (For mid-year enrollees only) | May 26-29, 2026, during Math & English classes, with makeups held during FOX Time and HelpDesk |