

Brunswick Believes: Student Success, Professional Excellence, Community Connections
Brunswick School Department, Brunswick, ME



ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages

Creating cultural competence, compassion, and connections one flutter at a time.

The Conversation

September 2018

An Orange and Black Story

The email blast from Rick Wilson appeared in my inbox. The subject line read, “Orange and Black Stories.” Being new to the Brunswick School Department, I thought, “Wow, people here take Halloween seriously.” But that wasn’t it. Once I opened the message, I realized that Rick wanted stories about Brunswick High School, whose colors were orange and black. Funny how culture and language can evoke such different images. So by way of introducing this inaugural issue of *The Conversation*, I thought I’d share a personal “orange and black” story:

My arrival in the U.S. came with the astonishing realization that people had hair in different colors. For the first five years of my life living with my Okinawan grandmother in Naha, I never saw anyone who didn’t have black hair. It never occurred to me that hair came in any other color. And then I started kindergarten in Chaffee, MO. Kids had orange hair, red hair, brown hair, and yellow hair. (I didn’t know the word blonde at the time.) I thought the yellow hair was so strange and so pretty. The other kids must have thought my hair was strange too but not so pretty. It was black and always in excruciatingly tight braids. The other kids liked to pull my braids and make fun of my slightly different features. I was half Okinawan and half Irish American (still am), but, in that time and place, not *all*-white was still *not*-white. If only I could have yellow hair. My cousins on my father’s side told me about hair magic that came in a box. I whined and pleaded and wheedled and pined until my mother relented and took me to Schnuck’s-Walgreens. I chose a box with the prettiest woman with the prettiest shade of yellow hair. My troubles would soon be over! My mother and I opened the box in our kitchen with excitement that soon turned into confusion. My mother didn’t speak English and certainly didn’t read the language. I had only begun to read, and my English vocabulary was limited to kindergarten lessons and St. Louis Cardinals broadcasts.

But with courage and confidence, my mother and I began deciphering the dye directions. After following all the steps, I waited patiently with a towel around my head until my mother said enough time had passed. She sat me in front of her dresser mirror and gently took the towel off. At first, we both looked in the mirror in stunned silence. Then we both screamed, and then we both cried. Something had gone horribly wrong. From the top of my scalp to about my ears, my hair remained jet black. From my ears to my waist, the rest of my long hair had turned a bright pumpkin orange. There I was, a Halloween freak and I didn’t even know what Halloween was. My father finally came home from work and solved the problem. He took me to his barber, and I got my first haircut – a boy’s haircut that eliminated any trace of orange. I didn’t want to go to school the next day, but I had no choice. Since I had no more braids to pull, the boys said I could play baseball at recess. The only other girl who played had really orange hair that was cropped as well. I didn’t know the word “ginger” at the time, but my English vocabulary was expanding daily.

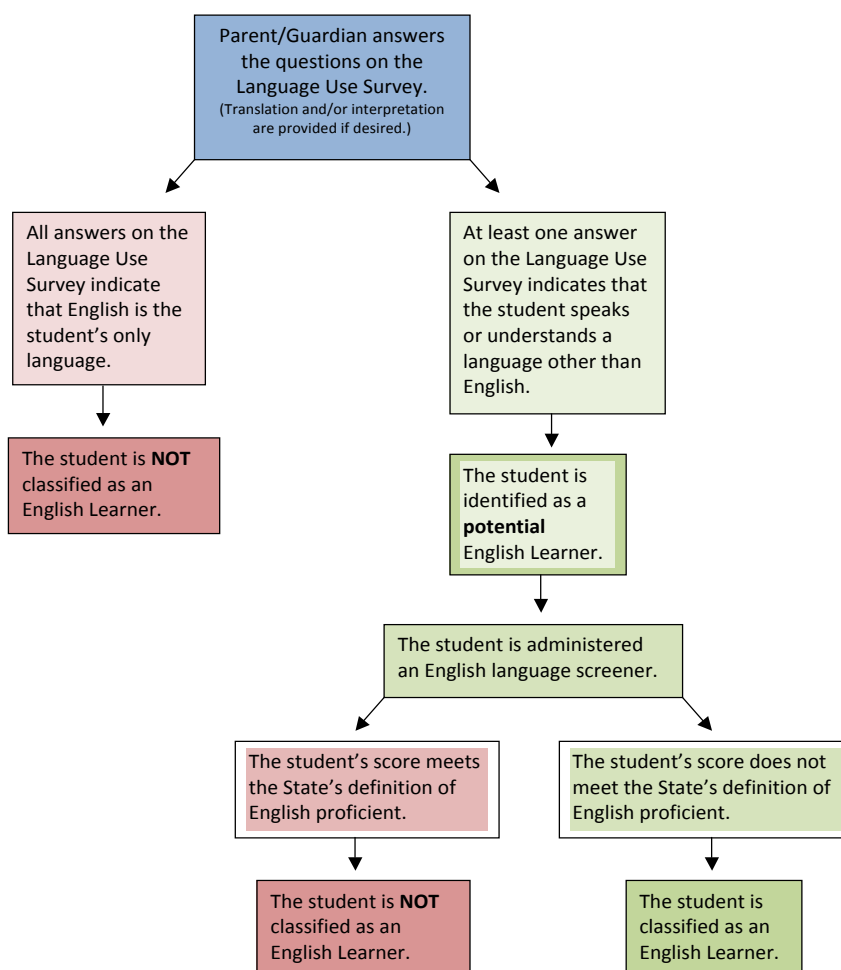
-- Emily Darby

*Please share **YOUR** stories of culture and language, and let’s begin “The Conversation.” You can email them to: edarby@brunswick.k12.me.us*

From the Maine Department of Education:

English Learner Identification Decision Tree

The parent(s)/guardian(s) of all students enrolling in a district for the first time must complete the Language Use Survey. The entire identification process must be completed within thirty days of enrollment from the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment during the school year. Note that if a parent/guardian refuses to complete the Language Use Survey, districts are still required under federal law to identify all English learners. In such cases, the "School Use Only" section of the Language Use Survey must indicate observed or student-reported use of a primary or home language other than English before an English language proficiency screener can be administered. See [Serving Maine's English Learners](#) for additional guidance.



GOOD TO KNOW:

◆ Maine's Department of Education provides a translation of the *Language Use Survey* in 25 different languages.

◆ Foreign students, foreign exchange students, immigrants, refugees, and students born in the U.S. need to complete the *Language Use Survey*. That means **ALL** students enrolling in public schools complete the survey.

◆ Maine uses *Kindergarten Model Screener* or *APT Kindergarten Screener* for kindergarten students, and *WIDA Screener* for students in grades 1-12 to identify English learners (ELs). Students who score a composite below 5.0 are identified as ELs.

◆ It is a federal requirement that all English learners be identified within 30 days of enrollment in the beginning of the school year or within two weeks of enrollment during the school year.

“The whole end of speech is to be understood.” – Confucius

So why do noses run and feet smell?

The Alphabet Soup

ESOL – English for speakers of other languages

TESOL – Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (an international professional organization)

ESL – English as a second language

TESL – Teaching English as a second language

EFL – English as a foreign language

ELL – English language learners

EL – English learners

LEP – Limited English proficiency

WIDA – originally *Wisconsin, Delaware, Arkansas*; formerly *World-class Instructional Design and Assessment*; currently *WIDA Consortium* (37 member states including Maine)

TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language

IELTS – International English Language Testing System

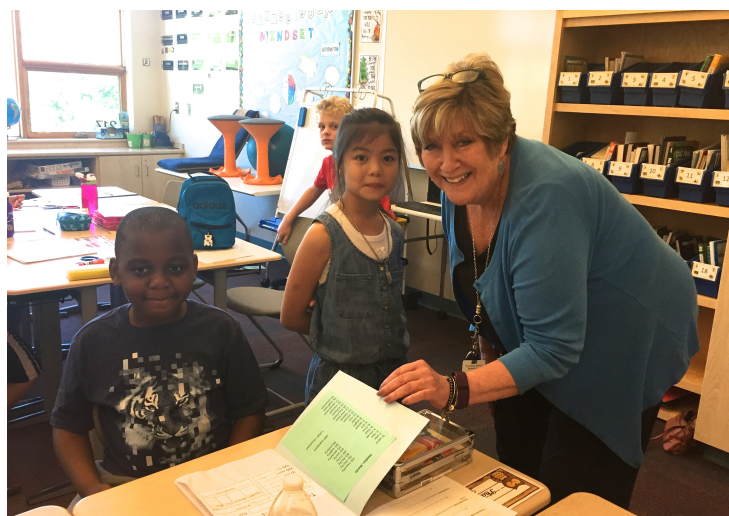
IEP – Intensive English program

SIOP – Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol

BICS – Basic interpersonal communication skills

CALP – Cognitive academic language proficiency

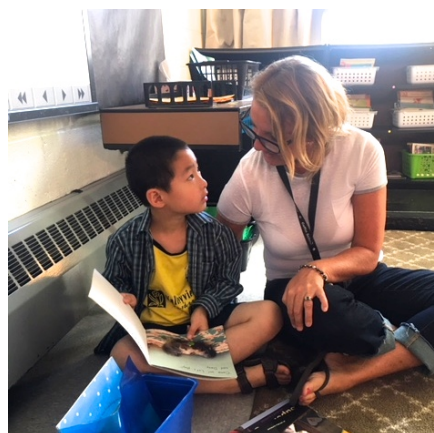
(Believe it or not, there are more!)



Schools in the state of Maine include the state of the world

Languages spoken by Maine students today:

Acholi	Albanian	Amharic	Arabic
Azerbaijani	Balijumbat	Bari	Bengali
Bulgarian	Burmese	Cantonese	Croatian
Czech	Dari	Dinka	Farsi
French	German	Greek	Haitian Creole
Hebrew	Hindi	Italian	Indonesian
Japanese	Kazakh	Khmer	Kinyarwanda
Kirundi	Korean	Lingala	Mandarin
Nuer	Pashtu	Polish	Portuguese
Romanian	Russian	Serbian	Sidamo
Slovak	Somali	Spanish	Swahili
Swedish	Tagalog	Thai	Tigrinian
Turkish	Ukrainian	Vietnamese	Zande



Sources: Maine DOE; WIDA; TESOL; Portland Public Schools, personal files.
By Emily Darby, Brunswick School Department ESOL Coordinator/Teacher