

# MATSOL Currents

Vol. 29, No. 2, Winter 2005

Massachusetts Association of Teachers of Speakers of Other Languages



*Providing professional development and support to educators who work with English language learners*

**MATSOL**  
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## Advocacy Bridges

by Carol Kolenik

The art of advocacy serves interesting purposes. It can shepherd a program toward success or doom it to failure. Most commonly, advocacy is born when a person believes so strongly in something that they put their effort into convincing others who are either undecided or completely against the cause to embrace that cause, jump on the bandwagon, and promote it themselves.

As a director of a worker education program, I am an advocate and promote advocacy everyday. At the Harvard Bridge to Learning and Literacy Program, over 500 hourly service employees participate in a wide variety of educational opportunities including individual and group tutoring, classes in foundational literacy instruction, ESL, GED, TOEFL preparation, and basic to intermediate computer instruction; mini-courses in

citizenship preparation, first time home buying, and financial planning.

Advocates can be the workers' family and peers who motivate, encourage, and support a workers decision to further their education. For some, the decision to further their education is an easy choice, but for others the prospect of returning to the classroom late in life can be overwhelming. Word of mouth from past participants, the champions of our program, generate a great amount of interest in the program and help others take that first step.

Advocates are also the managers and supervisors of the workers in our program that allow their employees to further their education. They are the crew chiefs that pitch in to help complete the work so a student can get to his/her class on time. Students in our program are given four hours of paid release time each week to attend the academic classes.

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## MATSOL's Advocacy for Professional Development of Structured English Immersion Teachers (K-12)

For the past year schools and districts have grappled with the implementation of Question 2 and the enormous need for training teachers working with English Language Learners (ELL) in Structured English Immersion (SEI) classrooms. Ironically, Governor Romney, who stressed English immersion in his campaign for governor, cut the amount of money the Board of Education proposed was needed to begin long-term professional development and training in their budget. This left Question 2 and the professional development of teachers in SEI programs an unfunded mandate in Massachusetts.

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**Letter from the MATSOL President**

On behalf of the MATSOL Board, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new MATSOL President.

My relationship with MATSOL began simultaneously with my relationship with the entire ESOL profession. As a graduate student working on my masters in TESL at Simmons College, I was the membership secretary under Carol Pineiro's and then Linda Schulman's leadership. There, I was privileged to meet and work in a professional capacity with educators from across the state. This connection was invaluable as a newly trained educator. Over the years, as I became established as an English as a Second Language Teacher, and later as an English Language Acquisition Coach for Brockton Public Schools, I desired to return to the organization with which I began my career. Again, I found MATSOL a welcoming organization and worked as the Professional Development Coordinator. Currently, I'm excited to work with MATSOL in this new position with the support of such a dedicated group of professionals.

Over the past two years, MATSOL has continued its work on behalf of its members. I have been privileged to be a part of the planning committees that have organized a fall fund-raising event that honored Felix Arroyo, Roger Rice, Vivian Zamel and Ruth Spack, a K-12 Conference with over 250 attendees, and a higher education conference that bestowed the first annual Ann Dow Award to Elaine Ward from the Circle Program at UMass Boston. In addition, the Rhode Island Special Interest Group has organized two highly successful professional development events for its members. I am especially proud of the continuing advocacy work that MATSOL undertakes in support of English language learners and teachers across the state for quality programs, long-term professional development, and high standards and achievement.

I would like to give a welcome to the members of the former New England Bilingual Special Education Network to MATSOL as our newest special interest group. This merger of our two organizations strengthens our ability to address the professional development needs of ELL teachers.

The MATSOL board is busy working diligently for the upcoming conferences and annual events. We welcome volunteers on the planning committees and on the board itself. Volunteering in MATSOL is an invaluable opportunity to connect with educators from across the state in service to the profession.

For more information, please feel free to contact me at <tvrdosin@hotmail.com>.

Sincerely,  
*Kellie M. Jones*

**2004 Highlights**

- Dreams of Freedom Event at the International Institute of Boston
- Adult focused ELL Conference: Attracting and Retaining English Language Learners in Higher Education
- Youth focused ELL Conference held in conjunction with MABE in March
- Awards given to Roger Rice, Felix Arroyo, Ruth Spack, Vivian Zamel, Elaine Ward, Umbelina Baptista and Susan McDaniel for their contributions to the field
- Advocacy for new qualifications of teachers of English language learners in conjunction with MABE and the ELL Directors Group
- Advocacy for professional development funds in the state budget to support teachers of English language learners
- Advocacy for In State Tuition rates for immigrant students who have graduated from US High Schools

# Elaine Ward Receives First Annual Anne Dow Award

by Sterling Giles

Anne Rindlaub Dow died in October 2003 at 65, after a two-year battle with multiple myeloma. Anne was best known as the director of ESL programs at Harvard for over 20 years. She made a difference in the lives of many who knew her in the Boston area and throughout the world. Her death is a great loss for our community. The following is excerpted from an obituary which appeared in the Cambridge Chronicle on 11/20/03:

[Anne] also worked as a consultant, planning the content and supervising the production of extensive multimedia programs to teach English to speakers of other languages. These include "In America" and "Disney's World of English," a comprehensive home learning system for preschool-age children based on Disney's classic cartoon characters. "Disney's World of English" has been used by millions of children in Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong for more than 25 years. In 2000, Disney Publishing Worldwide recognized the product with a special award for "Innovation in Product Development" at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

In April 1993, Ms. Dow received a Lifetime Achievement Award from MATSOL "for her contributions to the field and for the model ESL programs she has directed for more than 20 years." At the end of their citation, they remark, "Those of us who have taught at Harvard feel that we have worked with Anne, not for Anne."

In the same month, she received a "Courtesy Resolution Honoring Anne Dow" from TESOL, noting that she had "encouraged and supported the careers and professional development of an estimated 1,000 TESOL professionals." The city of Cambridge proclaimed May 3, 1993, as Anne R. Dow Day for "her many accomplishments as director of Harvard University's programs of English as a second language."

A music lover throughout her life, she sang with the Cantata Singers, Chorus Pro

Musica, the North Cambridge Family Opera and the Cambridge Community Chorus. She was also a church soloist and, when younger, collected international folksongs, which she performed with guitar and dulcimer in the Boston area. She was also an avid kayaker and scuba diver and an indefatigable traveler.

Ms. Dow was born in Lancaster, Penn., graduated from Westover School in Middlebury, Conn., which she served as a trustee from 1973 to 1978. She received an A.B. degree from Radcliffe College in 1960 and an A.M. degree in linguistics from Harvard University in 1966. From 1964 to 1969, she was a NIMH pre-doctoral research fellow at Harvard, studying acquisition of English as a first language.

In the Winter of 2004 the MATSOL Board decided to present an annual award in her name. A small group of people who had worked with her in various capacities defined criteria and set the nomination process in gear. The name Anne Dow Award for Excellence and Creativity was chosen to highlight her exceptional personal characteristics. The award will be given annually to a professional who has made outstanding efforts which reflect enthusiasm and

creative, energetic, independent thinking. It will be targeted towards those who display an ability to take risks, solve problems, support colleagues, and model ethical behavior. Specific criteria will vary from year to year, to reflect the many facets of Anne Dow's career and interests, but also to allow the recognition process to respond to the ever-changing needs of the institution and the field. Anne was not a static thinker; this approach ensures that what we highlight in remembering her can evolve in a changing world. The growing list of criteria includes administration, teacher training, materials development, and addressing social problems in an ESL environment.

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## **Anne Dow Award for Excellence and Creativity**

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## Advocacy

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Scheduling people from 35 different departments is the most difficult part of the entire program. The main objective is to allow the maximum number of students to be released during their work shifts to attend classes, without disturbing the operation of each work group. This would be impossible without the buy-in from directors, managers, supervisors and crew chiefs. When they support their employees' desire to further their education, the employees feel better about participating and they carry a positive attitude with them back to their jobs.

Some advocates are born and some are created. When a program is new and unproven it is not surprising that many would be skeptical about the benefits of a worker education program, and this was true here at the Bridge. Initially, many of those in charge were skeptical when they got the full Bridge presentation promoting the benefits of an educated workforce (i.e. improved communication, ability to offer better customer service, increased morale, retention, recruitment, etc.) It took only one strong advocate who could clearly see the benefits of the program, and who was willing to pilot the program with his workers. Once the pilot program demonstrated the benefits in real terms, others began to advocate for the program and request services for their workers. Employers are usually desperate for positive feedback about their workforce, considering most of the time feedback comes in the form of complaints that something wasn't done, wasn't done right or better or faster. Good news can also travel fast. The initial skepticism further softened as the Bridge staff familiarized themselves with every aspect of the departments' operations, for example: how long it takes to clean bathrooms and hallways,

how many people are needed to shovel after a snow storm, the differences between dining halls and restaurants. Once we knew the details of the work groups, we could be more realistic about the number of people we requested to be released and the best times to offer classes. A partnership formed between the Bridge and the departments that is built on trust and understanding.

Here at the Bridge, we have experienced a rare phenomenon whereby directors, managers, supervisors and crew chiefs have become advocates for release time. This is based on solid working relationships with the departments and their own beliefs in developing their workforce. The Bridge has extraordinary advocates. A manager of a dining hall rolled up his sleeves to finish cooking the chicken so one of his cooks would not be late to class. Crew chiefs and supervisors help custodians clean their designated areas to make sure the employees attend their classes. Parking managers drive employees to registration and cover their lots while the attendants sign up and get assessed for the program. There are also a number of supervisors who are at the top of the advocate list because they take classes themselves, they experience the Bridge benefits first-hand and promote the program whole-heartedly.

Worker Education programs cannot survive without advocates. In turn, advocates need to be developed, reinforced and rewarded for their efforts. Each year we hold a ceremony to acknowledge and thank all the advocates, from directors to crew chiefs for all they do to make the Bridge a success. Last year the University's President came to personally thank them (a big deal at Harvard!) Advocates are the cornerstones of the Bridge and we never forget that.

*Carol Kolenik is the director of The Harvard Bridge to Learning and Literacy, a worker education program at Harvard University. She came to Harvard in 1998 after completing a two-year assignment in Hue, Viet Nam. Kolenik worked with the University of Hue teaching methodologies and curriculum development to the staff and graduate students at the College of Arts and Sciences and the Teachers' College.*

*Kolenik created the Bridge Program, which has since become a model for training programs at other universities including the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and George Mason University in Virginia. The Federal Reserve Bank of Boston is currently considering using Kolenik's program as a model for Massachusetts' businesses to develop the skills of their own workforce.*

*Kolenik has developed adult education programs and worked in higher education in Massachusetts and Connecticut since 1989. She graduated from the State University of New York in Oswego, cum laude and holds a master's degree in education from the University of Massachusetts in Boston.*

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*C u r r e n t s*



## Elaine Ward Receives First Annual Anne Dow Award

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The first award was given in Spring 2004, for excellence and creativity in program development, at the higher ed conference on retention held at Suffolk University. Elaine Ward, Director of the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Community Leadership and Empowerment (CIRCLE) at U. Mass./Boston's College of Public and Community Service (CPCS) was the recipient. What follows is an excerpt from her nomination:

CIRCLE began in the 1990's as a collaboration between three UMass campuses with the Boston campus operating a one-year leadership development program. Although CIRCLE was quite innovative, the program went through a period of contraction. In 2000, [CPCS] took on the challenge of redesigning CIRCLE to make it a more viable program. The focus on immigrant and refugee leadership and community development remained, but now the CIRCLE certificate would also serve as an entry point for immigrant students into CPCS' BA programs. Elaine Ward, a CPCS graduate and an Irish immigrant herself, was hired to direct the "new" CIRCLE program.

When Elaine began her new job, the specifics of the program had not been worked out, there were little or no resources, and no students. Although her position was only part-time, Elaine did extensive community outreach to recruit the first [new] CIRCLE cohort [and to find] CPCS faculty... In addition, Elaine had to ensure that there were adequate academic and administrative support services in place for CIRCLE students. [She was also busy] securing funding, building collaborative relationships with community based organizations, conference and event planning, and curriculum development.

Elaine did not have a background in teaching or in educational administration. Instead, her preparation came from human services (counseling), community planning, and a strong commitment to participatory education. Although she was a recent graduate when she started working for the college where she had earned her BA, she moved comfortably into collaborative work with her former professors. At the same time, she was remarkably accessible to her students and responsive to their needs. Elaine, and by extension CIRCLE, have demonstrated how the theory of egalitarian and participatory education can be put into practice. ... Elaine has made CIRCLE a success because [she] is an intelligent and creative person who is able to see new possibilities for developing a cohort model; creating opportunities for academic learning that also foster leadership development and community service; and finally, to see students in a way that acknowledges their needs but also celebrates the resources that they bring to college learning.

When receiving the award Elaine spoke from the heart of the need to empower students and respect immigrants. She also participated in a most interesting session about CIRCLE, following the award, where colleagues and a student from the program spoke about curriculum, the relationship between life and school, and tips on how to build alliances with administrators beyond one's own program in order to be successful. It was both realistic and uplifting. MATSOL is very happy to remember Anne Dow by showing appreciation for Elaine Ward's excellence in refining and achieving the goals of the CIRCLE program. Keep you ears perked for this year's call for nominations, some time in winter.

**Higher Ed Conference**

**Harvard University**

**Cambridge, MA**

Spring, 2005  
(specific date TBA)

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# Lina Baptista and Susan McDaniel Honored as ELL Teachers of the Year at MATSOL-MABE Conference

Leominster, MA – March 12, 2004

MATSOL and MABE honored Umbelina Baptista, of the Framingham Public Schools, and Susan McDaniel of the Medford Public Schools as our Elementary and Secondary 2004 ELL Teachers of the Year. Senator Robert Antonioni, of our host city Leominster, assisted in presenting the awards following his comments regarding the legislative agenda and importance of our profession.

Recent changes and challenges in our state have greatly impacted the teaching of bilingual students in our K-12 public schools. We know that teachers of English language learners, as a result, have even more complex roles and responsibilities in their schools, for curriculum, for instruction, for assessment, for professional development, for planning, and for the day-to-day local advocacy on behalf of their students. They have responsibilities for and know the benefits to working with parents, with the community, and with the many educators and community members who contribute to the education of English language learners, in some way. They build instructional environments that are based on the prior knowledge, experiences, languages and cultures of their students, a first step in any good teaching or lesson, and a critical skill and cultural knowledge-base necessary for teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students. The roles and the complexity of the job are ever evolving. As new licensure requirements are clarified regarding who can teach ELLs in the coming year, it is clear that the state and our districts have a great charge in making sure that qualified teachers, like Susan and Lina, are in every classroom where English language learners study. What makes both Susan McDaniel and Umbelina Baptista model teachers to represent our profession, is their daily belief in the strength of diversity, and experience in embracing and building on the diversity that exists in their classrooms. This is at the heart of what ELL teachers do.

## SUSAN MCDANIEL

Susan McDaniel is a Grade 9-12 ELL English and ELL Literacy teacher at Medford High School. Susan has been teaching for 25 years of which the past 13 years she has been in this position. She has a B.A. from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and holds teaching licenses in ESL 5-9, ESL PreK-9, ESL 5-12, and English 7-12. She has also taught in adult education and workplace education. The following is an excerpt from Susan's nomination letter:

*Susan is an exceptional teacher and contributor to the Medford Public Schools. She initiated and developed a literacy program, when she realized there were many students coming from underprivileged countries who, while anxious to learn, had been deprived, due to circumstances in their countries. She presented this program at a MABE Conference and was highly received.*

*Susan has also worked with newcomer students, who speak no English at all. By the half way mark in the year, these students are able to understand and speak enough English to survive and by the end of the school year, they have achieved an intermediate level of proficiency.*

*Susan never complains, and always goes above and beyond. She took on teaching General Science and Health this year due to changes under the new SEI mandate. Susan's classroom is very inviting—she creates an environment where newcomers feel welcomed, and able to work.*

*In order to help students to get to know others in the school community, Susan initiated an International Club which she advised for many years.*

*Susan is a teacher that students trust and seek out for assistance in many ways. When students have personal problems, Susan helps them to resolve these issues, often going into her own resources to respond to the student or family need. She is diligent in her charge, and always cooperative and respectful. She is a teacher that any high school student would appreciate having!*

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## Honoring ELL Teachers

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**Currents**

## UMBELINA BAPTISTA

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Lina Baptista is a Grade 3 Sheltered English teacher at Woodrow Wilson School in Framingham, MA. Lina has been teaching for 27 years as a Bilingual Portuguese and Sheltered English teacher. She has a BA from Framingham State College and degrees from Regis College in Special Education and UMass/Boston in ESL. In addition she holds teaching licenses for Elementary K-8, Bilingual Portuguese K-8, ESL 1-6 and Young Children with Special Needs 3-7. We'd like to share an excerpt from Lina's nomination letter:

*Lina is the kind of teacher that every parent would want for his or her child. She teaches a Brazilian population, all of whom are still in the process of acquiring full proficiency in English. Each year the students in her class represent a wide range of English proficiency, academic ability and learning styles. Within her class, she has students who speak no English, who have just arrived from Brazil. She has other students who have been here, have acquired intermediate to advanced proficiency in English and are almost ready to move to a standard curriculum English classroom. Some students have strong academic preparation in Brazil and others have had weak preparation.*

*Lina significantly differentiates her instruction and she does this expertly.*

*Lina participates in courses and workshops each year to continually up-date her knowledge of current research and practice. She has also worked with different curriculum coordinators to develop and implement new science and social studies units required by the changes in the state curriculum framework. Lina is a mentor to teachers new to our field and works towards educating standard curriculum peers as well.*

*In addition to her curriculum knowledge, and ability to plan and implement effective instruction, Lina has wonderful classroom management skills and enjoys a wonderful relationship with both her students and their parents. She sets clear expectations for classroom behavior and interpersonal relationships for her students, and consistently reinforces these expectations. Her classroom is characterized by warmth, mutual respect, seriousness of purpose, a love of learning and fun. Lina's relationship with the parents of her students is characterized by respect and genuine concern for each family. She communicates frequently and openly with them. They often seek her out for advice related to issues*



Lina Baptista and Susan McDaniel

### Honoring ELL Teachers

*other than the education of their children and often years after they have left her classroom. In every way Lina demonstrates the skills and characteristics of a dedicated, exceptional teacher.*

MATSOL and MABE congratulate our Teachers of the Year! Through communications over the next year, we look forward to sharing information about the schools and classrooms of each of these teachers. Stay tuned as we highlight Susan's and Lina's teaching practice and classrooms, and those salient qualities, qualifications, academic and personal experiences, that make for a model ELL teacher!

### MATSOL/MABE Conference

Leominster, MA

March 11-12, 2005

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## What Second Language Learners Have to Say about Their Experiences

by Terri French

Literacy research is conducted all over the world in order to determine educational policy and drive classroom practice. However, the directives that follow are often heavily politically based rather than educationally sound. It seems that the ongoing debate between the past performance of bilingual education and the current impetus into full English immersion does not escape such scrutiny. Shortly after the new legislation passed here in Massachusetts, the adamant desire of some to compromise on the program delivery model had a boomerang effect on the voters and legislators who advocated the strict enforcement of the new principle. “The will of the people has been violated,” was the outcry.

Well, not all of the people, as not all of the school administrators, teachers, students and parents were heard from in the media. Interested in the first hand opinions of ESL learners themselves, I decided to ask their opinions. As a teacher-as-researcher, I wanted to find out how their different experiences compared to the research findings, and which type of program worked better.

C. R., a 43 year old female, was born and raised in Italy and came to the U.S. with her family at age 14. She received instruction in a structured ESL format when she arrived at an area high school, and has since achieved sufficient proficiency in English to become an accredited ESL teacher at the secondary level. She has worked in that capacity for over 15 years. Since C. R. had studied English in middle school in Italy, she saw her immersion into the English language as an opportunity to speed up the learning process. She also saw it as a pressure, however, because her parents and two older siblings, who spoke only Italian, relied on her solely to interpret in family matters and everyday business affairs. Her desire to learn the language was mostly influenced by her social desire to increase her circle of friends beyond the local Italian community. Secondly, it also would have made studying academic material easier since she had to frequently consult the bilingual dictionary to get her work done. She eventually mastered the language, as evidenced by her consequent employment as an accredited ESL teacher. She also received a Master’s Degree in Education from the University of Massachusetts in Lowell.

C. R. feels her proficiency with oral and written language is equal, but does admit that writing takes more time. When asked whether she judges her social conversation skills as well as her academic/cognitive language skills to be commensurate with native speakers, she judged them both to be at the proficient level. She thinks primarily in English, although has noticed thinking in Italian more often since meeting and marrying her husband, whose primary language is still Italian. C. R. is a proponent of bilingual education, especially the two-way system. Immersion in the English language and American culture during her early teenage years, even with the support of ESL classes, was a difficult transition both socially and academically. She feels that the two-way system is advantageous because it fosters interaction and sharing, builds self-esteem and pride for one’s own language and culture, increases the desire and motivation to learn, and thereby expedites the acquisition process. She also feels that it is largely the family’s responsibility to preserve the integrity of the native language and culture, but that the school should facilitate the effort.

Research finds that literacy and subject knowledge in the first language transfers to literacy and subject knowledge in the second language, resulting in second language fluency (Smith 1994). C. R.’s placement in regular English class after two years in ESL demonstrates the finding that formal academic preparation in the native language promotes greater initial success in the second language (Collier 1989; Cummins 1981b). Although she has a noticeable accent, she is very well spoken and the accent does not interfere with communication. This connects to the findings that the focus of acquisition should be on communication rather than rote rule learning (Oller 1993) and that permanent errors do not impede overall communication. Early exposure to a second language is often responsible for the elimination of the first language accent, but in C. R.’s case, exposure was late and the accent remains (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982).

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## MATSOL's Advocacy for Professional Development

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This failure is happening at a time when great attention is being given to teacher quality to ensure students' learning and achievement. It is imperative that the qualifications of teachers of English language learners meet a similar high standard and that the state support this enormous effort, with adequate funding long-term through the state budget. To be able to do this successfully, MATSOL has worked to educate legislators about the achievement gap, and about the critical role of and the strategy of increasing teacher professional development as a means to improving classroom instruction and the ability for ELLs to meet our high Massachusetts educational standards.

Working with a wide coalition of organizations, state agency personnel, and leaders in K-12 and higher education preparation (including leadership from META, ELL program directors and coordinators, members of MATSOL, and superintendents), MATSOL was able to convince the Legislature to include a budget amendment to earmark one million dollars for professional development of SEI teachers this fiscal year. Due to this success, MATSOL has been able to bring to the forefront and reverse Governor Romney's early budget cut from the Board of Educator's budget. The office for Language Acquisition and Student Achievement at the DOE will be responsible for the expenditure of this million dollars. MATSOL will continue to advocate for long-term funding to support the achievement of English Language Learners through professional development.

We thank MATSOL members for their support of this advocacy work. We invite any MATSOL members to become involved with our advocacy initiatives. For more information, contact Leah Natell at <leahlillian@aol.com>.

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## Freedom to Learn Event

by Eileen Feldman

MATSOL honored two members, Ruth Spack and Vivian Zamel, for contributions to the profession; Roger Rice, education attorney, and City Councilor Felix Arroyo were honored for their advocacy on behalf of ELL students. The event was held at the International Institute on October 30, 2003 to raise funding for MATSOL's work in support of English Language Learners. The director of the Institute Moira Lacey welcomed the group, MATSOL President Zoe Morosini recalled the mission of MATSOL and its immediate goals. Speeches by the award recipients followed.

Ruth reassured that the classroom teacher can accomplish small and great miracles. She is presently director of ESOL programs at Bentley College, formerly at Tufts; recently she was awarded the MLA Shaughnessy Prize for literature in ESL, the Innovation in Teaching Award, and the Curricular Service-Learning Award. Publications include *America's Second Tongue: American Indian Education and the Ownership of English, 1860-1900*, *Guidelines: A Cross-cultural Reading and Writing Test*, *The International Story: An Anthology with Guidelines for Reading and Writing about Fiction*.

Vivian reflected on the experiences that drew her into ESOL, among them her father's struggle to learn English and his pride in her. Director of ESOL Programs at UMass Boston and director of UMass Center for Improvement of Teaching, she was granted the first Professorship of Pedagogy there. Writings include *The Discovery of Competence: Teaching and Learning with Diverse Student Learners*, *Negotiating Academic Literacies*. Together Ruth and Vivian wrote *Enriching ESOL Pedagogy: Readings and Activities for Engagement, Reflection, and Inquiry* (Erlbaum) and *Crossing the Curriculum: Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms* (Erlbaum).

Both have been dedicated members of the MATSOL Board and frequent presenters at conferences in Boston, nationally and internationally. Ruth served on the MATSOL Board from 1989-1992, when she edited the Newsletter and chaired the Publications Committee. Vivian served on the Board for several years, being President from 1982-83.

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## Rhode Island SIG Becomes Involved

Rhode Island ESL and Bilingual teachers, functioning as MATSOL's Special Interest Group (SIG), are fully represented at all levels in MATSOL including editorial submission for *Currents*. May this become an example for other SIGs!



Snapshots from RI SIG event, June 2004

*Providing professional development and support to educators who work with English language learners*

## ESL and Bilingual Education: Now Needed More Than Ever

by Tabetta Bernstein

If anyone has doubted the need for bilingual and ESL education in Rhode Island, doubt no more. With the influx of students from Latin America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and other countries where the majority of the population is comprised of non-English-speakers, the needs of English language learners in our classrooms cannot be ignored.

According to data from the U.S. Department of Education's Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient Students, the percentage of English language learners (ELLs) enrolled in Rhode Island schools has grown by a whopping 38.9% in the ten-year period between the 1992-93 school year and the 2002-2003 school year. During the 2002-03 school year, a total number of 11,600 ELLs were enrolled in RI schools. This increase in the ELL population comes at a time when the total enrollment population of students in RI schools has actually decreased from 171,423 students during the 1992-93 school year to 158,000 during the 2002-03 school year. That means that though less students are enrolled in Rhode Island schools overall (a 7.8% decrease in the aforementioned 10 year period), the ELL population continues to increase.

The data implies that over time more and more of the students sitting in our classrooms will likely be non-native speakers of English. The 2000 Census data reveals that of the 184,374 children between the ages of 5-17, 12,170 of them do not speak English "very well". Trends suggest that this number has increased in the four years since the 2000 Census.

How many of the students in your school are non-native speakers of English? How many of them are sitting right now in general education classrooms, escaping the notice of the public and possibly the building principal and classroom teacher? More importantly, what can we, as educators, do to help these students find success in our RI schools? The students are there and they are waiting for us to meet their needs. It is our duty to make sure those needs are met.

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*Currents*

# WIDA Standards: What Are They and How Do They Affect Us?

by Tabettha Bernstein

Lately most of us in the bilingual/ESL field have been hearing the buzz about WIDA but many are still confused. What are these WIDA Standards? What happened to the old TESOL Standards? If we are responsible for the WIDA Standards, are we still responsible for the general education state standards as well?

So much to wonder about – but let’s just begin at the beginning. WIDA stands for Wisconsin, Delaware and Arkansas, the first three states to join together and create the WIDA Consortium. Later New Hampshire, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Rhode Island, Maine and Vermont also joined the fold, for a total of nine involved states. The creation of this consortium and the subsequent standards produced were spurred by the regulations of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Under NCLB, the old TESOL standards were not considered sufficiently rigorous, particularly in terms of addressing bilingual and LEP (limited English proficient) content courses.

The new WIDA standards encompass five English language proficiency standards, four language domains, five language proficiency levels and four grade level clusters. The five ELP standards are **Social and**

**Instructional (Standard 1), Language Arts (Standard 2), Mathematics (Standard 3), Science (Standard 4), and Social Studies (Standard 5).** For each standard, model performance indicators specify the skills students should learn in each of the **four domains (Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing)**, for each of the **four grade level clusters (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12)** at each of the **five language proficiency levels (Entering, Beginning, Developing,**

## **Expanding, Bridging).**

Along with the new standards, comes a new English language proficiency assessment. **ACCESS for ELLs**, a collaborative effort between the WIDA Consortium and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), measures proficiency for each standard and domain. The students’ results are then described in terms of the five English language proficiency levels. Piloted this fall in the WIDA Consortium states, ACCESS for ELLs will debut as the new English language proficiency exam in Rhode Island starting in the fall of 2005.

Many are wondering about the ESL/bilingual teacher’s responsibility to the state standards (in RI the GLEs – grade level expectations, and the GSEs – grade span expectations). Though the Rhode Island Department of Education has not yet aligned the WIDA standards with the GLE/GSEs, teachers are being encouraged to plan lessons

that embed skills specified by both for the appropriate grade and proficiency levels. Some districts have already begun alignment work and hopefully in the near future a document showing this alignment will be made available to teachers.

For now, the best move for most bilingual and ESL teachers is to get their hands on a copy of the WIDA Standards booklet and to begin figuring out how they can appropriately address the standards for their student population. Booklets may be available through your district ESL/bilingual directors. For more information, log on to WIDA Web site <<http://www.wida.us>>.

## *WIDA Standards*

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**Vol. 29, No.2**

**Keep Your Eyes Open**

for more RI SIG events!

## Mandated Methods and Teacher Training

by John M. Green

English Department, Salem State College

In recent years, I have noticed disturbing trends in our field.

Among the many working teachers enrolled in my graduate classes in TESL at Salem State, I have found increasing anger and frustration because of an erosion of teacher autonomy, a decline in respect for classroom teachers, and a general rise in the frequency of teacher bashing under the banner of “accountability.”

If this is the direction in which we are going, I wonder what the implications are for teacher training of all kinds, in formal courses like mine, in informal inservice workshops, and in professional conferences.

I am wondering whether it still makes sense to view ESL teachers as professionals who have a great deal of latitude in deciding what methods and classroom practices will best serve the needs of their students, and to preach the virtues of teacher creativity, reflective teaching, and a spirit of inquiry.

More and more, it seems that ESL teachers are being told what methods and activities they should be using. Decisions about teaching philosophies, goals, and methods are being made by others, often in response to legal mandates formulated by people with questionable agendas who know less about second language acquisition than classroom teachers do. A notable example here in Massachusetts is the law passed by voters in 2002 outlawing bilingual education as a possible educational model and demanding that teachers help ELLs attain proficiency in a much shorter period of time than what would be realistic according to the generally accepted research in our field.

Other examples of mandated policies contributing to a Dilbertesque work environment that disempowers teachers have to do with implementation of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, and especially those aspects relating to assessment. Here is one example. Schools in Massachusetts are

told by the state Department of Education to use LAS (Language Assessment Scales) results for program placement and exiting criteria [Editor's Note: LAS has now been replaced with MEPA, the creation of this new instrument involved teachers from all over the state]. The LAS tests, which used to be scored by teachers, are now given in late April and scored off site – at considerable cost, by the way. Results last year did not arrive until the end of June, and as of this writing it seems probable that they will arrive at about the same time this year. Placement decisions are typically made in May, and certainly not on the last day of school. Assessment issues, of course, are not limited to English language learners and their teachers. A recent report by a coalition of Massachusetts groups representing teachers, administrators, school boards, and parents<sup>1</sup> highlights the unrealistic definition of “proficiency” as measured by the high-stakes MCAS test, which seems calculated to set

schools and teachers up for failure in the ratings system.

No Child Left Behind was originally supported by liberals in the belief that it would mean more funding for education. The law passed, but the expected funding was not forthcoming. The original intent of the law was

laudable: to use education as a lever to help solve very real and very serious problems of socioeconomic inequality in America. Because of underfunding and because education is only one piece of the puzzle to begin with, NCLB represents an attempt to attack a host of difficult problems with a cheap and easy fix. This is like trying to repair the transmission on an 18-wheeler with a jack from the trunk of a Camry. The message we are hearing is “we don’t want to spend more money, all we need to do is squeeze teachers harder.” And if the cheap and easy fix doesn’t work, it will be because the teachers haven’t tried hard enough.

*Continued on page 16*

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### *Dilbertesque Work Environment*

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Currents



## Over the Transom

by Sterling Giles

*Currents* has recently received the following books for review: Longman has expanded its true stories series with *Beyond True Stories*, a high-intermediate text with rich exploration of each engaging topic, bringing the relationship between reading, thinking, and writing alive.

Michigan has quite a few new offerings. The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *Reader's Choice* is now available in split editions for teaching situations which don't justify the purchase of such a hefty book. *Giving Academic Presentations* is a wonderfully accessible student text with lots of self evaluation and examples. Another text in their EAP series is *Building Academic Vocabulary*, with units organized around key concepts (i.e. exclusion); each unit has a short list of essential words to master and a longer list of related words. The approach is fairly analytical and might serve writing better than reading. *More Mastery: Vocabulary for Academic Reading*, on the other hand, takes a natural approach via topics which introduce American culture; this is an expansion of the earlier *Mastery* which, like its predecessor, has lots of pre- and post-reading exercises. *Testing Your Grammar* is now out in a revised edition; this book for advanced students is thorough and gets right down to business. Students approaching a standard test could find it quite useful. Previously Michigan issued the advanced text *Discussion Starters*; the title speaks for itself. They now also offer *First Discussion Starters* for lower-level students and *More Discussion Starters*, also for the advanced level.

Pearson/Longman has a suite of video-based CD-ROM multimedia courses. There are four levels of the general, integrated skills *Longman English Interactive*, two business offerings, and a prep course for the TOEIC. There are also two levels of *Side By Side Interactive*, offered with or without civics content. It's time we all started moving beyond books, so I particularly hope someone will want to review one of these.

Thomson/Heinle has updated a number of already popular materials. *Reading Advantage* is in a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. *Themes for Today* and *Insights for Today* are in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> editions, respectively, with some new, engaging topics and related internet activities, as well as video based on the house's collaboration with CNN. *Weaving it Together* is also in a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition with news video, internet activities, longer reading passages, and a greater variety of exercise types.

If you are interested in writing a review of any of these texts, or receiving a more complete list of available titles, contact Sterling Giles at (617) 421-9134, <sterlrg@aol.com>. You can earn PDP's for writing published reviews.

### MATSOL, MA \* SAUA/SATE, SLOVAKIA PARTNERSHIP TEACHER EXCHANGE.

Calling for MATSOL hosts for Slovak guests.

March 9 -19 , 2005

We are presently seeking MATSOL teachers to serve as hosts for Slovak English teachers during the exchange. Four teachers anxiously await our response. The number of guests depends on the number of MATSOL hosts. There will be a planned, but flexible program of professional and social activities, as well as unplanned opportunities to accommodate everyone involved.

Time is short. If you are interested, contact Marjorie Soriano, MATSOL liaison to SAUA/SATE, call 978-927-2077 or e-mail <marjorie.s@juno.com>.

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## What Second Language Learners Have to Say

*Continued from page 13*

Second language learners understand first and express later (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982), but that academic proficiency takes anywhere from four to 10 years to accomplish, depending on the age at immersion and the amount of previous schooling (Collier 1989). C. R. feels that she comprehended English well after two years of ESL, but that fluent expression took about six years to accomplish. C. R.'s parents did not learn English at all and that her two older sisters have acquired a limited amount of proficiency. This may have slowed her second language acquisition (Ahktar, Dunham, and Dunham 1991).

T. C., a 54 year old male, was born and raised in The Chinatown neighborhood in Boston and was first exposed to the English language upon entering first grade. He received no second language support or instruction at school and thus was placed in an immersion-type or "sink or swim" situation. He has since achieved sufficient proficiency in English to become an accredited AMA ophthalmologist and has worked in that capacity for over 26 years. T. C. saw his immersion into the English language as neither an opportunity nor a pressure. He experienced it as an expectation and a demand from both the school system and the family. He grew up with the expectation that he "better act and think American." Although the family spoke only Chinese at home, his desire and drive to learn English was "all encompassing and seen as a means of succeeding at school, in the community and eventually the world." T. C. feels that he is more proficient in oral skills than written, and that his social and cognitive language skills are commensurate with native English speakers. When asked which language he thinks in, he said he did not know, but that the expression of the English language is automatic for him.

T. C. reports that he is an advocate of full immersion because it worked for him. He also feels that it is solely the family's responsibility to preserve the integrity of the native language and culture, and that this should not be taught in a structured class at school. T. C. has

absolutely no accent, and although he said that he makes constant permanent errors, absolutely no pronunciation or grammatical errors were observed. If speaking to this individual anonymously on the telephone, his Chinese lineage would be undetectable. He speaks English and Chinese, but also has a working knowledge of both Latin and French, which he studied in high school. He also reports occasional code switching, but more on an unconscious level, at which time he reminds himself that he is speaking in the wrong language. When his medical students speak to him in Chinese, he tells them, "I know you can speak Chinese. I need to know how you speak English, so use it." T. C.'s father became a fluent English speaker as a result of his job as a waiter in Chinatown and having constant exposure to the tourists. His mother, who worked as a seamstress in a small shop with little to no exposure to the English speaking world, speaks half Chinese and half English. There are some contradictions between his

experiences and the research findings. Specifically, he had no prior schooling or preparation in content areas in his native language prior to entering first grade with which to transfer skills, nor did it take him four to seven years to acquire proficiency.

C. R. became fluent in her second language in spite of the research finding that the ESL Pull-Out program model, the one in which she effectively learned English, has the lowest efficacy rate. T. C. became fluent in his second language in spite of the fact that he had no prior schooling or transferable literacy skills before his immersion. Both subjects reported gaining comprehensible input from caregivers and the larger community, a key factor in second language acquisition. These contradictions can only be explained by both subjects being the recipients of quality educational principles and programs, sound teaching practices, and effective strategies regardless of the program model label and in the absence of any program whatsoever.

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### English Proficiency

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*C u r r e n t s*

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When high efficacy program models and/or transferable literacy skills are not present, other factors that are responsible for language acquisition come into play. These other factors are the psychological, sociological, cultural, personality, gender, age, expectation and motivational differences that make up the human race, and the infinite number of variations and excesses of supply in these areas that people possess. Therefore, it stands to follow that any program model label and political edict has to allow the flexibility for these human differences and situations within the program and within the law to allow second language learners to successfully acquire the English language, and second language teachers to successfully facilitate the process.

**Disclaimer: The subjects asked that their anonymity be maintained, so only their initials are used.**

Citations follow

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Collier, V. P. (1989). How quickly can immigrants become proficient in school English? *Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students*, 16(1-2), 187-212.

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Dulay, H., Burt, M., & Krashen, S. (1982). *Language Two*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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## Editor's Note

Did you know that you can participate in putting *Currents* together?

Share with all other MATSOL members your experiences, write an article or two and earn Professional Development Points, send pictures, tell everyone what you do in the field. After all, don't you want to see the next issue of *Currents* your way? Or, simply, share with us your opinion, it counts. Let us know what you would like to see in the future.

Notice any difference this time? This long-awaited and hard-toiled issue is done in-house with the help of board members, old editors who remain active, and newcomers who bring a fresh point of view. Thanks to all of you! But for the next issue, deadline is April 15, 2005, their help won't be enough. We need you, a current MATSOL member, to participate. After all, a team works best. We are looking for motivated individuals to form our editorial board. If you are interested, don't wait, let us know.

Finally, let's have general rules for e-mail submissions: MLA format (including citations), JPEG files for images, and Word .doc files for text. Send your info to Oksana Jackim <ojackim@yahoo.com>.

We appreciate your input, in any facets it comes.

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## Mandated Methods

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If all of this represents a trend, and I fear that it does, we need to be addressing some serious and difficult questions. One that has been raised more and more often by the students in my graduate classes is this: what should teachers do when told to implement policies they believe are misguided? The best advice I have been able to come up with is this: *Don't keep quiet. Get together with others who agree with you, organize, and make your voices heard.*

And here's another tough question that must be raised: when it happens that mandated policies go against what teachers believe is right, what should be the response of our professional organizations? Should they take the pragmatic approach of working hand in glove with government agencies whose role is to implement and enforce policies, and give teachers tools to implement what is mandated, even if the mandates don't make sense? Or on the other hand, should our professional organizations be aggressive and vocal advocates for curriculum and assessment aligned with what is really possible for teachers and developmentally appropriate for students? Or should they try to do both?

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<sup>1</sup> MassPartners for Public Schools, "A Call to Action: Don't Shortchange Children." February 2004. Available online at <http://www.mfteducator.org/NewEducHigh.htm>

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## The New England Bilingual Special Education Network and MATSOL Merge

We are pleased to inform you that as of March 2004 the New England Bilingual Special Education Network (NBSEN) became an active special interest group of MATSOL, merging our common interests and mission. The MATSOL Board of Directors and NBSEN steering committee are confident that this merger will help foster the mission, the identity, and the major focus of our organizations. Promoting professional development and sound educational policies to enhance the educational opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse students with disabilities has been and will continue to be the major focus of this interest group within MATSOL. The steering committee for this SIG is currently planning for an event in March that will be held at the MATSOL-MABE 2005 Conference. We will also hold a meeting of our members at the conference to plan for future meetings and events, and to address the top needs you have identified for your professional development plans.

As a special interest group of MATSOL our records and membership list are now part of MATSOL. We encourage you and bilingual special educators from across the New England states to join MATSOL or to renew your membership now, as part of our Special Interest Group. If you are not interested in remaining in our membership databank, please E-mail Maria Wilson-Portuondo, Steering Committee Secretary at <Maria\_Wilson-Portuondo@brown.edu> or send a written message to:

Maria Wilson-Portuondo  
222 Richmond St., Suite 300  
Providence, RI 02903.

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*C u r r e n t s*



## Project-Oriented English Learning: How ESL Students Designed a School Calendar and Sold It as a Fundraiser

by Monika Floyd

It has become a tradition at the Power Program, the Adult Learning Center in Waltham, to dedicate the last four weeks in the school year to a school-wide project. Last year's topic was *Navigating Our City*, and I brainstormed with my ESL Beginner students about things they like or dislike in the city where they live.

The list of "likes" was long and included the good schools, the library, the shops and restaurants, the transportation system, the cleanliness of the city, the many parks, the safety and the job opportunities, to mention only a few. Paired up in twelve interest groups, the students then were asked to pick and explore their favorite feature of Waltham and prepare a short presentation about it. Equipped with disposable cameras, they headed out to the library, schools, City Hall, Recreation Department, Boys and Girls Club, etc. to gather information and to shoot photos that supported their topic.

The photos were digitally developed and the groups were told to select the best photo and to write a short comment to go with it.

It was at this point that we discussed the display of the data on poster boards or booklets and since we had 12 pages, the idea of a calendar came up.

While the majority of the students worked on poster board displays, some computer-savvy students designed with the help of *The Calendar Creator* software, 12 illustrated calendar pages. Then they added the school vacation dates for the new school year and hole-punched and string-bound the calendars.

At the end, every student received a calendar and, since other students had become curious, we produced additional copies and sold them in support of a school-wide fundraiser.

A fun project, easily adaptable and a multi-level learning experience!

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## The Reform Agenda: Leave No ELL Behind

### *Policies – Practices – Programs*

2005 MABE-MATSOL K-12 Conference, Leominster, MA, March 11-12, 2005

### **MATSOL and MABE are pleased to announce a special theme!**

The Bilingual Special Education Network SIG, with the leadership of Dr. Maria Luisa Wilson-Portuondo, Dr. Pat Landurand, and Dr. Maria Serpa, have organized sessions over the course of the two-day conference that will address many of the issues, and best practices in addressing the special education needs of English language learners. As part of this special conference theme, and as a special benefit to members of the Bilingual Special Education Network SIG and conference attendees, the Network will offer an additional keynote session on Friday afternoon, in conjunction with these conference sessions. Don't forget to register early for the MABE-MATSOL Conference! Last year our conference sold out! Register today! Registration forms can be found on the MATSOL website <[www.matsol.org](http://www.matsol.org)> or the MABE website <[www.massmabe.org](http://www.massmabe.org)>.

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## English Language Learners/Bilingual Education Advisory Council Members Appointed to Advise Board of Education

This year, a new ELL/Bilingual Advisory Council was formed based on an application process that the MA Department of Education opened to the public. Several MATSOL members and board members applied and were accepted to serve on this council, and work to evaluate and provide input to the Department of Education and Board of Education on important matters related to the education of ELLs in our public schools. MATSOL would like to congratulate all of its members who have stepped forth to become involved in the work of this council and who will be advocates for English language learners and their teachers.

The English Language Learners/Bilingual Education Advisory Council's role is to advise the Board of Education, through the Commissioner, on matters pertaining to the education of limited English proficient (LEP) students in Massachusetts public schools. The Council's composition includes public school teachers and administrators, representatives from higher education, community members, and parents. The highest priorities set for the English Language Learners/Bilingual Education Advisory Council, according to information provided by the Department, continue to be LEP student participation on statewide testing in English proficiency and MCAS and the urgent need to assess and improve LEP student performance at all levels and in all subjects tested. Although student assessment data has historically been collected, this is the first time that a more in-depth analysis of achievement patterns of LEP students has been undertaken.

### The Council is engaged in the following activities:

- Advising the Commissioner and the Board of Education on qualifications for teachers in Sheltered English immersion classrooms and the development of appropriate endorsement(s) and/or licensure.
- Discussing data on the performance of English language learners and clarification of other testing issues including the review of the annual measurable achievement objectives.
- Advising the Commissioner and the Board of Education on issues concerning the development of English proficiency and academic achievement of limited English proficient students.

Meetings of the Council are open meetings and MATSOL encourages members to attend if possible and to communicate with us on a regular basis about your needs, concerns and input that might inform the advising and advocacy work that our members on this council do.

### Meeting Schedule:

The meetings are held at the Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA.

Friday, December 10, 2004	12-2:30 P.M.	Room 203
Friday, January 14, 2005	12-2:30 P.M.	Room 3A
Tuesday, March 8, 2005	12-2:30 P.M.	Room 3B
Tuesday, April 12, 2005	12-2:30 P.M.	Room 3B
Friday, June 10, 2005	12-2:30 P.M.	Room 3A

### Council Members:

Paul Abraham	Professor, Simmons College
Gary Abdullah	Principal, Donahue Elementary, Holyoke Public Schools
Margaret Adams	Department Head Bilingual/ESL Services K-8, Brockton Public Schools

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Nancy Clair	Education Specialist, Center for Applied Linguistics
Michaela Colombo	Professor of Education, University of Massachusetts/Lowell
Dalis Dominguez	ELL Director, Lawrence Public Schools
Katherine Earley	ESL Lead Teacher, Revere Public Schools
Victoria Ekk	Principal, North Attleboro Middle School
Kathy Frye	English Language Learners Specialist, Boston Public Schools
Michael Karanja	Parent Liaison, African Assistance Center, Lowell
Thomas King	Language Acquisition Coach, Boston Public Schools
Susan L. Schwartz	Teacher, Methuen Public Schools
Maria de Lourdes Serpa	Professor, Lesley University
Natasha Soolkin	Russian Community Association of Massachusetts, Lynn

DOE Contact: Nyal Fuentes, Office for Language Acquisition and Academic Achievement

## **Governor Romney Releases House 1- Impact on MATSOL Advocacy Work**

This past week as Currents was ready to go to press, Gov. Romney released his budget and the MATSOL Board wanted to update you on issues related to ABE and ELL line items.

First, Governor Romney included an additional \$8,000,000 for Adult Basic Education programs in his initial FY2006 budget, known as

House I. This is a significant step forward in our organizational efforts to advocate for expanded services for adult English language learners we represent, who are served by all types of ABE programs and the continuum of services in our Massachusetts ABE system, including ESOL, literacy, workplace education programs, and GED. MATSOL recognizes the potential for this increase to first and foremost help to strengthen the infrastructure of the ABE system, as capacity funding, while directly addressing a reduction in the ABE waitlist of more than 25,000 adults in Massachusetts. The Governor joined the leadership and clients of the International Institute of Boston on Friday, January 28th to announce this funding at a press conference. Many MATSOL members from the International Institute, as well as members of the MCAE Public Policy Committee, with whom MATSOL works in partnership on ABE funding issues, were present to let the Governor know that we will be engaged in the process to secure this funding, and that this is a priority! MATSOL will continue to update you and continue to work in conjunction with MCAE and its institutional partners to support building the capacity of the Massachusetts ABE system.

In addition, the Governor's Budget this year included some of the critical funding needed to address the achievement gap that exists for English language learners in our Pre-K-12 public schools. As highlighted in another article in this Currents issue, from our 2004 annual end of year report, funding was cut by Governor Romney from the current fiscal year budget at the same time last year. This cut happened at a time where a the new state law, known as Question 2, was being implemented. MATSOL was successful in working with the legislature to reinstate funds in the joint budget of the Senate and House, that addressed the enormous professional development needs that accompanied this new law and changes in classroom instructional programs in most schools. The Board of Education requested 1.5 Million dollars for FY06 in its budget. We hope that the legislature will minimally include the full 1.5 million needed right now to address ELL achievement and the professional development of teachers working with ELLs and that they will continue to support English Language Learners as a top priority.

The MATSOL Advocacy committee will keep you posted through E-Bulletin and Advocacy Alerts as the budget process moves forward.

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New England Bilingual Special Education Network

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