

DEI Committee NEWSLETTER



December is Universal Human Rights Month!

Here are some ideas of what you could do in your classroom or at your school:

- Use this [illustrated guide](#) to explore the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Acknowledge [Human Rights Day](#) & choose an activity from [this list](#) or [this one](#) to do with students on December 10th.
- [Choose a book](#) to read with your students about organizing for human rights for all.
- [Teach about peace](#) in your classroom.
- Follow [Peace One Day](#) on social media & Tune into [Space Transformers Live](#) on December 21.

Calendar - December

(Source: Seramount)

December is [Universal Human Rights Month!](#)

For more information about the following events and holidays, [click here](#):

November 28-December 6:

Hanukkah, a Jewish holiday celebrating the victory of the Maccabees, or Israelites, over the Greek-Syrian ruler, Antiochus.

December 1: World AIDS Day, commemorating those who have died of AIDS.

December 3: International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

December 8: Immaculate Conception of Mary, celebrated by various Christian sects.

December 8: Bodhi Day, the Buddhist holiday that commemorates the day that the historical Buddha experienced enlightenment.

December 10: International Human Rights Day.

December 12: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a religious holiday in Mexico.

December 13: St. Lucia's Day, a religious festival of light in Scandinavia and Italy.

December 16-24: Las Posadas, a nine-day religious celebration in Mexico.

December 21: Yule Winter Solstice, celebrated by Pagans and Wiccans.

December 25: Christmas Day.

December 26: Boxing Day, a secular holiday in the UK and other countries.

December 26-January 1: Kwanzaa, an African-American holiday to celebrate universal African-American heritage.

December 26: Zartosht No-Diso, a day of remembrance in the Zoroastrian religion.

December 26: St. Stephen's Day, in some Christian sects.

December 26: Feast of the Holy Family in the Catholic church.

December 27: St. John's Day in some Christian denominations.

December 28: Feast of the Holy Innocents.

December 31: Watch Night, in some Christian sects.

We are accepting submissions: [Contact us](#) to contribute to this newsletter in the future.

NEC Diversity events

DEI Drop-in Group: Join us for our monthly meeting Monday, December 20, 3-4 pm. Check your email for reminder and zoom link!

Outside PD Opportunities:

- Tuesday, 12/7 at 7pm, GBH is hosting a discussion about Culturally Responsive Literacy Development. [More info here.](#)
- MPY is offering several DEI-themed PD Opportunities in December. Earn PDPs and learn more about DEI topics. [Click here for more information.](#) [Sign up here.](#)

Mailing List Link: tinyurl.com/nsecdiversity

Join our mailing list to get regular updates on DEI-themed PD, articles, videos and more!

DEI Keyword of the Month: Land

Acknowledgement

Our DEI Keyword this month is **Land**

Acknowledgement. In recent years, many community meetings, especially those focused on DEI, begin with a land acknowledgment. According to [this guide](#), “Indigenous land acknowledgment is an effort to recognize the Indigenous past, present, and future of a particular location and to understand our own place within that relationship. Usually, land acknowledgements take the form of written and/or verbal statements.”

Consider the questions below and use [these tips](#) to create your own land acknowledgement:

- 1) Whose land was this before settlement?
- 2) By what mechanism did the people lose it?
- 3) Where are their descendants today?

DEI Article of the Month - Inclusive Holidays in the Classroom

[This article](#) from Learning for Justice spotlights the discomfort that students and families can feel when winter holiday classroom celebrations are not inclusive. Some tips from the article are to ask students and families which holidays they celebrate, and teach about a variety of holidays. If you learn that a student celebrates a holiday outside of American Christian holidays, plan ahead to include that holiday into the right time of year. Overall, like much of what we do, building relationships and learning from our students is key!

DEI during the Holidays - Speak Up!

As we enter the holiday season, many of us will be interacting with family members that we haven't seen in a while. Oftentimes this can lead to uncomfortable situations and conversations, and it can be hard to know how to respond. [This document](#) provides real stories and offers suggestions and advice about how to engage in difficult conversations about DEI-related issues. The first section shares specifically about how to “Speak Up!” when engaging with family members.

NEC Community Spotlight:

At the North Shore Lower School, we have been working on exposing students to inspiring people from all over the world who have exhibited resilience and perseverance. A few of the people the students learned about were: William Kamkwamba (created a windmill for his village in Wimbe, Africa), Ruby Bridges (first African American child to integrate into an all white school), Louis Braille (blinded himself in an accident when he was a child and then invented Braille so people who are blind can have access to books), Temple Grandin (a scientist with Autism who invented a way to treat cows more ethically) and Emmanuel Ofosu Yeboah (a man who was born with one leg who rode a bicycle across Africa to teach about people with disabilities).



Pictured: Jessica Gelb, reading specialist at NSAL

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