

# DEI Committee NEWSLETTER



## May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and Jewish American Heritage Month!

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

- Find a new book for your class about [Asian American History](#) or [Jewish Identity and History](#).
- Newsela has text sets [here](#) and [here](#) with differentiated texts for 5 different reading levels.
- Check out this [list of resources](#) for learning about Asian Pacific American history in your class.
- [Watch a webinar or print a poster](#) from Learning For Justice about APA Heritage month.
- Check out [these resources and lesson plans](#) about Jewish American Heritage Month.

### Calendar - May

(Source: Seramount)

May is [Asian Pacific American Heritage Month](#) and [Jewish American Heritage Month](#)!

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

**May 1:** Beltane, an ancient Celtic festival celebrated on May Day, signifying the beginning of summer  
**May 2–3 (sunrise to sundown):** Eid al-Fitr, the end of Ramadan. Many Muslims attend communal prayers, listen to a sermon, or share food.

**May 3:** Feasts of Saints Philip and James, a Roman rite feast day.

**May 5:** Cinco de Mayo, celebrating the Mexican Army's 1862 victory over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War.

**May 6:** National Day of Prayer, observed in the United States, where people are asked to "turn to God in prayer and meditation".

**May 8:** Buddha Day (Vesak or Visakha Puja), a Buddhist festival that marks Gautama Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and death.

**May 17:** International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia, a global celebration of sexual orientation and gender diversities

**May 18–19 (sundown to sundown):** Lag BaOmer, a Jewish holiday marking the day of hillula of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai

**May 21:** World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, a day set aside by the United Nations

**May 23–24 (sundown to sundown):** Declaration of the Báb, the forerunner of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í faith.

**May 24:** Orthodox Easter (Pascha), celebrated by Orthodox Christians

**May 26:** Ascension of Jesus or Ascension Day, celebrated within most of the Christian faith

**May 30:** Memorial Day in the United States, honoring military veterans who died in wars fought by US forces

**May 29:** Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, commemorates the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í faith

## NEC Diversity events

**DEI Drop-in Group:** Join us for our monthly meeting Monday, May 23, from 3-4. Check your email for reminder and zoom link!

### Outside PD Opportunities:

- Check out [this playlist of webinars](#) from The GBH Peer Exchange, many of which contain themes related to DEI and Culturally Responsive Teaching.

**Mailing List Link:** [tinyurl.com/nsecdiversity](https://tinyurl.com/nsecdiversity)

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

## DEI Keyword of the Month: Privilege

Have you heard the term **privilege** and wondered what it is and whether you have it? [This video from Lean In defines privilege](#) as “the unearned advantage we get from being part of a dominant group whose needs have traditionally been prioritized.” This can be related to your race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, or some other aspect of your identity. Ijeoma Oluo, author of *So You Want to Talk about Race?* defines it a bit differently in [this video interview](#). She finds it easier to understand privilege not as a gift, but as “a specific set of hurdles that you don’t have to overcome.” Having privilege doesn’t mean your life has been easy, just that there are certain barriers that haven’t been in your way.

## DEI Article of the Month: Is Cinco de Mayo Mexican Independence Day?

Do you know the history of Cinco de Mayo? Many mistakenly believe that it is Mexican Independence Day. In fact, Mexicans celebrate their independence day on September 16. [In Mexico](#), only those within the state of Puebla tend to celebrate Cinco de Mayo, and it is not a federal holiday. The holiday was brought to the US through Mexican American immigrants, but didn’t become [part of popular culture](#) until food and beverage companies started advertising it. Want to teach about Cinco de Mayo? Check out [this article](#) to learn more about how to teach Cinco de Mayo and Mexican history without appropriating Mexican culture or reinforcing stereotypes.

## NEC Community Spotlight: DEI Initiatives at NSAU

We sat down with Casey Jones, staff member at North Shore Academy Upper School, to discuss some of the DEI initiatives she and others have been implementing throughout the school year. She has helped to establish an LGBTQ+ alliance group for students. They meet weekly to have conversations in a safe environment and support each other, and they have found ways to take action. For example, they created NSAU’s first LGBTQ+ awareness week, happening this week. The group created buttons with LGBTQ+ friendly themes and images and are distributing them to staff and students this week. Casey also hosts weekly discussions with NSAU staff about DEI initiatives and questions. If you would like to implement any similar initiatives in your school or with your students, feel free to email Casey or a member of the DEI committee for more info.

You can also print one of Casey’s AAPI posters, like the one below, for your school [here](#).



# AWARENESS WEEK

**Monday: Flag Day**  
Bring your pride flag!

**Tuesday: History Day**  
Learn about the LGBTQ+ community.

**Wednesday: Trivia Day**  
Check your emails for a trivia form.  
Prizes will be awarded!

**Thursday: Remembrance Day**  
Wear purple in remembrance of those who paved the road for us.

**Friday: Bake Sale!**  
The bake sale will take place Thursday and Friday.



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