No, I don't see the relevance or importance of teaching Wabanaki Studies. I heard about it during a PPS course or Community of Learners event. I heard about it from a colleague in my building. We also have had the Wabanaki Resource book since I have been here. 

Yes, I heard about it from a colleague in my building. I've nibbled on the edges of this and plan to do a lot more. I feel strongly about meeting the requirements of the law. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content.

No, I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content.

Yes, I do include Wabanaki Studies in Sociology, Religion and Modern World History Classes.

Yes, I don't remember how I heard of it. Another teacher is teaching that content. Another teacher is teaching that content. Another teacher is teaching that content.

I heard about it from the social studies department head. I heard about it from a colleague in my building. I heard about it from a colleague in my building. I heard about it from a colleague in my building.

I heard about it during a PPS course or Community of Learners event. I heard about it from the social studies department head. I heard about it from the social studies department head.

I heard about it from the social studies department head. I heard about it from the social studies department head. I heard about it from the social studies department head.

I heard about it in a non-PPS course I took for recertification. I heard about it in the newspaper or another media outlet (please specify the forum in the additional comments box).

I heard about it during a PPS course or Community of Learners event. I heard about it from the social studies department head. I heard about it from the social studies department head.

I heard about it from a colleague in my building. I heard about it from a colleague in my building. I heard about it from a colleague in my building.

We also have had the Wabanaki Resource book since I have been here. We also have had the Wabanaki Resource book since I have been here. We also have had the Wabanaki Resource book since I have been here.

I know little or nothing about Wabanaki History, people, or culture. I don't know where to design Wabanaki Studies related lessons or units so they fit with my broader curriculum.

I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content.

I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content.

I am not sure how I heard of it. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content.

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I heard about it in the newspaper or another media outlet (please specify the forum in the additional comments box). Portland Press Herald

I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Level</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes 15-20 years</td>
<td>I heard about it from the social studies department head. I heard about it in a non-PPS course I took for recertification.</td>
<td>I know little or nothing about Wabanaki history, people, or culture. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I am not sure how to design Wabanaki Studies related lessons or units so they fit with my broader curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes 20+ years</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agenda

- Introductions and Announcements
- Social Studies Survey Results
- Wabanaki Studies and Native Studies Update
- Plans for 2019-2020
Social Studies Learning Progression from 2000ish

K-2: Neighborhoods and Communities (defining them, mapping them, learning basic geography and civics terms that supported defining and mapping communities)

3: The City of Portland (history, landmarks, architecture, leaders, etc)

4: The State of Maine (history, geography, economics, government, Indigenous People)


6: World Geography and Cultures

7. Ancient Civilizations: Sumer, Egypt, Greece, Rome, Muslim World, Middle Ages

8: Early US History: 13 Colonies through Reconstruction

9: World Civilizations: Sumer through the French Revolution

10: Early US History: 13 Colonies through Gilded Age

11: Modern US and World: Imperialism through Present Day
K-5 Survey Results Summary
Response Breakdown

Responses from all grade levels, K-5, and across all schools (133 responses)
Social Studies Content Covered

1 = I am not able to cover SS content, 5 = I am able to cover 5-6 units
Additional Notes

- Though the bulk of elementary school teachers do not hold a BA in history, over $\frac{1}{3}$ report having taken undergraduate courses in history and more than half have taken a social studies methods course.
- Another $\frac{2}{3}$ report having a personal interest in social studies content.
- Teachers’ additional comments reflect a desire to teach more social studies and a frustration at not having time or resources to do so.
- Many comments expressed a desire for district leadership in the area of elementary social studies.
LD 291: An Act Requiring Wabanaki Studies

Do you know about LD 291?

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about LD 291.](chart.png)

- **Yes**: 82 (62.1%)
- **No**: 53 (40.2%)
LD 291

Do you feel you are meeting the requirements of the law? (1 = no, 5 = yes)
Additional Notes

- The majority of respondents named knowing little or nothing about Wabanaki Studies and not being sure how to design a Wabanaki Studies unit as the two major barriers they face.

- Not having time and not knowing where to look for or how to evaluate resources were also named as barriers.
K-5 Social Studies Topics
# Major Themes Across K-5

## K - 2
- Holidays
- Community (school or neighborhood)
- Culture (homes, transportation, resources)
- Geography and Mapping
- Historical People
- Storytelling

## 3 - 5
- Portland
- Geography
- Maine
- Immigration
- Early US history
- Current events
- Revolutionary War
- Civil War
- Westward Expansion
K-5 Resources

- The vast majority of respondents listed “my own resources,” books, and websites as their curriculum resources.

- Some listed specific websites, such as Time for Kids, Scholastic, etc)
6 - 12 Survey Results
Response Breakdown

31 responses
Number of Years Teaching Social Studies

- 0-5 years: 6 (20%)
- 5-10 years: 3 (10%)
- 10-15 years: 7 (23.3%)
- 15-20 years: 5 (16.7%)
- 20-25 years: 6 (20%)
- 25-30 years: 3 (10%)
- more than 30 years: 0 (0%)
Additional Notes

- 26 of 31 respondents have a BA in history, have an MA in history, or are working toward an MA history. Wow!
LD 291: An Act Requiring Wabanaki Studies
LD 291

Do you feel you are meeting the requirements of the law?

- 12 (38.7%)
- 5 (16.1%)
- 10 (32.3%)
- 3 (9.7%)
- 1 (3.2%)
Additional Notes

- Respondents identified not knowing anything about Wabanaki Studies and being unsure of how to integrate Wabanaki Studies into their broader curriculum as the major barriers to meeting the requirements of LD 291.

- Fewer respondents identified not having time or not knowing where to look for resources as barriers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>6th grade</th>
<th>7th grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural studies and identity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Middle east study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public policy/UN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election</td>
<td></td>
<td>Africa (pre-colonial to modern)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speeches</td>
<td></td>
<td>Art restitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient civilizations/ancient and modern wonders of the world</td>
<td></td>
<td>Japan: history and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration/Human migration (expedition)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Early US History (colonization and slavery)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>Immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Civil rights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6-8 Social Studies Units Covered

8th grade

US geography

Early US History through Civil War Ear

Bill of Rights Expedition

Climate Change Expedition
6-8 Resources

- Many people listed teaching/curriculum websites (Teaching Tolerance, Facing History, Out of Eden, Choices, World Book Student, etc)
- Many people also listed news or history related sites (Newslea, National Geographic, History Channel, Young Person’s History of the US, Lizard Print, PEW, American Journey, CNN10, etc.)
- Others listed geography sites or books (Zombie Geography, National Geographic, Foundations in Geography)
9-12

9th - *World Civilizations* (DHS), Big History (PHS) Building Community and Questions of Conscience (CBHS)

10th - *Early US History* (PHS and DHS) Africa Rising and Arc Toward Justice (CBHS)

11th - *Modern US and World History* (PHS and DHS) Public Policy and Oral History Theater (CBHS)

12th - electives (PHS and DHS) Expert Paper (CBHS)
9-12 Resources

- Many teachers listed specific curricula, books, or textbooks, such as Big History Project, Creating America, We the People, Facing the Lion, New Visions, and The Americans.
- Many teachers also listed curriculum and news websites such as Choices, Teaching Tolerance, Facing History and Ourselves, Scholastic Upfront Magazine, CNN10, Newsela, BBC, NYT, and PBS.
- Many high school teachers also listed films as curricular resources
Realigning and Reshaping Curriculum

Through

Wabanaki Studies and Native Studies
Curriculum Development Process

Decolonization

- Collaboration
- Privileging of Indigenous Voices
- Truth Telling

PPS Process

- Tribal Leaders Advisory Group
- Wabanaki Studies Commission Report from 2002
- Teacher PD
- Resources by Indigenous Peoples
Wabanaki Studies Curriculum Map

Guiding Principle

The landscape and natural environment are sources of knowledge. Gaining knowledge from the environment and landscape (land, forests, rivers, animals, weather, etc) is critical for understanding cultures, conflicts, and societies of the past and present.
From the 2002 Commission Report . . .

A.) Who Are the Wabanaki People?
B.) Wabanaki Tribal Territories
C.) Maine Tribal Governments and Political Systems
D.) Wabanaki Economic Systems
E.) Experiences of Wabanaki People Throughout History
F.) Wabanaki Cultural Systems
Wabanaki Curriculum Map

Color Coding
Wabanaki Studies and Native Studies--for the purpose of social studies--are broken into three major components:

1. **Building Awareness and Respect** - includes natural history, geography, pre-contact culture, economics, and government
2. **Understanding Dispossession and Survival** - includes Indigenous perspective on and experiences in the period from The Age of Exploration through the Great Depression
3. **Identifying Contemporary Contributions and Challenges** - includes Indigenous perspective on and experiences from World War II through today
Wabanaki Studies Curriculum Map

A view of the curriculum map, K-12, by color coding only
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>preK-2</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Emphasis</strong></td>
<td>Developing observation and awareness of environment</td>
<td>Developing awareness of the geography and ecosystems of the Presumpscot Watershed</td>
<td>Developing awareness of the topography, geology, geography, and ecosystems of Maine</td>
<td>Developing awareness of the topography, geology, geography, and ecosystems of the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas of Focus</strong></td>
<td>Past and continued existence of Wabanaki Peoples and other Indigenous Peoples</td>
<td>Experiences of Wabanaki peoples of Southern Maine, pre and post contact</td>
<td>Experiences of Wabanaki peoples of Maine, pre and post contact</td>
<td>Experiences of Wabanaki Peoples and Indigenous Peoples of North America, pre and post contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A, B, and F</td>
<td>A, B, E, F (some C and D)</td>
<td>A-F, emphasis on C and D</td>
<td>A-F, emphasis on C and D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Studies Topics Covered</strong></td>
<td>Holidays (Indigenous Peoples’ Day and Thanksgiving)</td>
<td>Portland History</td>
<td>Maine Study</td>
<td>US Region Study Revolutionery War Westward Expansion Civil War Civil Rights Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community (School and Neighborhood)</td>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td>Immigration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historical People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Storytelling (*see note!)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Emphasis</strong></td>
<td>Developing awareness of the topography, geology, geography, and ecosystems of ancient societies</td>
<td>Developing Awareness of the topography, geology, geography, and ecosystems of world civilizations</td>
<td>Continued Awareness and Understanding of the topography, geology, geography, and ecosystems of Maine, New England, and the early colonies of the USA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas of Focus</strong></td>
<td>Early peoples and ancient societies with a focus on Indigenous peoples of the Americas</td>
<td>World civilizations with some focus on Indigenous peoples in Maine and across the globe</td>
<td>Inclusion of the perspectives and experiences of Wabanaki and other Native Peoples in the colonization and development of the US</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Studies Topics Covered that relate to Wabanaki Studies and Native Studies</strong></td>
<td>Cultural studies and identity, Ancient civilizations, Immigration</td>
<td>UN and Public Policy, Pre-colonial to Modern Africa, Art Restitution</td>
<td>Colonial America, Revolutionary War, Westward Expansion, Civil War, Constitution, Bill of Rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Re-Wilding Deering Oaks Park Expedition at the EL middle school</td>
<td>Human Migration Expedition at the EL middle school</td>
<td>Climate Change Expedition at the EL middle school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Emphasis</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>10th</td>
<td>11th</td>
<td>12th</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing and understanding of the relationship between environment and history</td>
<td>Developing understanding of the relationship between environment and history</td>
<td>Developing understanding of the relationship between environment and history</td>
<td>Refining understanding of relationship between environment, history, and contemporary issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of Focus and Guiding Questions</td>
<td>Indigenous peoples of the globe</td>
<td>Doctrine of Discovery</td>
<td>Land Claims Settlement Act of 1980</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doctrine of Discovery</td>
<td>Treaties of colonial American and the Maritimes</td>
<td>Indian Law</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>What is the relationship between Indigenous peoples and their homelands? How does it differ from non-Indigenous people?</em></td>
<td>Scalp Proclamations</td>
<td>Contemporary struggles</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>What is the relationship between genocide and land?</em></td>
<td><em>Do Native Americans have the full rights of US Citizens?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses Offered</td>
<td>World Civilizations</td>
<td>Early US History</td>
<td>Modern US and World History</td>
<td>Elective courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plans for 2019-2020

- Focus will be on design and planning for implementation
- Continued teacher PD (funding dependant)
- Tie into equity team work
- Continued collaboration with tribal leaders (2 large meetings per year)
- Continued outreach and work with Indigenous families in PPS
- Development of Teacher Advisory Committee for preK-5 and 6-12 (sign up today!!)
Where do you teach?

I have completed several undergraduate classes in the areas of history, geography, economics, government, or anthropology. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course, I am interested in history, geography, economics, government, and/or anthropology and have educated myself through reading, travel, and independent study.

I am looking for ways to teach social studies, even teach them as well as I don't necessarily teach it. Even teach them as well as I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content.

We cover 3 well planned units (explorers, colonies, our IB units. I would like an actual social studies Scope and Sequence. I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence. I would love a consistent social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers.

I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course.

I know little or nothing about Wabanaki history, people, or culture. I am not sure how to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the googled websites. I have read about it in the newspapers or another teacher education coursework mentioned it. I heard about it during a newspaper or another teacher education coursework mentioned it. I heard about it during a newspaper or another teacher education coursework mentioned it. I heard about it during a newspaper or another teacher education coursework mentioned it. I heard about it during a newspaper or another teacher education coursework mentioned it. I heard about it during a newspaper or another teacher education coursework mentioned it.

My work with social studies content varies from year to year, based off what I learned in Massachusetts, plus what I learned in grad school towards standards based learning (and even so we didn't finish the PD). I teach the role of story telling in a culture-4 weeks (not only do we read stories and shelters around the world (4 weeks), and transportation systems see Judi Riley's response-she said she detailed it out. She is on same school for purchasing them.

The above comment is me saying (and kind of half-venting), if there is any knowledge of what we should be doing and/or how we should be based unites and integrating math, reading and writing, but with new curricular resources you use regularly. Whether REACH is an appropriate curriculum for students I am teaching with. If yes, how did you hear about it? I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers.

I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. If yes, how did you hear about it? I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. If yes, how did you hear about it? I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers. If yes, how did you hear about it? I would love an across the district social studies Scope and Sequence that is evidence-based and can be integrated and used by all teachers.
Mostly as a content hook for evaluating the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or elsewhere. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I am not sure how to design Wabanaki Studies related lessons or units so they fit with my broader curriculum. There are many resources that I have but don't know how to add. I know little or nothing about Wabanaki history, people, or culture. I arrived from Spain, my native country, in January. I am trying to learn as much as I can, but there is no money available at my school for purchasing them. I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. I am not sure how to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or elsewhere.
Portland000041

I have completed several undergraduate classes in the areas of history, geography, economics, government, and/or anthropology. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have worked together to incorporate history and social studies in the classroom. I have explored the methods of teaching social studies in the curriculum through independent study. I have found resources I would use, but there is no money available at my school for purchasing them. I do not have time to pursue my interest. We have too many other daily routines and responsibilities to fit it's catch as catch can - e.g. diversity around MLK day, holidays, etc. It's difficult to fit Social Studies in with everything else that we are required to do. I feel like I have to try to "sneak it in". It's one of my barriers to teaching social studies. To be meaningful, a scope and sequence on Wabanaki Studies for each grade level would work well. We do a large unit on World War 2 which is across all ages. Historical people, cultural traditions, community, social skills, Thanksgiving holiday, and Wabanaki Studies. The extent of my SS teaching occurs during read aloud and are mostly seasonal (1/30/2019 0:28:19). The whole group discussions which help contextualize bigger issues. It isn't easy to keep the story alive and the shared traditions. The data is often confusing and confusing. The level of focus on Wabanaki Studies is limited. It's one of the places where I do teach, but it's always a part of my language arts instruction. It's one of the events that I have to sneak in. I have spent quite a bit of time looking for Wabanaki information, for example, I know little or nothing about Wabanaki history, people, or culture. I am interested in history, geography, economics, government, or anthropology. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have explored the methods of teaching social studies in the curriculum through independent study. I have found resources I would use, but there is no money available at my school for purchasing them. It is difficult to teach these units due to a lack of time, resources and where to look for Wabanaki Studies related resources. I am not sure how to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or elsewhere. Where do I start to find out about Wabanaki Studies related resources? I do not have time to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or elsewhere. It would be nice to have more formal information that is centrally located that I can use for my students. We have a large amount of single copy books/biographies. I have talked to other teachers in the school district and they have not used Wabanaki Studies related content. It is difficult to fit Social Studies in with everything else that we are required to do. It's one of my barriers to teaching social studies. To be meaningful, a scope and sequence on Wabanaki Studies for each grade level would work well. We do a large unit on World War 2 which is across all ages. Historical people, cultural traditions, community, social skills, Thanksgiving holiday, and Wabanaki Studies. The extent of my SS teaching occurs during read aloud and are mostly seasonal (1/30/2019 0:28:19). The whole group discussions which help contextualize bigger issues. It isn't easy to keep the story alive and the shared traditions. The data is often confusing and confusing. The level of focus on Wabanaki Studies is limited. It's one of the places where I do teach, but it's always a part of my language arts instruction. It's one of the events that I have to sneak in. I have spent quite a bit of time looking for Wabanaki information, for example, I know little or nothing about Wabanaki history, people, or culture. I am interested in history, geography, economics, government, or anthropology. I have completed a social studies teaching methods or equivalent course. I have explored the methods of teaching social studies in the curriculum through independent study. I have found resources I would use, but there is no money available at my school for purchasing them. It is difficult to teach these units due to a lack of time, resources and where to look for Wabanaki Studies related resources. I am not sure how to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or elsewhere. Where do I start to find out about Wabanaki Studies related resources? I do not have time to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or elsewhere. It would be nice to have more formal information that is centrally located that I can use for my students.
I heard about it during a PPS course or Community.

I am not sure how to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or on class web page.

I do not have time to teach Wabanaki Studies related content. Therefore do not.

Students learn about the importance of heritage languages and efforts to maintain Passamaquoddy language.

I know little or nothing about Wabanaki history, people, or culture. I don't know.

I can add this culture to our study of Maine and the arts and crafts done by this culture.
Our PBL topic is immigration. We teach on this topic multiple times a week. We also incorporate social studies conversations and routines into our nonfiction reading and writing units.

I have completed several undergraduate classes in the areas of history, geography, economics, government, or anthropology.

I am not sure how to design Wabanaki Studies related lessons or units so they fit with my broader curriculum.

I am an Ed Tech but am Maine certified in Social Studies, Grades 5-7.

I have completed several undergraduate classes in the areas of history, geography, economics, government, or anthropology.

I am interested in history, geography, economics, government, and/or anthropology and have educated myself through extensive reading, travel, and independent study.

I support curriculum here at East End Community School. Both fiction and non-fiction books, video, and handouts that extend social studies learning.

I heard about it in my teacher education program.

I know little or nothing about Wabanaki history, people, or culture.

I don't know where to look for Wabanaki Studies related resources.

I am not sure how to evaluate the accuracy of the resources I find online, in the library, or elsewhere.

There is no social studies curriculum at our school.

There used to be a district wide social studies curriculum for elementary. It would be helpful to have that again.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Communication Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 2019</td>
<td>Wabanaki Studies Committee Meeting, UMO</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2019</td>
<td>Presenting for the DOE Maine Native American Standards Workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2019</td>
<td>Wabanaki Studies Committee Meeting, Augusta</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2020</td>
<td>Wabanaki Studies Committee Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2020</td>
<td>Wabanaki Studies Committee Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 6, 2020</td>
<td>Meeting with Pendar Makin, Bridgid Neptune, Donna Loring, Mary Herman, and Fiona Hopper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December, 2020</td>
<td>Wabanaki Studies Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2021</td>
<td>Meeting with Mary Herman, Bridgid Neptune, and Fiona Hopper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2021</td>
<td>Meeting with Wabanaki Public Health and DOE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2021</td>
<td>Wabanaki Studies Committee Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This was the first meeting of the Wabanaki Studies Committee (formerly Wabanaki Studies Commission) since 2004, I think. I was invited to join the committee.

Joe Schmidt asked me to present at a series of workshops he'd organized around the rollout of the newly revised social studies standards. These three workshops focused on the standards related to Maine Native Americans. The second presentation was supposed to be in October of 2019. I got sick and was unable to present.

This was the second meeting of the Wabanaki Studies Committee. The committee was originally supposed to meet monthly. Pender was injured in September and had to cancel that meeting. We’ve never met monthly.

I was unable to attend this meeting because it was scheduled during school vacation week.

This was our first virtual meeting, which I attended.

Donna Loring set up a meeting for Bridgid Neptune and me meet with Commissioner Makin to discuss how the DOE could support PPS’s Wabanaki Studies work. We asked directly about possible financial support, specifically for the film part of the curriculum that could easily be used statewide. We were offered the use of a conference room at the DOE office in which we could record interviews, possibly with a microphone from the DOE. We asked if there were plans to elevate the curriculum Portland is creating on the DOE’s statewide platform. No answer was given.

I was unable to attend this meeting due to a scheduling conflict. It was a one hour meeting, if memory serves, which was a reduction from the two hour meetings we had previously had.

Mary Herman reached out to Bridgid and me to schedule a meeting. However, when we got into the meeting a week or so later, she could not recall why she had asked us to meet.

Bridgid and I were invited to meet with Wabanaki Public Health, Joe Schmidt, and Mary Herman to talk about Wabanaki Studies.

I was unable to attend this meeting because of a scheduling conflict. It had been rescheduled from the original March date.
FAI

Emma Bond
*pronouns: she/her/hers*
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---

From: Xavier Botana <botanx@portlandschools.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 1:32 PM
To: Emma Bond <ebond@aclumaine.org>; Anne Rothacker <rothaa@portlandschools.org>
Subject: Re: Wabanaki Studies - Request

**EXTERNAL MESSAGE:**

Emma,

Sorry for the delay in getting back to you. We have retrieved about 400 emails and are close to being able to get you the first batch of ~200. That will be coming to you from Anne Rothacker, cc'd here.

We are completing a couple of more comprehensive documentation around professional development that we've organized and the costs associated with our work. I will probably be able to review those this weekend and have them for you shortly after that.

We also are proud to share with you [this article](http://thisarticle) that was recently published written by our Social Studies curriculum leader Fiona Hopper that documents the past few years of our work and also provides a good insight into the "why" we think it matters. She is willing to do a "drier" version for you guys if you would find that helpful. She would also be available to talk through any of this with you and/or others.

Thanks for your patience.

Xavier

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On Tue, Apr 27, 2021 at 9:54 AM Emma Bond <ebond@aclumaine.org> wrote:

Xavier,
I hope you're doing well. I'm just checking in on the status of the FOAA request regarding Wabanaki studies. Do you have any estimate for the timing of the first production of documents? (With the understanding that we had discussed a rolling production, so the first production may not be complete). Thanks for any additional information you're able to provide. Happy to jump on the phone if that's easier.

All the best,

Emma

**Emma Bond**  
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Legal Director  
American Civil Liberties Union of Maine  
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- ebond@aclumaine.org  
www.aclumaine.org

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**From:** Emma Bond <ebond@aclumaine.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 15, 2021 12:23 PM  
**To:** Xavier Botana <botanx@portlandschools.org>  
**Subject:** Re: Wabanaki Studies - Request

Xavier,

Thanks for the quick response, and for all the work Portland has done in this area.

Best,

Emma

**Emma Bond**  
*pronouns: she/her/hers*  
Legal Director  
American Civil Liberties Union of Maine  
PO Box 7860, Portland, ME 04112  
- 207-619-8687  
- ebond@aclumaine.org  
www.aclumaine.org
From: Xavier Botana <botanx@portlandschools.org>
Sent: Monday, March 15, 2021 8:00 AM
To: Emma Bond <ebond@clumaine.org>
Cc: James Morse <superintendent@portlandschools.org>; Maulian Dana <Maulian.Dana@penobscotnation.org>; Chris Newell <chris@abbemuseum.org>; Starr Kelly <starr@abbemuseum.org>; Margaret Edwards <medwards@clumaine.org>; Bruce W. Smith <bwsmith@dwmlaw.com>; Melissa A. Hewey <Mhewey@dwmlaw.com>; Melea Nalli <nallim@portlandschools.org>; Anne Rothacker <rothaa@portlandschools.org>
Subject: Re: Wabanaki Studies - Request

EXTERNAL MESSAGE:

Dear Emma,
This acknowledges receipt of your Freedom of Access request. We will review it and respond with an estimated timeline and associated cost.
Best,
Xavier

On Fri, Mar 12, 2021 at 11:49 AM Emma Bond <ebond@clumaine.org> wrote:

Dear Superintendent Botana,

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Wabanaki Studies law, 20-A M.R.S. § 4706(2), requiring instruction in "Maine Native American history." In light of the importance of this topic, we are reaching out to schools across Maine to learn more about how this law has worked in practice. Specifically, we are reaching out to the five largest school districts in Maine, and to five school districts near tribal communities in Maine.

Attached is a letter providing background about the issue, culminating in a records request seeking information about Wabanaki studies in your school. You will see that we specifically address some of Portland's recent successes in the area! We know that the letter covers a lot of ground, so would be very excited to hear from you or your staff to talk through any questions you may have.

We appreciate your commitment to public service and education in Maine and look forward to working with you on this important project.

Best regards,
Emma

Emma Bond
pronouns: she/her/hers
Legal Director
American Civil Liberties Union of Maine
--
Xavier Botana
Superintendent
Portland Public Schools
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Pronouns: he/him

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--
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original and any copy of this E-mail and any printout. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Portland Public Schools.
Finding a Riverview: Anti-Racist Education, Decolonization, and the Development of a District-Wide Wabanaki Studies Curriculum

Fiona Hopper
Portland Public Schools
Social Studies Teacher Leader and Wabanaki Studies Coordinator

In my experience, my fellow white New Englanders know very little about the Indigenous peoples, histories, or cultures of this area. In what is now called Maine, there is profound ignorance about Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Mi’kmaq, and Maliseet/Wolastaqiwik cultures and communities.

When we encounter our ignorance, we often express surprise or perhaps embarrassment, but we rarely consider our ignorance a matter of public health. So when Lisa Sockabasin, Director of Programs and External Affairs at Wabanaki Public Health, said during an early meeting between Portland Schools officials and tribal leaders, that Wabanaki Studies was a matter of public health, I thought about it for weeks afterwards. As I contemplated her words, it became clear that decolonizing is not a social justice add-on, or a trendy way to demonstrate wokeness, or an additional box on the cultural proficiency checklist.

It is a matter of life and death.

Like most white people, I’ve been trained to think that my ignorance is accidental, or at least benign, but it’s neither. Also, it isn’t as simple as not knowing. As Charles Mills points out, white ignorance cannot be explained as white not-knowing because it is ultimately about errors and biases in thinking, which cannot be overcome just by learning new information. The kind of place-ignorance I share with most of my fellow white New Englanders is not just a byproduct of settler colonialism.

It is the work of settler colonialism.

This place-ignorance, so common among non-Native people and white people in particular, is part of the structure of settler colonialism. It’s no accident that we’re ignorant and it’s no accident that we remain that way.

The failure of the state of Maine to implement Wabanaki Studies is a structural failure rooted in settler colonialism—a failure in no small part responsible for the ongoing public health crisis that Lisa Sockabasin identified. Passamaquoddy nurse practitioner and consultant for the Portland Public School, Bridgid Neptune, describes it this way:

Our tribal community, like others, is mourning preventable deaths of young people and deaths of our Elders who carry our language and culture. As I mourn recent losses and as each day passes, this work becomes more and more important for us. Without a doubt, I know that Wabanaki Studies, done right, will change the outcomes my family and Native community face.

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The gravity of structural inequity was reinforced for me when I stood below the Dundee Dam on

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the Presumpscot River last summer. The dam towered one hundred feet above—a great behemoth of concrete and steel. Water poured down in a long, controlled line from the pond the dam had created above.

Though it looks like part of the river on maps, to call this area a river is inaccurate. The river has been buried in a pool of near stagnant water. The dam has pushed the water far outside its banks, which causes a continual swirl of silt and debris. Even if they could make it up that far, fish would not be able to lay eggs in the aquatic dead zone created by the dam. The flowing water that fish have journeyed from the sea to find for thousands of years is now gone.

Chief Polin, an Indigenous leader from the Presumpscot River watershed, is the first recorded water protectors of the Presumpscot River. In 1739, he traveled over one hundred miles on foot to Boston to tell Governor Belcher of the destruction wrought by the dams that had been built to support the extraction of mast pines for British ships. These same ships transported barrels of dried cod harvested by the ton from the Gulf of Maine to feed enslaved Africans in the southern colonies.

At this time, Colonel Thomas Westbrook, military leader and the King’s Mast Agent, was building a massive dam across the river. In his request that fish passage be included in the dam, Chief Polin referred to the Presumpscot as the “river to which I belong.” He explained that the loss of a critical food source would devastate his people.

Belcher requested that Westbrook add fish passage, but the request was ignored. In order to protect the ecosystem to which they had belonged since time immemorial, the people of the Presumpscot river attacked dams, mills, and upriver logging settlements for the next seventeen years.

I’d recently learned this history and thought of it as I stood under the shadow of the Dundee Dam. It was then that I saw how many traits white supremacy and settler colonialism have in common with dams. How their combined forces have fundamentally shaped the course of society just as dams artificially alter the course of a river. They use their power to control people and resources just as dams control the flow of a river—and, as with dams, full life is only restored through their removal.

White supremacy and settler colonialism are structures that shape contemporary American society, just as dams shape habitat. All who live here travel through the deadened, toxic environment they create. All who live here have their lives altered by white supremacy and settler colonialism’s power to determine the time, length, and course of our passage. When we fall one hundred feet into the roiling waters below, we think it was unavoidable. The experience of a life shaped by powerful, controlling, human-made systems convinces many of us that a series of dead ponds really is a river.

Thankfully not everyone is convinced. Many are still willing to share a river view.

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Nearly twenty years ago, The Maine legislature passed LD 291, An Act to Require Teaching of

---

3 Lisa Brooks and Cassandra Brooks, “The Reciprocity Principle and Traditional Ecological Knowledge,”
Maine Native American History and Culture.\textsuperscript{5} The legislation received little attention nationally, but it laid the groundwork for other Indigenous nations to push states to pass similar requirements.

The legislation was written and put forward by Donna Loring, the Penobscot Nation representative to the Maine state government, and Donald Soctomah, tribal representative from the Passamaquoddy Nation. Though it did not use the term decolonization, the law was, as Indigenous Education scholar, Penobscot Nation citizen, and relative of Donna Loring, Dr. Rebecca Sockbeson, puts it: “intended to function as an educational policy working toward anti-racist education and decolonization.”

The intentions of the law’s Indigenous authors, Dr. Sockbeson further explains, were trivialized by state inaction.\textsuperscript{6} A lack of effort to fulfill the requirements of the law became yet another way for the state to disregard Native communities and leaders and to perpetuate white ignorance.

A recent state-wide survey revealed what Indigenous leaders, educators, activists, and presenters already knew: that the law was not being followed and when attention was paid to the Indigenous people of this area, it all too frequently reinforced the colonial narratives of extinction and the white supremacist narrative of inferiority. Even after twenty years, the law that set a new precedent in the nation has not been institutionalized by schools.\textsuperscript{7}

I’ve spoken with many educators over the past few years, the majority of whom are cisgender white women, like me. Many want to honor their obligation to uphold state law and teach Wabanaki Studies, but they frequently are overwhelmed by the scope of what they do not know and are afraid of making a mistake.

The combination of white ignorance, fear, and the absence of institutional motivation and support has left the groundbreaking legislation passed in 2001 largely ignored in schools located in what is now called Maine. Dr. Sockbeson notes that “many call themselves ‘allies’ to Indigenous peoples in Maine, yet Wabanaki Studies Legislation has been left behind.”\textsuperscript{8}

I first encountered LD 291 after nearly ten years of teaching in the Portland Public Schools. A Black colleague and I co-founded a course for Portland educators focused on the relationship between systemic racism and education. In our design process, we decided to reframe American history in terms of stolen land and stolen labor. I cannot recall the exact origin of this idea. We were reading and digesting a lot of information at the time, but when we hit on that concept, the entire course fell into place. We named white supremacy and settler colonialism as the defining structures of the United States of America, then we went out and told our colleagues.

Since its inception, the course has served nearly one hundred and fifty educators in our district. It has proven to be a foundational element of the district-wide equity work launched just a few years after the course’s inception. The class allows educators to reconsider history they learned long ago and to examine how systemic racism is at work in themselves, their schools, and the United States.

\textsuperscript{6} Rebecca Sockbeson “Maine Indigenous Education Left Behind: A Call for Anti-Racist Conviction as Political Will Toward Decolonization,” Journal of American Indian Education 58, no. 3 (2019): 105.
\textsuperscript{7} “Research Findings,” Reclaiming Native Truth: A Project to Dispel America’s Myths and Misconceptions, June 2018, https://rnt.firstnations.org/.
The creation of this class was, unknowingly, our district’s first small move toward decolonization.

When we were still in the planning stages for the course, I drove two hours north to the Penobscot Nation. It was there I met Chris Sockalexis, Officer of Historic and Cultural Preservation, and later James Francis, Director of Historic and Cultural Preservation and tribal historian. James agreed to spend a class period with the first group of teachers, and has been a regular guest speaker ever since.

For many white teachers who grew up in what is now called Maine, he is the first citizen of a nation within the Wabanaki Confederacy they have ever met. And for some teachers who grew up in the towns of Orono, Old Town, or other settler communities built on unceded Penobscot territory, he is the first Penobscot citizen they have spoken with at length.

In the fall of 2017, the Assistant Superintendent of the Portland Public Schools, Melea Nalli, and the then newly hired Equity Specialist, Barrett Wilkinson, met, for the first time, with Indigenous leaders from across the state. About a month before, I’d read an article in the local paper about a resolution in front of the Portland city council to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. In it, Portland Superintendent Xavier Botana was quoted as saying that our schools taught about colonization and its destructive legacy.

I knew that teaching about the destructive impact of settler behavior and teaching about Indigenous peoples were far from being one in the same, and I knew, too, that we were rarely doing either one well within the Portland Public Schools. But when I read that article, it taught me to hope that we had district leadership who would support the implementation of a Wabanaki Studies curriculum.

I’d come to see LD 291 as anti-racist legislation that the white supremacist institutions of the state of Maine had left unfulfilled and to see its implementation as a critical first step toward meaningful equity work.

As a personal second step, I reached out to the mother of two Passamaquoddy children who attended the elementary school where I worked as an ESOL teacher. We met for a cup of coffee and have since shared many more as we became partners, colleagues, and close friends.

***

Bridgid Neptune (Passamaquoddy) grew up in Mohtumikuk, part of the Passamaquoddy community near the international border between what is now called the United States and what is now called Canada. She works as a nurse practitioner in southern Maine, and also works tirelessly as a consultant to the development of Wabanaki Studies work in the Portland Public Schools. Our district’s fledgling successes would not be possible without the support, feedback, and investment of Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet/Wolastoqiyik, and Mi’kmaq advisors like Bridgid.

In addition to regular consultation from Bridgid and support from the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribal historians, James Francis and Donald Soctomah, the district Academic Team has met bi-annually with tribal advisors to gather feedback on how our work is progressing and on our proposed next steps. Roger Paul, Chief Clarissa Sabattis, John Dennis, Lilah Atkins, Maulian Dana, Lisa Sockabasin, Esther Anne, Starr Kelly, Richard Sillyboy, Gabe Paul, Rebecca Sockbeson, Darren Ranco, Donna Loring, Maria Girouard, and Chris Sockalexis have all participated in advisory meetings. The guidance of Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet/Wolastoqiyik, and Mi’kmaq advisors is critical.
We cannot expect to do any decolonizing of curriculum without attempting to decolonize the process by which it is created. This kind of “dam removal” does not come easily to school departments. It requires supportive leadership, a commitment to equity, and the vision to understand the critical connection between decolonizing, anti-racist work and equity. It also requires patience, cross-cultural relationship building, and resources.

In my fifteen years of experience in education, this is not the norm of how schools do business.

Until I started working part time as the Wabanaki Studies Coordinator for the Portland Public Schools, I had no idea how little I knew about rivers, or even what there was to know about them. The Indigenous leaders, advisors, and friends I’ve been privileged to work with had not pointed this out directly, but instead have invited me to see, on many different occasions, that I do not have a river view.

I didn’t even know the term river view, let alone what it implied, until Penobscot and Passamaquoddy language teacher, Roger Paul, mentioned it during a tribal advisory meeting at the Abbe Museum.

I’d used the word land repeatedly in an early draft of a curriculum scope and sequence. On the first page I wrote some assertions about the importance of land-based education. I used land because that’s what was used in the articles I’d read about decolonizing land-based education. These articles were all full of the word land. They came from academics writing about the work happening within First Nations communities in the plains of what is now called Canada, an area, I later realized, with fewer rivers than the Dawnland—one translation of the Indigenous name for the lands and waters of what is now called northern New England and the Maritime Provinces of Canada.

After reading through my description, Roger pointed out that the nations of the Wabanaki Confederacy— Penobscot, Maliseet/Wolastoqiyik, Mi’kmaq, Passamaquoddy, and Abenaki—are river people. “We have a river view,” he said. I asked if landscape might be a more appropriate term. “It’s your language,” he joked good naturedly, “you decide.”

That morning, Starr Kelly, Curator of Education, had offered a tour of the museum to all meeting participants who arrived early. The Abbe Museum is a small Smithsonian affiliate and a national leader in decolonizing museum spaces. She summarized the decolonizing framework outlined in Amy Lonetree’s groundbreaking book Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native Americans in National and Tribal Museums.9

Lonetree names (1) Collaborating with Indigenous People, (2) Privileging Indigenous Voices, and (3) Truth Telling as three guiding principles—some might also say critical commitments—of decolonizing work.

The curator went on to frame the museum tour through these principles so we could see how they have been applied to the curation of exhibits, use of space, and even the organizational structures of the museum. They had used Lonetree’s principles to reconsider the colonial conception of a museum. The power of this new (or newly popular) view had reshaped their organization.

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The assistant superintendent, curriculum director, and I wrote furiously in our notebooks as she spoke.

Later in that same meeting I said that meaningful inclusion of Wabanaki Studies in any school-based curriculum would require that the content and the concepts move through the curriculum rather than being compartmentalized in some tiny section of it. “You’re describing a river,” John Dennis, Mi’kmaq educator, noted. “Oh,” I said, “I had no idea.”

On the three-hour drive back to Portland, my colleagues and I talked through everything we’d heard. “I’ve never had a day like this,” one of my colleagues said, “where I said almost nothing and was engaged the entire time.” We all agreed and discussed how we, too, might use the three principles of decolonizing that the Abbe Museum used to shape the development of Wabanaki Studies curriculum and, maybe, everything else.

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Viewing settler colonialism as a structure rather than a moment in long-ago history is a critical first step in decolonizing work, Starr Kelly explained to the social studies vertical team when she presented to us. Settler colonizers come to stay—that’s not an event, it’s an ongoing invasion.10

Her presentation was titled Can We Decolonize Educational Spaces?: A Critical Look at Settler Colonialism and Empire Building. In it, she asked teachers of history to consider the ways in which they uphold empire-building as the pinnacle of civilization and how destructive that ubiquitous narrative is.

Even now, the Penobscot Nation is fighting for water rights to the Penobscot River. This is why decolonization and cultural humility are named as guiding principles of the new social studies instructional vision crafted by a team of teachers, Indigenous parents, and students from the Black Students Union, just this year. Moves made toward decolonization allow for anti-racist work, social justice education, environmental education, and inquiry to be front and center.

Much of decolonizing in social studies begins with an assertion of interrelationship. The questions that follow require students and teachers to see relationships between structures, events, systems, and resources. These questions include:

What is the relationship between power and economics?
Between empire building, genocide, and enslavement?
Between settler colonialism and the founding of the United States of America?
Between dams and the dispossession of Indigenous peoples?
What is the relationship between the state of Maine and the tribal communities within its superimposed boundaries?
What is Indigenous sovereignty and why is it important?
What are treaty obligations? How can we uphold them?

Decolonizing requires students and teachers to ask critical questions of power, nation building, capitalism, and all of the other topics schools typically avoid engaging with.

In education, we often call this kind of student-led inquiry “best practice.” But anyone who has had the opportunity to learn, even a little bit, from Native educators knows that supporting an understanding of

interrelationship—and not feeding students conclusions—is how Indigenous pedagogy works. No jargon, special terminology, or teacher training needed. Questions centered on understanding interrelationship\textsuperscript{11} will underpin the pre-K-12 Wabanaki Studies scope and sequence currently under development. Bridgid Neptune will get first read of the compelling questions, then they will go to the tribal advisory group. Finally, COVID-19 protocols permitting, we will convene at the Abbe Museum once again.

The questions will be revised and then will go to the Social Studies Content Team, where they will be refined once more. Then, finally, the team will be ready to construct units that support each inquiry. Some of that work will be reading, reviewing, and adapting curriculum that already exists—curriculum made by the Indigenous nations of the Wabanaki Confederacy in what is now called the United States and what is now called Canada. Some of that work will involve building new material. The whole process, though, will be guided by the first principle Amy Lonetree names: collaboration with Indigenous communities.

All this said, the principle of collaboration is often in tension with the normal bureaucratic channels of curriculum development. It takes a willingness on the part of district leadership in order to function, and even then it is a tightrope we’re walking all the time. We know that what we create will not be perfect. We know that teachers in our district will need massive professional development support. We know, too, that what is created now will need to be refined again and again and again as understanding grows and knowledge is refined.

This will take a commitment to collaboration: one that educational institutions in the state of Maine have yet to sustain. But I am heartened by the perspective Bridgid shared in a recent update presented to the Portland School Board. She wrote,

There’s been no shortage of well-intentioned efforts and program on the Rez. We’ve seen plenty of 2-3 year grant-funded programs designed by non-Natives that fail to meet their objectives. They fail to center the community’s voice, perspectives or strengths. They privilege their intentions, while ignoring our culture and identities. They are trying to “help,” they say. This is not helpful, it’s harmful. This inevitably leads to low expectations and mistrust. PPS has avoided those missteps and is leading the state in this work. They have, and continue to, center Indigenous voices and perspectives, which has earned them confidence and buy-in from community leaders, Elders, and young people. This has not been easy or quick, it is complex and emotional. Trust and communication needed to be rebuilt before getting started on tangible curriculum work.

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One afternoon, I had lunch with James Francis, at the Boom House, which overlooks a massive dam spanning the Penobscot River in Old Town,

\textsuperscript{11} Sometimes called compelling questions in the world of inquiry-based education. See the Inquiry Design Model, http://www.c3teachers.org/inquiry-design-model/.
Maine. When we entered, James ushered me over to the plate glass window to admire the river. I had never seen someone look at a river with such attention and interest. It was as though we’d just entered a room with a revered guest, and I had no idea who it was.

When I crossed the bridge over the Penobscot after dropping James off, I looked out at the river, trying to see what he saw. I watched the water swirl and ripple and pour toward the giant dam downstream. This was the first time I’d ever deliberately contemplated a river. And I had a flicker of understanding. Rivers. That was where to begin if one wanted to find a river view.

Highly respected aboriginal leader of the Dene First Nation, Georges Erasamus, says “where common memory is lacking, where people do not share in the same past, there can be no real community. Where community is to be formed, common memory must be created.”

I first heard this quote while watching a campaign announcement video from the 2020 presidential candidate, Mark Charles. In his campaign, Mark Charles, a citizen of the Navajo Nation and a scholar of the Doctrine of Discovery, calls for a truth and conciliation commission—on par with post-apartheid South Africa—to be created in the United States.12

He makes a compelling case for why this is the only way to find truth, healing, and equality in a country based on land-theft, slavery, and the disenfranchisement of huge swaths of the population. In naming the absence of common memory, Mark Charles points to the deliberate ways in which settler colonialism and white supremacy have worked in tandem to break communities and prevent shared understanding in order to ensure power and profit for a select few.

Building a common memory in order to create a true community where all people have dignity, safety, and equal access to resources and justice is the long, long work of decolonizing.

Last spring, the Portland Public Schools hosted its first ever community dinner for Indigenous families. Huntley Brook Singers from Motahkomikuk set up in the middle of the Portland High School cafeteria and families gathered to eat, dance, talk, and learn about the Wabanaki Studies work underway.

Bridgid had posted the event in social media forums used by her community and done outreach through a network of friends and relatives scattered throughout her homeland. She hand signed and mailed invitations to the homes of students who appeared on a list painstakingly created by our district student data expert. The process of creating that list revealed data collection problems that run deep into the local, state, and federal data collection systems. The invisibility of Indigenous students in our district data was profound, and acts as a present moment example of the destructive aspects of settler colonialism.13

hundred years of war in this area is still at work in the data systems of today.

How can you build a common memory with a community when you refuse to see that it is even there?

As I watched him, I saw how the school system had failed him. It failed him because it could not see him. I wondered what it would’ve been like if he could’ve been seen.

During the community dinner, I ran into a student I’d known during my first year as a teacher. He hadn’t been in my eighth grade English class, but was best friends with a boy who was, and they often hung around in my room in the morning and after school. The young man, who I will call Jason, had his daughter with him. She would be starting kindergarten in Portland in the fall.

I remembered Jason well. I had no idea he was a tribal citizen of a nation in the Wabanaki Confederacy. I doubted if any of his teachers had, or if they knew, what it would have even meant to them. Jason was constantly being disciplined in school. He struggled academically and seemed to drive his teachers crazy. I could tell he was bright and funny, and I enjoyed talking with him. But I was also a little relieved that he wasn’t in my class.

Toward the end of the evening, Jason danced in a circle around the drum with his daughter and his nieces and nephews. He had his eyes closed. His feet knew exactly what to do, so he had no reason to look at them. As I watched him, I saw how the school system had failed him. It failed him because it could not see him. I wondered what it would’ve been like if he could’ve been seen. The entire trajectory of his life could’ve been different if he had been seen and understood at school.

Our institution failed him, and had no idea. Jason’s sense of himself as a learner, his future opportunities, his connection to school, and his access to education were all collateral damage of white ignorance. An ignorance that can be, and is, deadly. His mother mentioned to me that he’d had many struggles. She didn’t elaborate, but I heard Lisa Sockabasin in my head. Wabanaki Studies in every school is not just about curricular compliance, it’s about visibility, dignity, and, above all, every person and community’s right to wellbeing.

Wabanaki Studies is about public health.

Where common memory is lacking, there can be no community. Jason’s daughter’s first experience in a public school will have been dancing with her father and her cousins around the drum and hearing songs in Passamaquoddy. It isn’t enough. I don’t know if we’ll ever be able to do enough, yet that moment marked a tiny starting point to a long journey toward building school communities where Indigenous students are seen and respected.

***

Recently, I received a digital copy of a map that shows the Presumpscot River watershed—in which the city of Portland is located—striped of roads, towns, and other development. It will be the anchor for a unit about what it means to be a water protector for third graders.

The goal for that unit, which will focus primarily on Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, Maliseet/Wolastoqiyik, Mi’kmaq, and Abenaki14 is water rights activism. This will replace the long standing third grade Portland history unit, a unit whose primary focus has been the study of colonial landmarks scattered throughout the city.

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14 A people which has no current land base in Maine.
The shift toward Indigenous-led environmental justice movements marks a turning point because the emphasis will no longer be on preserving the story of settler colonial greatness but on, what award-winning Wolastoqiyik musician Jeremy Dutcher calls, “building sustainable relationships with this place we call home.”

Sometimes I’m asked why a white person is doing this work. It’s not without its complexities, certainly, but settler colonialism and white supremacy are structures built by white people. It is our work to unbuild them, too.

The teaching corps of Maine, like that of the nation as a whole, is disproportionately white and female. Every student in Maine will have many white cisgender women as teachers and so it falls to us, not Indigenous people, to figure out how to provide a meaningful, respectful, and accurate Wabanaki Studies education to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike. This requires white teachers to grapple with our ignorance, our resistance, our socialization, our fragility, and our endless anxiety about making mistakes.

My message to the many white teachers I’ve worked with is as follows. For those among us already seeking to do meaningful anti-racist work, look no further. For those hesitating to engage, that hesitation is ultimately about our fear of discomfort — because I’ve yet to meet a tribal citizen who didn’t already assume that we would make lots of mistakes. Take a deep breath, then join the Indigenous leaders, activists, artists, representatives, scholars, and citizens who’ve been fighting the public health crisis created by settler colonialism and white supremacy for centuries. Start by seeking the education you probably never received and push for that education to be included in all teacher education programs and all schools.

Because our inaction is not neutral. It is destructive.¹⁵

***

Last summer, twenty-five educators from the Portland schools and two Penobscot guides paddled down river from Sugar Island, where we’d just spent two days learning from Penobscot leaders on tribal lands. The majority of us were divided between two twenty-five-foot warrior canoes. Ryan Ranco, one of the guides, mentioned that he’d never seen the water so still. It was a perfect mirror.

We glided by the remnants of two booms — man-made barriers built in rivers to contain logs — leftover from logging days. I could see the image of each reflected in the water. The water was so still that the boom and its reflection were virtually indistinguishable. I would’ve believed Ryan if he’d told me the boom was a sphere suspended in water.

Everything is changed once seen from a river.

Fiona Hopper has taught in the Portland Public Schools for fifteen years. She started her career as a middle school English Language Arts teacher and later became an ESOL teacher for elementary school students. In 2015, she co-founded a course for Portland teachers that explores systemic racism and its impact on education both historically and today. Fiona is starting her third year as the Social Studies Teacher Leader and Wabanaki Studies coordinator for the Portland Public Schools.

Below are links to various sources to help paint a clear picture of Wabanaki Studies curriculum development in Portland Public Schools. The article listed first provided the most detailed account of our district work to date.


PMA Educator Night, December 2021

New England News Collaborative series on racism in New England, October 2021

Webinar for the DOE, May 2020

Donna Loring Lecture, University of New England, October 2019

I’ve also created a suite of resources for PPS educators to use to develop and improve their Wabanaki Studies curriculum while the district curriculum is under construction. All the resources are housed in one document, titled the Wabanaki Studies Planning Guide for Portland Educators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Name</th>
<th>Event Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-present</td>
<td>Race in the USA</td>
<td>12 session graduate style course for PPS educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2017</td>
<td>Invisible and a Q and A with James Francis</td>
<td>COL, also part of Race in the USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2018</td>
<td>Wabanaki Studies 101</td>
<td>Lunch and Learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2018</td>
<td>Dawnland Film Screening</td>
<td>Parent University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov-18</td>
<td>Decolonizing Thanksgiving</td>
<td>COL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>Bringing History to Life Through Primary Sources</td>
<td>COL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2019</td>
<td>An Introduction to Passamaquoddy Culture and Language with Roger Paul</td>
<td>COL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2019</td>
<td>Invisible and a Q and A with James Francis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td>N'tolonapemk: Our Relatives' Place</td>
<td>COL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>Decolonization Workshop</td>
<td>All Day Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>Chief Polin Memorial Tour</td>
<td>COL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>Penobscot Nation Summer Intensive</td>
<td>overnight trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2019</td>
<td>Mapping Wabanaki-Maine History</td>
<td>workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2019</td>
<td>Using the Decolonization Resource Evaluation Tool</td>
<td>part of an all day training for Equity Leaders Tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Event Title</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2019</td>
<td>Decolonizing Thanksgiving</td>
<td>School based PD for Ocean Ave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2019</td>
<td>Discomfort and Renewal</td>
<td>Public event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-2020 School Year</td>
<td>Makking Wabanaki Maine History</td>
<td>All Staff PD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2019</td>
<td>The Land Claims Settlerment Act</td>
<td>Public event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2019</td>
<td>Mapping Wabanaki-Maine History</td>
<td>Parent University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2020</td>
<td>Questioning the Legacy of Empire Building</td>
<td>PD for Social Studies Content Team Members and related partner organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2020</td>
<td>This is Passamaquoddy Territory</td>
<td>Public event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2020</td>
<td>Decolonizing Curriculum</td>
<td>School based PD for Presumpscot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2020</td>
<td>Penobscot Sense of Place</td>
<td>Public event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2020</td>
<td>Upstander Academy</td>
<td>week long workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2020</td>
<td>Maine Indigenous Education Left Behind</td>
<td>virtual event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2021</td>
<td>PD for PPS Arts Educators</td>
<td>PD for music and visual art educators and related partner organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2021</td>
<td>This is How We Name Our Lands</td>
<td>virtual event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2021</td>
<td>POW Camps in the Maine Woods</td>
<td>virtual event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2021</td>
<td>Penobscot Nation Summer Intensive</td>
<td>multi-night trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2021</td>
<td>Upstander Academy</td>
<td>week long workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2021</td>
<td>Take Me to the River PD</td>
<td>full day PD for 3rd grade teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona and Alberto</td>
<td>This course was first offered in winter/spring of 2016. The course includes a session about Indigenous history with a focus on Wabanaki Studies as well as a session with tribal historian James Francis (Penobscot). In 2018, we began opening James’ presentation to all PPS educators, and later to the general public, so that more people would have an opportunity to hear him.</td>
<td>approx $400 per speaking event (including transportation costs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>James Francis (Penobscot tribal historian) came to talk to PPS teachers. They all watched the film he made, Invisible, first. Participants in the semester long Race in the USA course were required to attend. The event was open to any other faculty who wanted to come.</td>
<td>approx $400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>PD session for all staff at PPS Central Office</td>
<td>no cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS (Barrett and Fiona)</td>
<td>Film screening open to all PPS faculty, students, and families, SCHs granted for teachers</td>
<td>1000????</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Fiona led a workshop on how to disrupt the Thanksgiving myth through Wabanaki Studies</td>
<td>no additional cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Kathleen Neuman from MHS led a workshop instructing teachers in how to use Maine Memory Network to find and highlight primary sources related to Wabanaki Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Roger Paul, teacher of Wabanaki languages, presented to PPS teachers</td>
<td>approx $300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>James Francis (Penobscot tribal historian) came to talk to PPS teachers. They all watched the film he made, Invisible, first. Participants in the semester long Race in the USA course were required to attend. The event was open to any other faculty who wanted to come.</td>
<td>approx $400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Film screening of N'tolonapemk and Q and A with Bridgid Neptune</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>Mishy Lesser from the Upstander Academy and Maine Wabanaki REACH led an all day workshop for 20+ PPS educators</td>
<td>$500 for REACH, $1000 for Mishy + hotel, which was about $200, plus lunch for teachers was about $250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>PPS teachers met up at the Chief Polin Memorial in Westbrook and the president of Friends of the Presumpscot River led a tour</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona, Barrett, and Chris</td>
<td>25 PPS educators spent a day learning from Penobscot leaders, spent the night on Sugar Island, then paddled to Indian Island the following day. Teachers received SCHs for participating in the trip.</td>
<td>$5000 (NEA grant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sockalexis</td>
<td>The PPS admins (all department heads and school leaders) participated in the mapping workshop offered by Maine Wabanaki REACH as part of their annual administrative retreat</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrett and Fiona</td>
<td>Building equity leaders were introduced to a resource evaluation tool to use for assessing the quality of Wabanaki Studies related texts.</td>
<td>no cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiona</strong></td>
<td>Fiona presented during all staff PD about how to disrupt the Thanksgiving myth using Wabanaki Studies resources</td>
<td>no cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portland Public Library</strong></td>
<td>Starr Kelly from the Abbe Museum presented at the Portland Public Library. Fiona advertised this event to teachers and was able to grant SCHs to anyone who attended.</td>
<td>no cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barrett</strong></td>
<td>Full staff from 5 PPS middle and high schools participated in the mapping workshop organized by Maine Wabanaki REACH as part of required early release PD. All middle and high schools were supposed to complete the workshop by the end of the 2020 school year, but the pandemic made that impossible.</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USM Osher Map Library</strong></td>
<td>Maria Giourard presented at USM Hannaford Hall. Fiona advertised this event to PPS educators and was able to grant SCHs to those who attended.</td>
<td>no cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grace and Barrett</strong></td>
<td>This was a Parent U event, so it was open to all faculty, students, and parents within PPS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abbe Museum</strong></td>
<td>Our 2019-2020 contract with the Abbe Museum included a PD session with Starr.</td>
<td>not sure of the cost. It included Starr’s presenting fee plus travel expenses. Maybe $350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiona and Libby Bischoff from the USM Osher Map Library</strong></td>
<td>Roger Paul and Newell Lewey presented to an audience of 350+ at Hannaford Hall. Fiona advertised this event to PPS educators and was able to grant SCHs to any who attended.</td>
<td>no cost, USM paid the honoraria to Roger and Newell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiona</strong></td>
<td>Fiona presented during all staff PD about how to use Wabanaki Studies to start decolonizing curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiona and Libby Bischoff from the USM Osher Map Library</strong></td>
<td>James Francis presented to an audience of 250-300 at Hannaford Hall. Fiona advertised this event to PPS educators. Teachers taking Race in the USA were required to attend. Fiona was able to grant SCHs to PPS educators who attended.</td>
<td>$500 honorarium for James Francis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upstander Project</strong></td>
<td>4 PPS social studies teachers participated in the Upstander Summary Academy</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abbe Museum</strong></td>
<td>Rebecca Sockbasin presented virtually. The event cost $10. PPS did not cover that cost, but did grant SCHs to anyone who attended. Fiona advertised this event to PPS educators.</td>
<td>no cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abbe Museum</strong></td>
<td>As part of our contract with the Abbe this year, we included a PD session that we chose to use for arts educators.</td>
<td>$250 (included in Abbe contract for 2020-2021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USM Osher Map Library</strong></td>
<td>Creators of the Penobscot Place Names map presented virtually. Fiona advertised this event to PPS educators and was able to grant SCHs to anyone who attended.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Abbe Museum</strong></td>
<td>Bonnie Newsom presented about the POW camps built on Passamaquoddy lands during WWII. Fiona advertised this event to PPS educators and was able to grant SCHs to any who attended.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiona</strong></td>
<td>20 PPS educators will paddle the Penobscot and spend time learning from Penobscot leaders. The trip is scheduled for June 21-23 with a follow up debrief session on the morning of June 24th. PPS educators will receive SCHs for participating in the trip.</td>
<td>$8000 (Learning for Justice/Southern Poverty Law Center grant from 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upstander Project</strong></td>
<td>5 PPS educators will participate in the Upstander Summer Academy</td>
<td>$1,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fiona and Brooke Teller</strong></td>
<td>All 3rd grade teachers will spend a full day learning about the new Wabanaki Studies unit for that grade level. There will be 3-4 follow up sessions throughout the 2021-2022 school year.</td>
<td>unknown at this time. $1000-$1500 is our working estimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona's salary and benefits for 2018-2019 (.5 FTE)</td>
<td>Research and begin design of Wabanaki Studies curriculum and to conduct social studies synthesis in PPS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona's salary and benefits for 2019-2020 (.6 FTE)</td>
<td>Launch social studies content team tasked with drafting an instructional vision for social studies and continue work on Wabanaki Studies curriculum development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona's salary and benefits from 2020-2021 (.7 FTE) + level B stipend</td>
<td>Lead social studies curriculum work in Wabanaki Studies, Africana Studies, and general social studies curriculum for PreK-12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wabanaki Studies Consultant</td>
<td>Bridgid Neptune has acted as a consultant for Wabanaki Studies development in PPS since 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbe Museum Contracts</td>
<td>We had to modify the Abbe contract from 2019-2020 because of the pandemic. This year's contract covers the costs of tribal advisory meetings for 2020-2021, a PD session, and technical support from Starr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mileage Reimbursement</td>
<td>This would include mileage to and from Penobscot Nation 3 times, mileage from Portland to Houlton, Houlton to Eastport, and back to Portland, and mileage to and from the Abbe Museum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Reimbursement</td>
<td>This would include food reimbursement for a lunch for tribal advisors in October of 2018, food reimbursement for Fiona in November of 2018, Air B and B accommodation for Fiona, Melea, and Jesse in March 2019, as well as food reimbursement for them and lunch costs for tribal advisors at the Abbe Museum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies Content Team</td>
<td>The Wabanaki Studies Subcommittee has been meeting throughout 2020-2021 to develop units for K, 3rd, 7th, and 10th grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD for PPS Educators</td>
<td>This course includes one to two sessions related to Wabanaki Studies. By the end of June 2021, approximately 200 PPS educators will have completed the course.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Projected Costs to Finish Development and Fully Implement (3 year projections)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film</td>
<td>A film to support the Wabanaki Studies curriculum. This will likely have to be paid for through outside grants and funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and Resources</td>
<td>This assumes investment of approx. $14,000.00 per grade level, or $28.50 per student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Development</td>
<td>This includes payment for PPS teachers working on the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal Advisors, Consultants, PD</td>
<td>This includes projected costs for a consultant, ongoing tribal advisory meetings, and some PD for PPS educators led by tribal leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary and Benefits for Social Studies</td>
<td>This includes an estimate of Fiona's salary at .8 FTE with a level B stipend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
approx. $4000 for teachers  
+ $300 for guest speakers  

approx. $23,425 to date  
$1,800 per course. As of  
2020, the course is now  
offered twice a year.  

estimate is $120,000.00  

estimate of $200,000  

estimate of $25,000.00  

estimate of $50,000