



# PETALLS

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## Preparing Excellent Teachers for All Language Learners

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##### PETALLS Website

<http://www.uml.edu/petalls>

##### PETALLS WEEBLY Access Strategies and Lessons!!

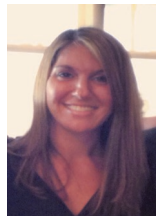
<http://petalls.weebly.com>



This newsletter features PETALLS participants and highlights the ways they work to improve instruction for ELLs.

#### Andrea Gobbi Supervisor of Secondary Curriculum LPS

Andrea Gobbi, the Supervisor of Secondary Curriculum for the LPS, is a graduate of UMass Lowell where she earned her Ed.S. in Educational Administration. She began teaching English at the International High School seven years ago and soon became the English Content Coach. This is her second year as Supervisor of Secondary Curriculum.



Andrea oversees curriculum, instruction, and assessment across the LHS Campus and coordinates efforts among principals to ensure that all students receive a rigorous and cohesive curriculum that will prepare them for college and beyond. Andrea is involved in developing common interim assessments across the LHS Campus to provide teachers with frequent feedback on students' progress. She also coaches teachers with instructional strategies that accelerate the learning of LHS students. Andrea is integral to preparations for a 2016 NEASC Accreditation visit.

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**PETALLS Conference 2015**  
*Practices that Improve the Education of ELLs*  
**October 7, 2015**  
**All Educators Welcome**

**Keynote Speaker:** Dr. Susan O'Hara, coauthor of *Common Core Standards in Diverse Classrooms: Essential Practices for Developing Academic Language and Disciplinary Literacy*  
**Call for Proposals will be coming soon!**

#### Nicole Finneran Grade 7 Science Teacher, Robert Frost Middle School

Nicole Finneran completed the UMass Lowell Graduate Certificate in ESL in spring 2014 and is now dually licensed in science and ESL. In her position at the Frost school, she

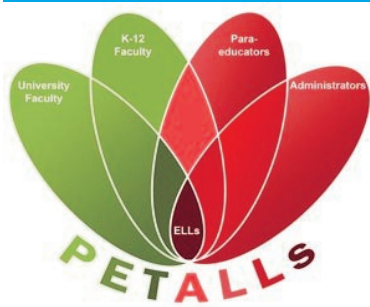


- plans and implements an inquiry-based, hands-on science curriculum aligned with MA Science Curriculum Frameworks, Common Core State Standards (ELA & Math), and WIDA Standards
- incorporates technology to advance and enhance student learning
- uses assessment to inform instruction
- consults weekly with team members (special education and ESL teacher) to discuss student achievement, placement, and create cross-curriculum units of study
- manages a classroom to create a safe, engaging and efficient learning environment where all students are encouraged to take positive academic risks
- establishes and maintains consistent, and open communication with parents
- organizes science-based school field trips

Nicole explained the value of the ESL certificate program: "Prior to completing the program, I thought I was helping the ELLs in my classroom by lessening their workload. This program helped me understand that it is not about elimination, but rather about providing the right supports to address barriers and make content comprehensible."

Nicole and her colleague, Linda Bonano, fellow ESL certificate program completer, are organizing effective strategies for ELLs into a resource binder for teachers at the Frost.

When asked about recommendations for teachers of ELLs, Nicole explained, "ELL students need constant exposure to vocabulary (domain-specific, high-frequency, signal words, etc.) in meaningful ways. (Cont'd on p. 2)



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Alisha Silvestrone  
Paraprofessional Perspectives  
Also:  
ParaTELL 3.0

#### INFORMATION

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#### PETALLS WEEBLY

Resource Site  
<http://petalls.weebly.com>

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### Alisha Silvestrone Grade 4 Reilly Elementary, Lowell Public Schools



Alisha completed the UMass Lowell Graduate Certificate in ESL in spring 2014. In her position at the Reilly school, Alisha

- plans and implements lesson plans based on district modules and Common Core Standards
- teaches core content as well as tiered instruction in mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies
- uses data to inform instruction
- tiers instruction and provides intervention so all students are provided with what they need to make progress
- learns about her students academic and sociocultural needs

Alisha completed ESL certificate courses taught by Laurie Hartwick, LPS ELL Facilitator and UMass Lowell adjunct. She explained, "I was given the opportunity to work collaboratively with people who came from various positions within the education profession. We were able to share experiences working with ELLs and strategies we found to be successful."

Alisha provides two recommendations for teachers of ELLs:

1. Take time to get to know students and their families. According to Alisha: "Each student comes to school, not only with unique academic needs, but also with unique background experiences, culture, language, personality, interests, and attitudes toward learning. We need to recognize that all these factors affect how their students learn in the classroom." Then, we must create a culture of high expectations and differentiate instruction to help all students succeed.

2. Take time to learn strategies and the instructional supports that are effective with ELLs. Strategies often involve the use of instructional supports such as teacher-generated graphic organizers and anchor charts. These require time to create, but this additional preparation time is well worth it. Using and teaching students to use instructional supports improves learning opportunities for all students.

...Finneran, cont'd from p. 1

They need to consistently hear the word, see the word with an image for reference, read the word in text, and use it in their writing. They need to see teachers model this behavior and understand that this is an expectation that teachers have for them."

### Paraprofessionals

Last year 62 paraprofessionals completed ParaTELL, 10 hours of Professional Development (PD) aimed at improving their ability to support instruction for ELLs. Paraprofessionals overwhelming reported that they learned much during these PD sessions. For example, one high school paraprofessional explained that she learned about how students with different levels of English proficiency needed different instructional supports to complete assignments.



Another paraprofessional who supports the instruction of ELLs in the elementary school explained, "This PD has given me more strategies to use to teach the students that I have. So it was very important for me, especially where I only speak one language."

According to paraprofessionals, having time to collaborate with peers is very helpful. As one paraprofessional who worked in the elementary grades explained, "It was awesome to work with group members and receive different feedback from them. And it was good to work with people that are in the same position as I am because I feel like we understand each other at a new level."

**ParaTELL 3.0 will be launched in January 2015.**