



ConnTESOL QUARTERLY

The Connecticut Affiliate of the National TESOL Association

ISSUE 7 WINTER 2016

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
LAURA SICOLA

JULY 2015 SPECIAL
SESSION

AWARD OF
PROFESSIONAL
EXCELLENCE

WORDS OF WISDOM

*"To have another
language is to
possess a second
soul."*

-Charlemagne

CONTACT INFORMATION

CONNTE SOL
PO BOX 1075
MIDDLETOWN, CT
06475



The Keynote Address with Laura Sicola

*"I am, now, more than ever,
stressing that clarity in speech is
paramount to success in college and
beyond."*

These were only some of the words of praise which were awarded to Dr. Laura Sicola, about her Keynote address.

Throughout the address, Dr. Sicola impressed upon us the conventions of language that we all-to-often forget, while juggling the rigors of learning; pronunciation. Bringing up a humorous scene from Shawn Levy's 2006 remake of *The Pink Panther*, Dr. Sicola reminded everyone that repetition alone does not alleviate mispronunciations, and was able to energize the audience, with her comment that "we are training our students to become leaders."

Praise for Dr. Sicola continued on;

many people commended Dr. Sicola's ability to speak to all levels of education, and present information that "applies to all ESL teachers, not just K12 or higher ed." audiences. Others also admired Dr. Sicola for bringing "information [that] was so relevant and well presented."

After the keynote address, Dr. Sicola stayed for an additional workshop, which was very well attended, and was also applauded for its usefulness. Of the workshop, it was stated by one attendee that "I really appreciate the (take away) tools she gave us. I can use them in my classroom now." As well as having command of the room, Dr. Sicola had "good interaction with the audience and plenty of great teaching strategies."

~Mitch Peterson

Bilingual/English Learner Legislation Sections 286-298

Section 286: Previously a student could only spend 30 months in a transitional bilingual program. Section 286 (d) allows for students to spend up to an additional 30 months in a program of bilingual education if the local or regional BOE requests the extension from the CSDE or the CSDE determines that it is necessary. The CSDE must use standards developed pursuant to section 290 to determine whether to grant the request. Section 286(e) requires that when local and regional boards of education meet with parents of eligible students to explain the benefits of language programming, they also communicate the native language accommodations that may be available for the mastery examinations.

Section 287: Local or regional boards of education that are required to provide bilingual programs may apply to the State Board of Education and receive a portion of the appropriated \$1,916,130 based on the number of eligible children in the school district compared to the total number of eligible children state-wide. Any additional funds appropriated must be spent in accordance with sections 290, 294 and 297 of this act.

Section 288: Previously, if a local or regional board of education is not able to hire certified bilingual education teachers for a school year, the district could apply to the commissioner of Education for permission to use a certified teacher of

ESL to fill its need. Districts in this circumstance now must apply to the Commissioner if unable to hire a certified bilingual education teachers.

Section 289: The CSDE must study the feasibility of using RESCs to assist local and regional school boards with low enrollments of English learners and submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly.

Section 290: Not later than July 1, 2016 Standards must be developed for determining whether an extension of a bilingual education program is necessary for an eligible student. These must be developed by the CSDE, in consultation with IHEs, bilingual education experts and teachers.

Section 291: Not later than July 1, 2016 the CSDE must provide information to board of education on (1) research-based practices on how to involve parents and legal guardians in the language acquisition process and (2) native language accommodations for students on the state-wide mastery tests.

Section 292: Each local or regional board of education shall provide in-service training for teachers, administrators and pupil personnel on second language acquisition, language development and culturally relevant pedagogy.

CONFERENCE GALLERY



FRANCO FLORES



GLORIANNE RUSATE
PRESENTING FRANCO
FLORES WITH HIS

2016 CONNTESOL AWARD OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Starting this year, ConnTESOL will be awarding one qualified TESOL Professional our newly designed "ConnTESOL Award of Professional Excellence." This honor is to be chosen, based on YOUR opinions. To nominate someone, the following criteria must be met:

(Continues on bottom of page 3)

Bilingual/English Learner Legislation Sections 291-298

Section 293: CSDE will collect and disaggregate student data on the statewide mastery tests for students in bilingual programs in order to monitor (1) academic progress of students in bilingual programs and (2) the quality of the bilingual education programs. Not later than July 1, 2016 the CSDE must submit a report on its findings.

Section 294: For the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years, the CSDE will administer an English learner pilot program in consultation with IHEs and experts in the area of language acquisition.

Section 295: (f)(1) The statewide mastery test scores of English learners that have been enrolled in a school in CT or another state for fewer than 20 months will not be included for the calculating of accountability measures. Also, pursuant to (f)(2), mastery examinations shall be offered in the most common native languages of students who are English learners, when such examinations have been developed and approved by the United States Department of Education.

Section 296: A local or regional board of education for a town designated as an alliance district may apply to the Commissioner of Education to receive an increase of funds. Such a request must include objectives and performance targets and a plan that may include a range of topics, such as provisions for the enhancement of bilingual education programs or other language acquisition services to English learners including, but not limited to, participation in the English language learner pilot program, pursuant to section 294 of this act.

Section 297: No later than July 1, 2016, the RESCs must conduct a survey of EL services and bilingual education programs in their regions for the purpose of identifying the need for enhanced or new services provided by the RESCs.

Section 298: Each RESC shall study the feasibility of such RESC providing and administering new EL services and bilingual programs.

English Learner Updates 12/8/15

Shortcut to English Learners page:
www.ct.gov/sde/Englishlearners

Public Act 15-5 from the June 2015 Special Session:
<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2015/ACT/PA/2015PA-00005-R00SB-01502SS1-PA.htm>

Specific parts of the legislation that pertain to English learners:
http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/bilingual/english_learners_connecticut_legislation_2015.pdf



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DR. SICOLA GIVING HER KEYNOTE ADDRESS



WILLIAM THOMAS (TREASURER) AND MAGGIE STEVENS LOPEZ (CO-CHAIR)

2016 CONNTESOL AWARD OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Criteria

Applicants are evaluated on their ability to:

- Inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn
- Participate in continuing professional development.
- Create a supportive and encouraging learning environment by providing quality language instruction based on well-articulated theory,

philosophy, educational research, and best practice

- Have a positive impact on students and colleagues.
- Play an active role in the school/community.
- Demonstrate involvement in the field of TESOL through membership in a professional organization.

“Like a bird learning how to fly, it takes time for a bird to learn how to fly and see the world.”

This opening sentiment, by Greenwich High School senior Franco Flores, was quite the statement. As one of the 2015 ConnTESOL scholarship recipients, Franco explained his fear of communicating with others, who spoke different languages than him. He detailed his experiences in ESL classes and the quick improvements he made in his second language acquisition. Once Franco developed confidence in speaking English, he made several improvements in all aspects of his life. Mr. Flores was promoted from a dishwasher to a busboy when his manager noticed that his English had greatly improved. However, Franco's professional life was not the only facet of his life which showed improvement.

Franco explained that, not only did he show great academic growth, he had also discovered a passion for

American literature through John Steinbeck's work. Franco mentioned being drawn to the life lessons which Steinbeck illustrates in his novels - particularly the portrayal of unfairness in the world. Another passion that Franco discovered through his acquisition of English, was film production. As his English improved, Franco confided in his teacher who taught him that hard work creates quality work.

Franco's inspiring words prove how impactful learning a second language can be in one's life. Here, we see how confident Mr. Flores became when acquiring English. He mentioned how all of his experiences with language in school and work have inspired him in many ways. He wants to someday build an educational institution in his native country of Peru. On behalf of ConnTESOL, we would like to congratulate Franco and wish him good luck in all future endeavours.

Josh Giannone

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"FRANCO AND FAMILY"



FRANCO WITH GLORIANNE RUSATE



“To serve the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages and their students.”

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