

Dual Language Learners Celebration Week

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Dr. Deborah Bergeron: Happy February. I am so excited to be talking to you from my office with a friend. I have a friend today. Jennifer Amaya's here, and we're going to tell you about Dual Language Learners Celebration Week, which is coming up very soon, February 19–22.

Jennifer Amaya: Good afternoon, everyone, I'm Jennifer Amaya. I am the content lead for the Office of Head Start on Culture and Language, and we're here to talk to you about the DLL Celebration Week. We are very excited to be with you and share some of the resources and to support these strengths and the benefits of dual language learners. And also, share some of the toolkits that we would like to highlight for you for the Resource Box.

Deborah: Yeah. It's really exciting. You know, prior to this job, I was a principal at a couple of different schools. And two of the schools where I worked were – had a very high ESOL population. So, dual language learners are not new to me. And you know what I – I was thinking about it before we – we came here to talk, and said, "What do I remember the most?" And you know what I remember the most? They were so eager to learn. They were so much fun to learn – to teach because they loved learning. So, learning a language was part of it, but also just embracing whatever it was that you had in your classroom to get a hold of, and the excitement was just something that – it was so unique to that population.

Jennifer: Yeah. That's very true. And you know, for us, this is an opportunity to really highlight the work that the Office of Head Start has been doing through their origins of Head Start and how we support diverse children and families. And also, you still highlight that they are strengths and the benefits of being a dual language learner.

Deborah: Yeah.

Jennifer: And you know, they are all – it's important just for all of us to remember is that Head Start on a yearly basis serves over a million children.

Deborah: Right.

Jennifer: And of those, 300,000 more are dual language learners. And they have – they speak over 140 languages, and sometimes we don't think about what it means in terms of the services that we provide. So, this is really exciting.

Deborah: And it's been true since the beginning. It's not new.

Jennifer: That's right. That's right.

Deborah: Awesome. So, I understand that this isn't just going to be any celebration week. We actually have something specific that we're – like almost like a present that we're going to use.

Jennifer: Yes. Yes.

Deborah: Can you tell us more about that?

Jennifer: Yes. So, we have – we have – during the Celebration Week, we're doing online shops, we're doing social media. And we're using that Resource Box that many of our programs are going to be utilizing. And they have really highlight resources that are available in ECLICK, or ECLKC. But we have put them all together. And I wanted to share with you some of my favorite resources. Is that okay with you?

Deborah: Absolute – this does look like a present. It feels like my birthday.

Jennifer: It does. So, may I show the box so that everybody gets as excited as we are? This is the Resource Box to highlight resources for the Dual Language Learners Celebration Week. And I wanted to share with you some of my favorites.

Deborah: Okay. What's inside?

Jennifer: Yeah. So, I was very excited when I received this box. I went over all of the details. But one of the ones – most important is the jump drive. So, the jump drive has over 40 different resources that are aligned under foundational resources that really highlights the awareness of dual language learners, and it has resources that highlight coordinated approaches, which looks – assistance and services, and how do we better support children who are dual language learners and their families. And there is a whole section about resources to be utilized in the classroom setting, as well. So, that's why I chose it to be one of my favorites because in ECLKC we have all these resources.

Jennifer: Right.

Jennifer: But, if you have it on your jump drive, you can take with you and use it as a tool for professional development and brainstorm with your staff, as well.

Deborah: Yeah, you know it's interesting. You can. You can go online, and you can look stuff up. But isn't it nice to have something in one place?

Jennifer: Yes.

Deborah: That's exciting.

Jennifer: So, I know everybody's excited to have the jump drive. So, thank you for having that.

Deborah: Yeah.

Jennifer: The other one – a resource that I want to share with you. As you probably know, we have been doing a lot of work in the past month related to the Dual Language Learners Program Assessment tool. And one of the tools or resource that is also in the box is related to the dual language learners, and there is key messages, there's a whole tool that is also integrated in the jump drive. So, really highlight what it means to be a program that looks at systems and services and how do we better coordinate services for integrated approaches. So, this is a really great resource that is one of the highlights of the tool.

Deborah: So, if I'm – if I'm a provider and maybe just recently getting more dual language learners in my program, not really sure what to do, this would really help me.

Jennifer: Yes. Absolutely.

Deborah: Ah. Okay.

Jennifer: This is one of the first pieces that you might want to take a look at it to access your systems and services. Yeah.

Deborah: That's fantastic.

Jennifer: The other resource that I – that was very informative, and as well one of the newest resources is a Resource for Home Visitors. So, what we have heard in the past is that we didn't have too many resources to highlight home visitors and how do they work with dual language learners, and the different strategies to utilize. So, our National Center on Development, Teaching, and Learning has put together this really great resource to highlight the strategies, additional resources and practices that can be used by home visitors and their families and the children to really strengthen systems for dual language learners. So, this is really an exciting resource that I thought was worthwhile to mention.

Deborah: You can learn a lot by going into someone's home.

Jennifer: Yes. Yes.

Deborah: That's fantastic.

Jennifer: The other one piece – and I totally forget to ask you.

Deborah: Yeah.

Jennifer: And I wanted to ask you. Can I do a love note? I know you usually do your love note for the grantees.

Deborah: Of course. It's never too late for a love note.

Jennifer: One of the love notes that I wanted to share with you with everybody is to Telamon Corporation. Especially to the executive director Suzanne Orozco who has helped us to really put their thoughts, and their insights, and the development of the Dual Language Learners Program Assessment Tool. Because we really wanted to capture the grantee's perspective and their value in utilizing the tool. So they have been helping us from a couple of months from now in terms of the feedback, the input, how the tool developed. And we're really grateful to them. And just an additional note. Within Telamon Corporation, last month we have Telamon, North Carolina highlighting for us on a national level in a webinar the work on strategic approach to dual language learners and also to dual language learners family and how they be utilized in implementing the tool itself. So that's my love note.

Deborah: That's a good love note. So – so – so, basically you've got all those resources. But they aren't just put together from the people here at the Office of Head Start. You actually went on the ground and got their perspective.

Jennifer: Yes. Yes.

Deborah: Well, you can't beat that. I mean, that's just going to make this so much more meaningful. And you know, what I think would be really awesome is when you get your present, why don't you go to the CLRP community on MyPeers and share with each other. You know, make it a big event to, you know, open your box, and then share with us how you're using it. And talk to each other. Maybe you'll have some great ideas. You can share challenges or successes that you're having.

Jennifer: Yes.

Deborah: Yeah?

Jennifer: Yes. yes. Absolutely. And what it does is that it informs our work at the Office of Head Start, and really help us to think strategically, what is that they grantees need from us in order to better serve our dual language learners children and their families, too.

Deborah: I'm so excited about this, Jennifer. Thank you for coming by.

Jennifer: Thank you. Thank you. And the only last thing. Let's continue this conversation. So, please don't forget to hashtag. Brilliant Dual Language Learners. And send us your comments and your feedback. And now I believe that we're going that we're going to show you a video where we outline all the different events that are happening during the Dual Language Learners Celebration Week. So, thank you, everybody. Thank you.

Deborah: Thank you.

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