

Civically Minded

a weekly newsletter for educators from the Maine DOE

May 29, 2023

Greetings from the DOE!

Last week I wrote about environmental education and citizen science as a natural introduction to civics learning, and about my joy at witnessing Maine's annual run of alewives. That same day I received information about a summer workshop through the Herring Gut Center called "Fresh to Salt: Flowing Together." This workshop will prepare educators to incorporate alewives into their curriculum and design a project based learning opportunity for students. For more information, email freshtosalt@herringgut.org.

Yesterday the Portland Press Herald highlighted two fifth grade students from Loranger Middle School in Old Orchard Beach, Oscar Stanton and Tate Graham, who successfully lobbied the state legislature to have the pink edged sulphur declared the state butterfly.

According to the paper, "Laura Seaver, who teaches fifth grade, said the state butterfly project was a perfect segue from the unit on ecosystems to the next on civics and government."

Maine in summer, as we all know, is a beautiful place to be. Many of us will be spending more time outdoors in the forests, fields, and on the rocky shore (and even in our own back yards). Inspiration and opportunities for civic learning and civically minded thinking abound!

-Jess Graham, Civics Teacher Leader Fellow, DOE
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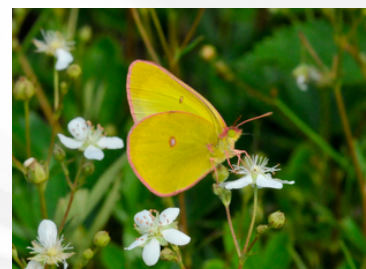


Photo from the
Portland Press Herald



From the Department:

The Interdisciplinary Team at the DOE creates a monthly newsletter. Please click [here](#) to subscribe.

Spring/Summer Book Study Opportunities: *Social Emotional Playbook* and *This Is Your Brain On Stereotypes*. [Earn contact hours in a flexible way!](#)

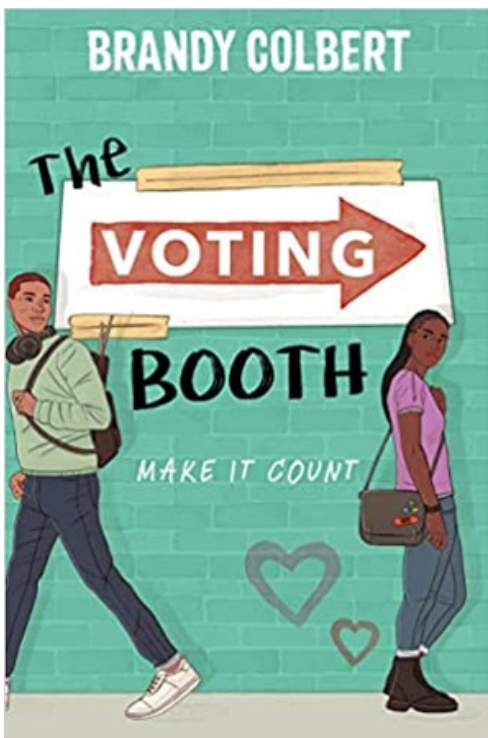
[2023 Summer Symposium on Inclusive Practices for Students with Autism and Developmental Disabilities](#)

[Using Genealogy to Teach Inclusive History Pilot Program](#)

Opportunities for Teachers:

For middle school teachers thinking ahead to next year, the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute hosts an annual competition for students to share civics projects in their Civics Challenge. You can register for information [here](#) and see winning projects from 2023 [here](#).

Books to Inspire Civic Thinking



The Voting Booth
by Brandy Colbert

The Voting Booth begins with civically-minded meet-cute and follows two teens as they pursue learn about voting rights. Lately I've been looking for ways to incorporate more art, literature, and music into both civics and history classes. This novel could serve as a jumping off point for individual or group research into access to voting issues facing citizens. How realistic is the scenario in the novel? Do Maine citizens have more or fewer barriers to voting? You can find a review from Common Sense Media [here](#).