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We help schools think and talk about issues related to race and skin color, national origin and ancestry, religion, disabilities, gender (including gender identity and expression), and sexual orientation.

Day of Welcome



NOVEMBER 4, 2022

Our statewide campaign saw record levels of participation this year!

On November 4th, civil rights teams across the state celebrated the fourth annual Day of Welcome in their school communities. This year we set a new high with 126 schools taking part in the event!

Civil rights teams promoted the idea that our schools are for everyone through intentional and inclusive messaging. They created signs, banners, and displays connecting their welcoming messages with what we call the six civil rights categories: race and skin color, national origin and ancestry, religion, disabilities, gender (including gender identity and expression), and sexual orientation. They called attention to their work and found ways to engage their school communities in thinking and talking about what it means to be truly welcoming and how it relates to civil rights issues. Check out some of the highlights in the linked slideshow below.

Many thanks to everyone for bringing such passion and creativity to the Day of Welcome this year!

[View the 2022 Day of Welcome Slideshow](#)

Feeding the Day of Welcome Spirit

From candy to cider, yummy treats are a great way to get folks involved. Here's how some civil rights teams used food in their Day of Welcome celebrations this year!



Houlton Middle/High School



Jordan-Small Middle School

Hampden Academy: communicated that they were “*bursting* with excitement” to welcome everyone to their community and handed out Starbursts in advisory groups.

Houlton Middle/High School: created Day of Welcome-branded candy treats to incentivize participation in their table activities.

Jordan-Small Middle School in Raymond: spent the week baking and frosting over 200 cupcakes so that they could hand one out to each student on Friday.

Madison Area Memorial High School: made colorful cupcakes and cookies and handed them out during lunch.

Marshwood High School in South Berwick: received a donation of 500 munchkins from Dunkin and 100 muffins from community members. They passed the treats out and welcomed students as they arrived at school.

Mountain Valley High School in Rumford: invited students to join them for cocoa and donuts in the parking lot, where their Day of Welcome messaging is painted on concrete barriers.

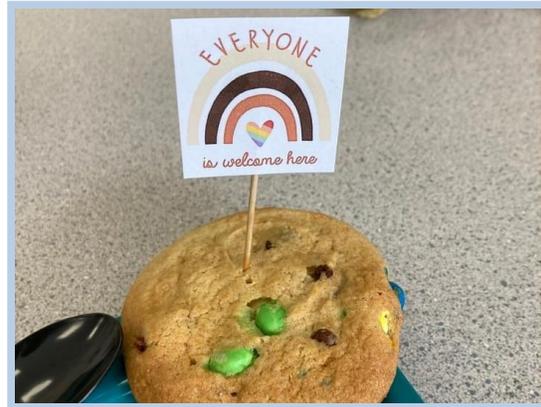
Palermo Consolidated School: handed out lollipops to every student with an attached welcoming message: Palermo School welcomes you!

Sacoee Valley High School in Hiram: provided donut holes and apple cider and played music in the main lobby as students got to school.

Shapleigh School in Kittery: the middle-level team worked with nutrition staff to serve cookies during lunch time with a special message from the civil rights team.



Sacoee Valley High School



Shapleigh School

Welcoming New Teams

This fall we were successful in getting civil rights team started in the following schools:



- Albert S. Hall School
- Eric L. Knowlton School
- Great Salt Bay Community School
- Harpswell Community School
- Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary
- Kermit S. Nickerson School
- Lyman Moore Middle School
- Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
- Mill Stream Elementary School
- Orono High School
- Telstar Middle School
- Waterville Junior High School
- Waterville Senior High School
- Woodside Elementary School
- Yarmouth Elementary School

We already have commitments from some other schools to start civil rights teams this winter. It's encouraging to see so much new interest in the CRTP this school year!

Civil Rights Team Shoutouts



Captain Alberts Stevens School in Belfast: Advisor Sara Pendleton presented on the accomplishments and impact of the civil rights team in her school at the Educate Maine annual education symposium. The *Civil Rights Team for ME* workshop offered “a learning opportunity for educators to understand the importance of equity, inclusion, and education of elementary students using the civil rights team model.”

East Auburn Community School and Gardiner Area High School: For the Day of Welcome, the civil rights teams at both these schools created original poems for the occasion. The East Auburn civil rights team read their collaborative [team work](#) as part of their presentation during a whole school assembly. In Gardiner, civil rights team member and GAHS Poet Laureate Lily Willigar wrote “[Welcoming Poem](#),” which was shared over the intercom as part of the morning announcements.

Marshwood Middle School in Eliot: In addition to their regularly scheduled weekly meetings, the civil rights team has decided to eat lunch together every Wednesday and discuss relevant topics. Advisor Renee Caverly reports that they thoroughly enjoy this time together!

Mt. Blue High School in Farmington: The civil rights team crafted [a statement](#) to support the public placement of a [Gender 101 poster](#) in their school. A few community members were trying to remove the poster or move it to a less prominent location. Advisor Meadow Sheldon shared the team’s statement at a school board meeting, and the board voted to keep the poster in its current location.

Robert V. Connors Elementary School in Lewiston: The civil rights team was selected to design and create ornaments representing the state of Maine for the [National Christmas Tree](#) display. Their ornaments centered themes of welcoming, belonging, and inclusivity. Advisors Kelsey Boucher and Nesrene Griffin then got to attend the official tree lighting ceremony on December 11 at the White House. Congratulations! (You can read more about it in this [DOE press release](#).)

Traip Academy in Kittery: The civil rights team recently unveiled their beautiful new land acknowledgement mural, as featured in this [Seacoast Online article](#). It accompanies the land acknowledgment statement that the team created last year, which includes Abenaki words and a reminder that the school is located on the ancestral homelands of Maine's indigenous people.

Thanks for reading!

That's all the recent news from the CRTP! Look forward to another edition of *The Torch* sometime soon. Until then...

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Administered by the Office of the Maine Attorney General

The mission of the Civil Rights Team Project is to increase the safety of elementary, middle level, and high school students by reducing bias-motivated behaviors and harassment in our schools.

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