



ENL DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



The Zhuk Sisters - Ukraine

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

Sometimes there's a feeling of déjà vu when teaching a former student's younger sibling. I have certainly felt this way with the Zhuk sisters, Maryana (age 21) and Alina (age 9). Maryana was a fourth grader during my first year teaching ESOL in Gates Chili in 2009-2010 at Neil Armstrong School. The following year, the ENL program moved to Florence Brasser and Maryana attended 5th grade there. In May of her 5th grade year, Alina, her baby sister, was born.

Maryana moved from Ukraine to Gates with her parents Oksana and Igor, when Maryana was seven years old. She remembers leaving behind her grandparents, family and friends when she moved to the United States.

When she came to Gates Chili, she started out in the 1st grade at Neil Armstrong with Ms. Irene Stumberger as her ESOL teacher.

After elementary, Maryana attended Gates Chili Middle School where she fondly remembers her ESOL teacher, Ms. Lisa Taylor. She says she exited the ENL program at some point during middle school. She went on to graduate from Gates Chili High School in 2018. Some of her best memories include attending Homecoming and Prom, and getting her driver's license. After high school, Maryana studied business at MCC for two years.

Maryana's sister, Alina, is currently a fourth grader at Walt Disney School, the same grade Maryana was in when I first taught her. Despite their age difference, the sisters are close friends and enjoy hanging out together. They are both kind, friendly and easygoing. They share their love of animals, especially their pet rabbit, Puffy.

As a teacher, it is a joy and an honor to have worked with the Zhuk sisters. It is so nice to get to know a family and build that relationship over the years. Maryana and Alina, you are our #GCCPride!

*Mrs. Sara Meza
ENL Teacher
Walt Disney School*



MS students prepare for Ramadan

DID YOU KNOW?

It is NYSESLAT Testing season! The NYSESLAT, or New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is an annual state test taken by ELLs in grades K-12. The three-session test includes a listening section, reading comprehension questions, and a writing prompt. In addition, students will meet individually with an ESOL teacher to take the speaking portion of the test. Once these scores are calculated, students will receive their updated levels (entering, emerging, transitioning, expanding, or commanding), which determines their programming for the next school year. As a result, these tests are extremely important to our students and teachers! Be aware of when and where these tests are being administered in your buildings so that you can support ELLs by being quiet in the hallways and planning effectively so that ELLs are not overwhelmed with missed work due to testing.

CURRENT EVENTS - RAMADAN

This year, Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, began on April 12. Because the Islamic calendar is lunar, Ramadan begins about ten to twelve days earlier each year. During Ramadan, Muslims not only fast, but also partake in special prayers, donate to charity, and spend extra time with family. Because the school calendar automatically accommodates Christian holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, it is appropriate to make accommodations for Muslim students during their holiday as well, such as providing an alternative lunch placement and allowing absences on Eid al-Fitr, which falls on Thursday, May 13 this year. Watch the video below to hear our Middle School ENL students talk about how they and their families celebrate!

Sharing Ramadan Traditions

Here is some additional information about Ramadan for teachers and administrators:

[CLICK HERE](#)



Taking the NYSESLAT