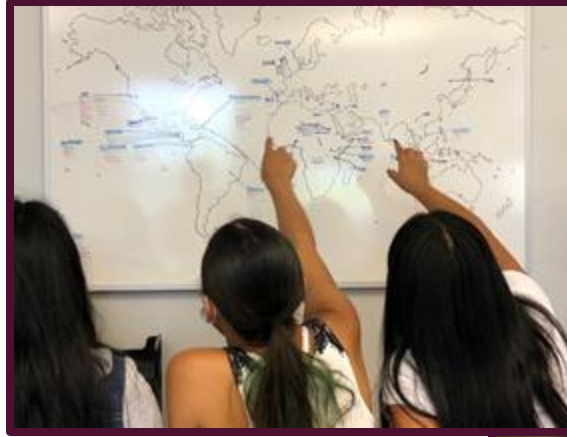


Jessica Lander



- EL History and Civics Teacher at Lowell High School in Lowell, MA
- Teach recent immigrant and refugee students from 30+ different countries
- 2023 Massachusetts History Teacher of the Year, Top Ten National History Teacher
- Author of *Making Americans: Stories of Historic Struggles, New Ideas, and Inspiration in Immigrant Education* (Beacon Press, Oct 2022) Winner of the 2024 George Orwell Award

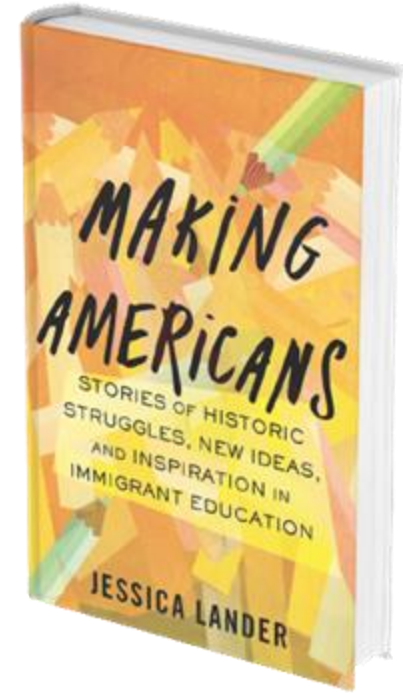
The background is a vibrant, abstract collage of warm colors including yellow, orange, and pink. It features geometric shapes and patterns, with two green pencils with red erasers positioned diagonally, one in the top right and one in the bottom left. A central white rounded rectangle contains the text.

The Importance of Belonging

Belonging is fundamental. For young people, a sense of belonging provides a foundation for building a life and pursuing one's dreams. and, young people who feel that they belong are moved to invest their talents, their energy, and their heart in enriching their new home.

The 8 Pillars of Belonging

- opportunities for **new beginnings**
- supportive **communities**
- assurance of **security**
- **chances to dream**
- committed **advocates**
- recognition of students' **strengths** and assets
- **acceptance** for who students are and where they come from
- opportunities for students to develop their **voice**—and valuing those voices



The background is a vibrant, abstract collage of geometric shapes in warm tones of yellow, orange, and pink. Several pencils are integrated into the design: a teal pencil with a brown eraser in the bottom left, a green pencil with a red eraser in the top right, and a light blue pencil with a grey eraser in the center. The text 'The Past' is centered in a bold, dark purple font.

The Past

Uncovering the Past: *Meyer v. Nebraska*

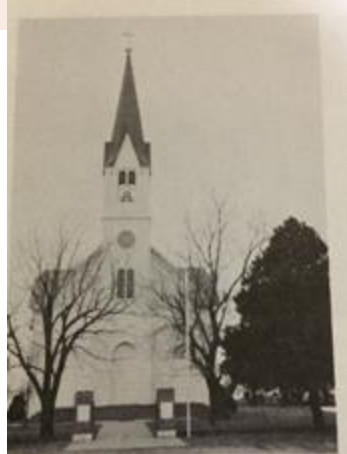
1920

Rural Hampton, NE

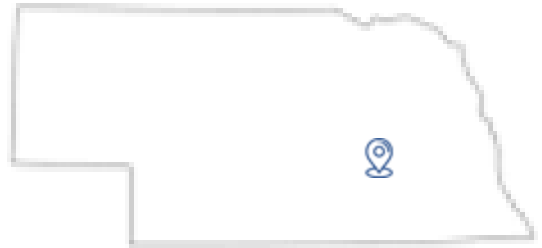
In a rural, one-room schoolhouse, a parochial teacher named **Robert Meyer** was arrested for teaching the Bible in German—not English—for his German-speaking students. He took his case to the Supreme Court and won, enshrining the rights of students to learn and teachers to teach non-English languages.



Photo: Nebraska NHD Org



Zion Lutheran Church - Rural



Uncovering the Past: *Mendez v. Westminster*

1943
Westminster, CA

Mexican-American and Puerto Rican children were denied access to the "white" school in their area. Their families organized to fight for their children's futures, suing 4 school districts. The case (*Mendez v. Westminster*) ultimately desegregated California schools—and laid the groundwork for *Brown v. Board of Education*.



Photo: Sylvia Mendez, c/o Zinn Education Project



Uncovering the Past: *Plyler v. Doe*

1982
Tyler, TX

In 1977, the Tyler Independent School District voted to charge a \$1,000 tuition for every student who could not provide legal residence in the US—roughly 1/4 of most undocumented Texans' annual income. Undocumented families resisted, risking deportation to advocate for their children's access to an education. Their fight culminated in a landmark Supreme Court decision that affirmed undocumented children's rights to public education in the US.



Photo: Tarlton Law Library,
University of Texas



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The Present

An Example at the District Level



Guilford County NC

- Who: EL Director Mayra Hayes + Her team
- 126 schools, 650 miles, 7,000 EL students, 50 countries, 100+ languages
- Rethinking instruction:
 - ◆ “On an autumn night in 1607, a furtive group of men, women and children set off in a relay of small boats from the English village of Scrooby, in pursuit of the immigrant’s oldest dream, a fresh start in another country.”
 - ◆ “Chimpanzees are eating bananas. Bananas are yellow.”

Strategies for creating change

- Regular group PD
- One-on-one coaching
- Meeting each skeptical teacher/leader where they are
- Co-teaching
- Model teaching
- Finding & Sharing resources
- Sharing best practice

An Example at the School Level



Global Village Project, Decatur GA

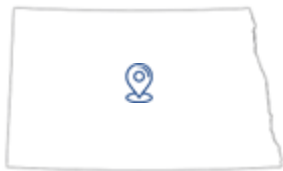


- The only school devoted to refugee girls who have spent a long time out of school
- 100 local older mentors who meet one-on-one with students each week
 - ◆ Provides opportunities for regular conversations with a native English speaker
 - ◆ Opportunities to practice and make mistakes without the embarrassment of messing up in front of peers.
 - ◆ Mentorship program after graduation to help navigate high school and beyond

Strategies at GVP:

- Mentorship
- Frequent opportunities to practice and learn from mistakes
- Shared mission
- Personalized approach for each student

An Example at the Classroom Level



“Partnership for New Americans” class - Taught by Leah Juelke, teacher of immigrant and refugee students in ND

In this class, students:

- Learn together
- Pair up and interview each other and write reflections on what they learned.
- Share their partner’s childhood memories as if they were their own
- Together craft lessons and activities that they teach at a nearby elementary school, teaching lessons on: on watercolors, Nepali dance, the Arabic alphabet, Bhutanese dragon masks, cooking Somali Mandazi

In another class, Leah’s recent immigrant students share “Journey to America” stories. They then print a book of their stories and share it in the community

Strategies for building bridges

- Co-creation with students
- Tapping into students’ strengths and assets
- Affirming students’ identities
- Building relationships
- Opportunities to share and tell stories
- Students as teachers

An Example at the Classroom Level



The Tasting History Project, Lander's Classroom



- *The Tasting History Project* is embedded in our study of U.S. History. It is the final project at the end of our study of early 1900s immigration to the United States
- Project Overview: Students: explore, reflect and share food cultures; choose and write about a family recipe, practice clear descriptive writing; reflect on and write about migration stories; share food and history; become published authors

Strategies for centering student knowledge:

- Centering Student Voice
- Families as teachers
- Asset-based
- Community partnership
- Students as community teachers



An Example at the Classroom Level



The Tasting History Project, Lander's Classroom

- Collaboration with the district food services which works with our class and our students to highlight and serve one dish a month from our cookbook in the district to 14,000 students.
- Through this partnership, for the first time our school district cafeteria has served food from: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Guatemala, Somaliland
- The importance of students seeing their food is valued in our community

