Almost 30 Years of NNELL:
A Brief Retrospective

Nancy Rhodes, Center for Applied Linguistics
NNELL Breakfast, Boston ACTFL Conference
November 19, 2016
8:45–9:15am
NNELL Objectives

NNELL is a forum for people interested in early language teaching.

OBJECTIVES

- Facilitate communication
- Provide information that will improve public awareness and support for early language learning

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Publish newsletter FLESNEWS
- Promote FLES at conferences
Helena Curtain (Wisconsin) and Kathleen Riordan (Massachusetts) propose a NNELL uniform to promote unity and collaboration among members.
Language instruction should start in the early grades

Languages should be available for all students
Pick a name!

NESP (Network of Elementary School Foreign Language Educators)
FLIC (Foreign Language Instruction for Children)
NELL (Network for Early Language Learning)
EFLL (Early Foreign Language Learning)
EAL (Early Additional Languages)
NNELE (National Network for Early Language Educators)
NNEELL (National Network for Early Language Learning)

NNELL it is!
NNELL networking meeting at Northeast Conference in NYC, 1987, focuses on topics to include in first issue of FLESNEWS.
Carol Ann Pesola Dahlberg, NNELL’s first President, is awarded Florence Steiner Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, ACTFL 1988, Monterrey.
NNELL well-wishers congratulate Carol Ann Pesola Dahlberg at ACTFL award ceremony (Helena Curtain, Betsy Grob, Nancy Rhodes, Mari Haas, Myriam Chapman, Carol Ann Dahlberg, Mimi Met, Eileen Lorenz, Marcia Rosenbusch, and Jack Darcy).
Next Steps: Become an Organization

- Members meet in January 1991 at CAL to decide the fate of NNELL: Should it become a part of another organization or a stand-alone organization?

- DECISION: NNELL should become a separate organization, "with close ties to all language organizations that promote early language learning."
NNELL members meet in 1991 at CAL to decide NNELL’s fate.
The mission of NNELL is to promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own, and to coordinate the efforts of all those involved in early language education.
Future NNELL Presidents Susan Walker, Carolyn Andrade, and Audrey Heining-Boynton at NNELL organizational meeting 1991
Pat Barr–Harrison, Ellen Boudreaux, and Helena Curtain draft mission statement.
Greatest Accomplishments

- Impact on national standards
- Critical role in national legislation
- Leadership in professional development and in preparing strong leaders for the profession
Did you know that the national standards for learning languages include levels K–8 because of NNELL’s influence?
NNELL President Eileen Lorenz with JNCL-NCLIS Executive Director, J. David Edwards, a great supporter of NNELL initiatives.
NNELL Presidents

1987-91 Nancy Rhodes (Chair)
1991-92 Carol Ann Pesola Dahlberg
1992-93 Carolyn Andrade
1993-94 Audrey Heining-Boynton
1994-95 Mari Haas
1995-96 Eileen B. Lorenz
1996-97 Mary Lynn Redmond
1997-98 Susan Walker
1998-99 Christine Brown
1999-00 Myriam Met
2000-01 Kathleen M. Riordan
2001-02 Carine Feyten
2002-03 Martie Semmer
2003-04 Lori Langer de Ramirez
2004-06 Janis Jensen
2006-08 Terry Caccavale
2008-10 Paula Patrick
2010-12 Jacque Bott Van Houten
2012-14 Rita Oleksak
2014-16 Nadine Jacobsen-McLean
2016-18 Nathan Lutz
L to R: Lori Langer de Ramirez, Nancy Rhodes, Susan Walker, Janis Jensen, Mimi Met, Martie Semmer, Marcia Rosenbusch, Carol Ann Dahlberg, Eileen Lorenz, Kathleen Riordan, Mary Lynn Redmond, Christy Brown, Mari Haas, and Terry Caccavale
NNELL members meet in 1993 to draft proposal for first ever federally-funded National K–12 Foreign Language Resource Center (at Iowa State University).
Announcing the NNELL 10th Anniversary Volume

Critical Issues in Early Language Learning: Building for Our Children’s Future

Edited by Mimi Met
Foreword by Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State

Available from
Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley
Spring 1998
NNELL Editor Marcia Rosenbusch (center) receives the Florence Steiner Award for Leadership in Foreign Language Education, Postsecondary Level, 1996.
NNELL President Rita Oleksak (right) receives NADSFL’s highest honor – Foreign Language Supervisor of the Year Award in 2014 (with NNELL Past President Kathleen Riordan).
Favorite NNELL Memories

- Acronym FLES – what does it mean? How do you pronounce it? Why is it so confusing?
- F-L-E-A?
- FLESH?
NNELL Mission and Core Beliefs, 2016

- The mission of NNELL is to provide leadership in support of successful early language learning and teaching. Since its founding in 1987, NNELL continues to be an invaluable resource for educators, parents and policymakers advocating for K–8 programs of excellence in second language education.

- Core Beliefs: NNELL believes that all elementary school students should have access to high quality, ongoing and systematic world language instruction.
Thank you, NNELL’s Founding Members!

Carolyn Andrade  Rosemarie Benya  Christine Brown  Helena Curtain
Jack Darcy  Diane Ging  Betsy Grob  Donna Grundstadt
Mari Haas  Nancy Hess  Sheri Houpt  Laureen Hurt
Melanie Klutts  Sara Lindsley  Gladys Lipton  Myriam Met
Kurt Muller  Bettye Myer  Carol Ann Pesola  Joy Renjilian-Burgy
Nancy Rhodes  Kathleen Riordan  Marcia Rosenbusch  Elsa Statzner
G. Richard Tucker  Susan Walker
NNELL today! Executive Board

Rita Oleksak  
Past President

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Nadine Jacobsen-McLean  
President

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Nathan Lutz  
President Elect

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Diane DeNoon  
Treasurer

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Kate Krotzer  
National Networking Coordinator

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Marcella Summerville  
Advocacy Chair

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Dorie Perugini  
Executive Secretary