

# REF

## PENNSYLVANIA LANGUAGE FORUM



Pennsylvania State Modern  
Language Association

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## ABOUT

*Pennsylvania Language Forum* (PLF) is the semiannual online publication of the *Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association*. It features articles on teaching strategies, lesson plans, project ideas, and research by and for world language teachers in Pennsylvania.

PSMLA Members will receive an invitation to view the journal online through the publications section of our website. A digital archive of previous issues is also available online. Visit <https://psmla.org/pennsylvania-language-forum> to access PLF online.

## SUBMISSIONS

Article submissions are accepted on a rolling basis but must be received by February 1 to be considered for publication in the Spring issue of PLF or by August 1 for the Fall issue.

Contributors have the option of submitting their article for peer review. To learn more about that process, please see page 27 for further details. All other submissions should follow the guidelines outlined below.

### Submission Guidelines

- PSMLA members may submit titled articles related to teaching and language education.
- All submissions must be written in English, though examples of lessons or student work may be in the target language.
- All articles must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document or a Google Doc, formatted using Times New Roman 12-point font and be double-spaced. PDF article submissions will not be considered for publication.
- Scanned documents and photographs that accompany the article submission must be clearly identified and labeled. They must be submitted as a JPG or PNG.
- All documents of the submission must include the following information:
  - Name(s) of author(s)
  - Affiliation(s)
  - Language(s) taught
  - Intended levels, when relevant
  - Release Form(s) (available at <https://psmla.org/pennsylvania-language-forum>)

Submissions must be submitted online using the submission link on the [PSMLA website](#).

All authors and any co-authors must be current PSMLA members. PSMLA members whose work is chosen for publication will be notified via email and will receive a final copy of their submission for approval before publication.

## Contact PLF

PSMLA is once again accepting ads for the *Pennsylvania Language Forum*. Vendors wishing to advertise should consult the Advertising Manager's page on the PSMLA website ([www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org)). All other questions may be directed to Christina Huhn or Nathan Campbell, Co-Editors of PLF, at [PALanguageForum@psmla.org](mailto:PALanguageForum@psmla.org).

## President's Message

Fall 2021



**John Grande**  
**President**  
**Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association**

Welcome back to a new Fall semester! We have learned much from the past year about teaching virtually and/or our hybrid schedules. We are back to the “new normal” and making the best of a still difficult situation.

For me personally, June 2021 fulfilled a major milestone of my life. I retired after 35+ years of teaching in public schools. As I reflect upon it, it is a bittersweet stage of my life. As most of you have guessed, I miss my colleagues with whom I shared many of life’s ups and downs, whether about education or life itself. I have now begun a new adventure – teaching at the university level! I am looking forward to what this new phase will bring to my life as I carry with me all that I have learned so far.

I am grateful to the members of PSMLA who have continued to bring us new strategies and new ways to make the best of this “new normal”. Virtual professional development sessions, coffee hours to connect and network with teachers throughout the state, language advocacy letters, and virtual exchanges with state level policy makers have continued to support and keep World Language education vital and in the forefront of education.

The culmination of all this time and effort is once again expressed in the return of ... and our first ever ... “virtual” Fall Conference beginning on October 13, and running until Saturday, October 16, 2021. This year’s theme is **Addressing the Moment: Bridging Differences with Languages**. We decided to change the format to accommodate teachers’ busy schedules and will have several online sessions, beginning late afternoons and ending early evenings. Please register for this conference and take advantage of the low cost for both membership renewal and conference registration. More details are available on the [PSMLA website](#). By the way, all the conference sessions will be recorded and viewable at your leisure until the end of February. As always, we look forward to sharing ideas, strategies, best practices, and technology initiatives. Networking and collaborating with each other nurtures us and motivates us to do our best in our classroom daily!

In closing, then, it is my hope that your year will be much less stressful than last year. And may the differences we find in each of us continue to make our lives richer!

All the best,

John Grande



**Nathan Campbell & Christina Huhn**  
Co-Editors, *Pennsylvania Language Forum*  
Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association

Welcome to our Fall 2021 issue of the *Pennsylvania Language Forum (PLF)*!

As we continue to navigate these challenging times, our fellow educators share their unique insights and encouragements for our profession. PSMLA's president, John Grande, opens our journal as he shares his perspective on the next chapter in his life and career. Deeper in this edition, Cherie Garrett offers our readers another installment on Tech tools to enhance our pedagogy and support our students. Cherie makes technology integration manageable and accessible for us by offering a consolidated list of resources and ideas for easy implementation in the classroom.

Our historian, Gabi Appel, brings us a new addition to the *PLF*, "From the archives", highlighting the history of our organization and our teachers. This first submission provides an interesting comparison to one of our organization's original goals and reminds us that collaboration and advocacy remain vital contributions to our profession. As our current demographics remind us, we are a diverse organization with rich experiences and perspectives that are, at our core, the most valuable asset we have. PSMLA provides its members opportunities through webinars, coffee hours, workshops, and the Fall Conference to unite as one body and share our collective knowledge.

We hope that you will be inspired to be proactive advocates in your own academic setting after reading about how to advocate for the programs that matter to you and your students. As a consideration of her insightful and practical article, Thekla Fall offers a self-assessment to guide you on your path to advocacy.

Finally, as we set out on the next 100 years as Pennsylvania's premiere language organization, we need to pursue, invest in, and mentor the next generation of leaders. As an emerging leader herself, Wilma Dunkle, reflects on her experiences this past summer as a participant in ACTFL's LILL program, a program designed to equip world-language teachers as they step into new positions of leadership. Wilma calls on more young people to join her and continue what many others have worked hard to preserve. We hope you will answer that call.

Please enjoy this fall issue!

Christina and Nathan, your co-editors

[palanguageforum@psmla.org](mailto:palanguageforum@psmla.org)





# ACTFL2021

## VIRTUAL

### NOVEMBER 19-21

- ▶ Enjoy outstanding professional development with **500+** educational sessions, **3** dynamic keynote speakers, and an interactive expo at the most comprehensive event for language educators!
- ▶ On **November 18**, choose from one of **5** informative and practical pre-convention workshops to enhance your convention experience
- ▶ For all convention updates, visit **actfl.org**



## BECOME AN ACTFL MEMBER AND SAVE



**SAVE \$100 ON CONVENTION REGISTRATION**  
Save more money than the cost of member dues!

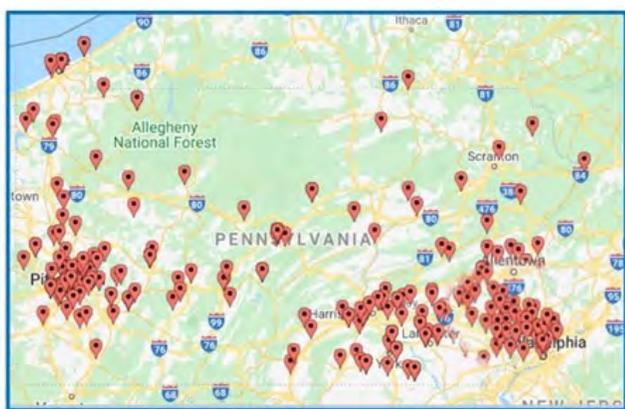
**JOIN OVER 400 MEMBERS FROM PENNSYLVANIA**  
Connect with educators in your state in addition to thousands of ACTFL members from around the world.

**GAIN ACCESS TO A WEALTH OF RESOURCES**  
From publications to Special Interest Groups, you'll have access to all the latest information and resources.

**REGISTER AND JOIN TODAY AT ACTFL.ORG**

# PSMLA Membership Demographics

We are 674 unique members from all over PA...



...in various institutions...

356 High Schools

104 Colleges/Universities

93 Elementary Schools

66 Middle Schools

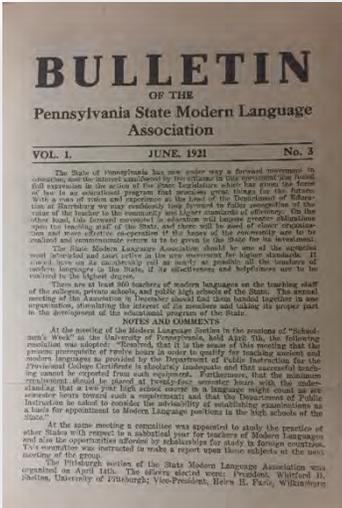
7 Academies

6 Charter Schools



...teaching 15 different languages!





## Strength in Numbers and Inspiration

Gabi Appel, PSMLA Historian

In June 1921, thus almost exactly one hundred years ago, our association distributed its first publication, then called *Bulletin*. From the very beginning and throughout various points of its history, part of the core principles of the association was to become a strong organization which unites teachers and is influential in shaping language teaching and learning in Pennsylvania. Take a look at the following two segments from the *Bulletin*, which urge us to reach out to all language teachers in the state.

"The State Modern Language Association [*i.e.* PSMLA G.A] should be one of the agencies most interested and most active in the new movement for higher standards. It should have on its membership roll as nearly as possible all the teachers of modern languages in the State if its effectiveness and helpfulness are to be realized to the highest degree.

There are at least 900 teachers of modern languages on the teaching staff of the colleges, private schools, and public schools of the State. The annual meeting of the Association in December should find them banded together in one organization, stimulating interest of its members and taking its proper part in the development of the educational program of the State." [Bulletin, 1, 1921, 3]

"For the welfare of modern language teaching throughout the state we need to extend our membership and our influence. The Association will not be fully effective until every progressive teacher in Pennsylvania is an active member." [Bulletin, 8, 1928, 1]

Language education policy should be shaped and developed by those who are most qualified to do so. Our organization, our members, our leaders need to be the predominant voice shaping that policy. The words first published by our organization a century ago are still valid after all these years!

2021

# PSMLA Exemplary Program Awards SHOWCASE

In honor of the national “2005 Year of Languages”, PSMLA began an award program to recognize and honor Exemplary PA high school foreign language Programs (PEP). All PA high schools (public, parochial, private, charter) are encouraged to SHOWCASE their exemplary programs!

To participate, high schools must submit documented evidence that they meet the rigorous criteria established by PSMLA – with signatures of the school superintendent, principal, and supervisor or department chair to attest to the accuracy of the information submitted.

PEP criteria are detailed in the form of the 11 Indicators and the PEP Rubric ([www.psmla.org](http://www.psmla.org)). The PEP Rubric serves as a BLUEPRINT to assist schools by helping them to evaluate their world language programs and by providing concrete goals for improvement, as needed. The two-year awards may be earned at four levels: Globe, Bronze Globe, Silver Globe, and Golden Globe.

PSMLA believes that all PA students deserve exemplary foreign language programs! Therefore, PEP is *not* a competition; *every* school that meets and provides the required evidence receives a commensurate award.

NOTE: Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, 2019 Award Schools were given the option of extending their normal two year award for a third year. Many schools chose to do this and two schools opted to reapply.

On the following pages see:

- 2019—2022 PEP Schools by award categories
- Individual School Profiles alphabetically
- Rationale for the 11 PEP Program Indicators
- Notes to Parents and Administrators

# 2021 PSMLA Exemplary Program Awards



## GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS

- Academy of Notre Dame de Namur, Villanova, 2005-21\***
- Gettysburg Area High School, Gettysburg Area S.D., Gettysburg, 2015-21**
- Merion Mercy Academy, Lower Marion S.D., Merion Station, 2015-21**
- North Hills Senior High School, North Hills S.D., Ross Twp., 2016-21**
- Owen J. Roberts High School, Owen J. Roberts S.D., Pottstown, 2013-21**
- Palisades High School, Palisades S.D., Kintnersville, 2020-21**
- Penncrest High School, Rosetree Media S.D., Media, 2014-21**
- Pittsburgh Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh S.D., Pittsburgh, 2007-21**
- Plymouth Whitemarsh High School, Colonial S.D., Plymouth Meeting, 2019-22**
- Upper Moreland High School, Upper Moreland Twp. S.D., Willow Grove, 2009-21**
- Upper St. Clair High School, Upper St. Clair S.D., Upper St. Clair, 2019-21**
- Vincentian Academy, Pittsburgh, 2019-21**



## SILVER GLOBE AWARDS

- Abington Senior High School, Abington S.D., Abington, 2013-21**
- Chartiers Valley High School, Chartiers Valley S.D., Bridgeville, 2017-21**
- Gateway High School, Gateway S.D., Monroeville, 2018-21**
- Greater Latrobe Senior High School, Greater Latrobe S.D., Latrobe, 2019-21**
- North Allegheny Senior and Intermediate High School,  
North Allegheny S.D., Wexford, 2020-21**
- Saucon Valley Senior High School, Saucon Valley S.D., Hellertown, 2019- 21**
- Upper Merion Area High School, Upper Merion Area S.D., King of Prussia, 2019 -21**



## BRONZE GLOBE AWARDS

- Great Valley High School, Great Valley S.D., Malvern, 2019-21**



## GLOBE AWARDS

- Boiling Springs High School, South Middleton S.D., Boiling Springs, 2017-21**
- Delaware Valley High School, Delaware Valley S.D., Milford, 2015-22**
- Eastern Lebanon High School, Eastern Lebanon County S.D. Myerstown, 2019-21**
- Honesdale High School, Wayne Highlands S.D., Honesdale, 2020-21**
- Titusville Area High School, Titusville Area S.D., Titusville, 2017-21**

(\*Years listed represent years of consecutive PEP Awards.)

Indicators	RATIONALE
1. Maintain high percentage enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards are for all students, not just the academic/economic elite. All students should attain world language standards.</li> </ul>
2. Provide choice of languages in a 4 year high school sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U.S. society is diverse. Programs should reflect this diversity within reason.</li> <li>Students may be more motivated to attain standards with a language of their choosing.</li> </ul>
3. Retain students at higher levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exemplary programs maintain student interest to continue their study</li> <li>Schools with high academic expectations for students will arrange student schedules to avoid conflicts that otherwise might prevent them from taking higher level classes.</li> </ul>
4. AP, IB, level 5 classes, and/or College in the High School programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exemplary programs challenge students to reach higher levels of proficiency and encourage students to continue language study K-16</li> </ul>
5. Schedule classes that are one level per period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time on task is critical for attainment of standards. Multi-level (or split) classes often result in students receiving a half a period.</li> </ul>
6. Offer an extended sequence of instruction in at least one commonly taught language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of 3 -5 five years are needed (in a 5 period per week standards-based program) for most students to attain an Intermediate Low level of speaking proficiency (ACTFL Scale)</li> </ul>
7. Implement key practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use the target language 90% in most classes in a comprehensible way</li> <li>engage students in pair and small group communicative activities</li> <li>encourage/require students to express their own meanings</li> <li>integrate culture into daily instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time on task is critical. Students must be immersed in the target language as much as possible in every class period.</li> <li>Teachers must speak the target language—but it is critical that students comprehend what is said.</li> <li>Without pair and small group activities in the target language, students have insufficient speaking practice to attain the Communication Standard</li> <li>Students will not attain proficiency if the main emphasis of instruction is grammar and if the only speaking that occurs is memorized.</li> <li>Cultural knowledge is essential to effective communication.</li> <li>Although there are many other best practices for effective world language instruction, we believe that these are key.</li> </ul>
8. Administer standards-based, performance assessment that cuts across languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There can be no standards-based program without a valid, reliable assessment that cuts across languages to determine student progress in attaining standards.</li> <li>To be valid and reliable have outside verification of results using a common measurement tool such as the ACTFL Scale.</li> </ul>
9. Engage in yearly staff development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As professionals, teachers must maintain and improve their knowledge and skills. Educators must model the concept of “life-long learning”.</li> </ul>
10. Maintain membership in professional organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As professionals, teachers must stay abreast of the research in the field, standards implementation, new materials, etc.</li> <li>Through their membership, teachers support the work of their professional organizations.</li> </ul>
11. Provide special program features beyond the classroom environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These special program features may support the national standards areas: Communications, Cultures, Connections , and Communities</li> <li>Special programs/projects/activities tend to increase student motivation and participation in world language programs</li> </ul>

## Teachers share their inspiration

We asked our members to share the inspirations that have driven them as world language educators. Here is what they had to say.

I love learning and reading.

The feeling of helping someone when I tutored them in high school.

Passionate and encouraging teachers and professors, plus a love of Spanish, inspired me to become a teacher.

The happiness of learning, love, tolerance, and kindness that my Public and Religious School Teachers imbued in me and my strong yearning to pass these treasures to students.

What inspired you to become a teacher?

Encouragement from family.

I loved exploring new ideas and I wanted a job that would allow me to be creative, engage with others, and push me to constantly grow and change. Teaching definitely does that!

I considered being a teacher in 9th grade. When I mentioned something to my history teacher, he said I think you'd be a great teacher and this is a great job. That's all I needed to hear.

I was always the kid who could explain things to the other kids in class. I didn't become a teacher; I realized that I was one.

Learning has always been a joyful and intricate process to me. The joy of learning something that you are interested in is very special. I wanted to be part of that process and that is why I decided to devote my life to being an educator. As an educator, you can be one the most influential people in your students' lives. They look to you not only for content but also for guidance, encouragement, compassion, and strength. To this day, I still remember who my teachers were from kindergarten to college. Many of these teachers taught me to pass on the love of teaching and learning and to create lifelong passionate learners.

I loved sharing the knowledge I acquired, "language is about everything".

Before becoming a teacher, I was a flight attendant and traveled the world. I wanted to bring my experiences and my love of travel and culture to young people.

I always loved learning and wanted to be a teacher for as long as I can remember. I knew I would become a language teacher after I studied abroad in Venezuela--I fell in love with the language, the culture, the people, and I knew I had to share that passion with others.

Spanish was my favorite subject from the very first day of level 1. I knew from that day that my Spanish teacher was wonderful and that learning a new language was going to be exciting and rewarding.

Music and German were the most fun for me. The teachers and the students in those classes were always doing interesting things and it made my brain happy. I was shy, and those classes made me feel like I belonged.

I loved it all except for science and that was only because I had believed I wasn't good at it.

Languages-I always knew I wanted to teach, but when I took French and Spanish in high school, they clicked with me and I knew that I had found my calling.

### What was your favorite subject as a student in high school?

English. I always wanted to share my love of the language with younger people. However, in college I had a wonderful Spanish professor and decided to pursue a teaching degree in Spanish.

I don't remember thinking in terms of favorite subjects, but I'd have probably listed Spanish class and social studies at the time. I had really caring and competent Spanish teachers throughout junior high school and high school, and I really wanted to learn Spanish in part at least thanks to my aunt in Perú. I've always been interested in history. Spanish language and culture and history (local, U.S., Spanish-speaking world and in general) are still my favorite interests.

Spanish. On day one my teacher was explaining to us how learning a new language would give us the ability to communicate and connect with <<huge amount>> of people in the world and outside our community. I wanted to be able to do that. I wanted to be able to communicate, travel, and learn about as many cultures and countries as possible.

German and French. Both teachers were older women, native speakers. They built on my profoundly eventful year on France, where I started German as "Foreign" language. For me, language wasn't about learning "vocabulary" and "verbs". It was about how grammar and syntax reflected a culture's "world view" about its relationship to its geography, history, arts; its cultural self-image. Yet, as not a native speaker of French or German, I didn't have to bow down at the altar of absolute bias to one language culture.

French, because it was my passion. I was caught up in its history, culture and people.

My mother.

My high school  
language  
teachers

Who is one person that has had the most influence on your teaching?

My high school Spanish teacher, my college methods professor, and my long-time colleague have all had direct and important influences on my teaching. I would not be where I am or who I am as a teacher without their influence and support.

It is a tie: Frank Bisk, Ray Leven, Dr. Trudy Moskowitz ( Temple University )

Dr. Glisan at IUP was the most influential person in my teaching. After having her for Phonetics and Phonemics and Methods of Teaching, she completely left her mark on my instructional practices. To this day, she still sits on my shoulder watching every activity and technique that I use with my students, and I am a much better teacher because of her.

There are many teachers in various areas, but for foreign language learning my high school German teacher will always have a special place in my heart. His personality and love of life were beyond compare!

The biggest influence on my teaching has been not one person, but all the people who have provided leadership, guidance, information, encouragement, and training in the peer-led organically driven and evolved Teaching with Comprehensible Input movement (beginning with Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling -TPRS). If I were to select one person from that language teacher movement network, I would name Michelle Kindt for her generously offered training opportunities, clear and competent teacher and teacher trainer voice, and her personal support.

The person who had the most influence on my teaching was my Japanese teacher in College. He made Japanese easy to learn while having fun, learning songs and playing games. No judgement. I remember that going to Japanese class was the highlight of my day. I made a lot of friends there that I still keep in touch with.

My son. When he was born and I watched him acquire language skills, I knew I needed to restructure my teaching methods.

My 6th grade teacher, Mr. Kelzenberg, was a pivotal figure. He was amazingly creative and made learning, especially writing, fun. He had us create recipes for witches' brews, write our own epitaphs, and bet each week on football stats. I remember one writing assignment asked us to compose an essay describing one thing that we were really good at. I was a pretty shy and insecure 12-year-old, and I remember coming home crying because I didn't think I was good at anything. My mom was so shocked that I couldn't see any of my own gifts or talents.

# Top 10 Technology Tools

Cherie Garrett  
Dallastown Area High School



After teaching via hybrid instruction for the past school year, it was essential to embrace technology to meet the needs of learners who were both in the classroom and live streaming from home. One positive effect of the pandemic has been the development of a plethora of technology tools to present and to practice content, to create with the target language, to record spoken language, to assess student work and provide feedback. I have found the following free-version tools to be very effective in teaching and learning a world language and plan to continue using them this school year.

Technology tool	Usage
<a href="#">Pear Deck</a>	To present an interactive lesson using Google slides (live session or student-paced). Also, great to practice vocabulary in an interactive way (Pear Deck vocabulary).
<a href="#">Class Tools</a>	To practice content by using the free templates to create games, quizzes, and fun activities in seconds.
<a href="#">Flippity</a>	To practice content by using the free templates to create games, quizzes, and fun activities in seconds.
<a href="#">Book Creator</a>	To create an original book, story, or adventure by combining text, images, audio and/or video.
<a href="#">Blooket</a>	To practice content in an extremely fun way. If your students like Kahoot and/or Gimkit, your students will absolutely love Blooket.
<a href="#">Screencastify</a>	To record a spoken presentation. Extremely useful with a PowerPoint.
<a href="#">Flipgrid</a>	To record presentational and/or interpersonal speaking. Also, connect with other classrooms anywhere in the world by using GridPals.
<a href="#">Padlet</a>	To assess students' knowledge on a given topic or brainstorming ideas.
<a href="#">Mote</a>	To provide spoken feedback to students. Instead of typing comments, save time and make it more personal by leaving a voice message.
<a href="#">Rubrics in Google Classroom</a>	To provide specific feedback quickly by using a rubric posted in Google Classroom.

## Quick Tech Tips from Cherie Garrett!

Want an awesome tech tip?  
Eliminate ads on YouTube  
videos!



To eliminate ads when showing a YouTube video, place a dash between the "t" and the "u" in the YouTube URL. You will get a new URL to use that doesn't contain any ads.

Example:

<https://www.yout-ube.com/watch?v=VrvOaxBIPPc>

(note the "-" between the t and u)

**ADVANCE YOUR CAREER WITH ACE**

# Education Webinar

**October 21**

7 pm ET / 6 pm CT / 4 pm PT

Learn more about American College of Education's high-quality, low-cost online programs. Earn your M.Ed. in ESL and Bilingual Education for under \$10,000 or your Ed.D. in Second Language Instruction for under \$24,000.



**Register Now** 

## College & University Spotlight

### Institution Name & Location:

Indiana University of PA., Indiana, PA

### Department Website:

[IUP: Department of Foreign Languages](#)

**Contributed by:** Charles McCreary, D. Ed.,  
Associate Professor of French

**Approximate number of Modern  
language majors in programs:** 5-15



IUP



Indiana University  
of Pennsylvania

### Modern Language Programs

- *Options in Spanish:*
  - Bachelor of Arts
  - Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education (PK-12 certification)
- Minor option for French, German, & Spanish
- Certificates in Chinese, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish
- **\*New\*** Certificate in Spanish for Safety Sciences
- Summer courses available for Spanish-language courses

### Study abroad

- Credit granted towards undergraduate degrees
- University programs in close to 100 different destinations
- Scholarship offerings for study abroad
- Departmental programs available in:
  - Spain
  - Mexico
  - France
  - Valladolid, Spain
  - Austria



Students at a train station in Lorraine, France.



### Summer Courses

Summer programs are available for Spanish-language courses.

## Scholarship Opportunities

- Available for students in all languages
- Program specific grants for students to attend conferences and workshops
- Additional study abroad scholarships

## Links

[IUP's Critical Language Options](#)

Check out our webpage for more details about all of our programs:

[IUP: Department of Foreign Languages](#)



*Professor Jean-Louis Dassier gives students in his French classes a valuable skill for their careers.*

## What makes IUP's Modern Language programs special?

- IUP's teacher education program in Spanish has been **recognized three times** as an ACTFL/CAEP model program with a **high rate of graduate placement**.
- We offer **placement testing and credit** for prior oral proficiency at advanced levels through our ACE Credit program in Spanish, French and German.
- We are particularly proud of our **language certificate program** which has added more students each year since its inception about five years ago.
- **\*New\*** We recently developed an interdisciplinary **Certificate in Spanish for Safety Sciences**.



"My study abroad experience in Costa Rica was life-changing, as I spent a month studying, traveling, and practicing the language and culture of the native peoples," said Shelby Ledger, Class of 2015. Ledger, who is pursuing dual degrees in Spanish and Spanish Education, also volunteered abroad in Cuzco, Peru, doubling her exposure to Spanish-speaking cultures.

# 68th Annual Northeast Conference



## *Classroom Roots, Global Reach*

**February 10–12, 2022**  
**New York Hilton Midtown**



**Christopher Gwin**  
Conference Chair



**For more information, visit [www.nectfl.org](http://www.nectfl.org)**

## Magnifying your Leadership Lens

Wilma Dunkle  
Meadville Area Senior High School

Have you ever found yourself wishing you were the charismatic leader to whom people are so naturally drawn? Yeah, same here. Have you ever really stopped to analyze the characteristics of *other* types of effective leaders? I'm guessing we're in the same camp here, too.

This summer, I had the opportunity to represent PSMLA at ACTFL's Leadership Initiative for Language Learning (LILL). LILL is a program that the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) developed in 2015 to "empower individuals to become agents for change, in order to foster a growth mindset focused on effective teaching and learning, and purposeful nurturing of leadership skills, all in the service of learners." (Leadership Initiative for Language Learning, n.d.)

In the beginning phases of LILL, I found myself wondering how I got there: *I'm not in the right place; I'm an imposter, slinking into this group of actual leaders in language education.* Let me be specific: I'm not, and will never be, that outgoing charismatic person who generally comes to mind first when defining "leader". However, what I learned (perhaps relearned?) quickly during the LILL summer institute is the importance of a variety of leadership styles to build sustainable strength in an organization. If all members of an organization possessed the same or similar leadership skills, or worse yet, if all members tried to function as though they possessed the same coveted qualities, we would instantly cripple our collective goals with this feigned leadership.

So, what skills could I offer to PSMLA and to our profession at large? LILL requires participants, referred to as emerging leaders, to complete the Clifton Strengths assessment, a leadership skills evaluation developed by Don Clifton (Rath, 2007). I responded to a host of prompts where I chose which one of two statements described me more accurately. Upon completion, this program then threw my top five strengths, in order, back at me: achiever, learner, focus, analytical, and relator.

As I followed up with the explanations of these strengths in the corresponding book, *StrengthsFinder 2.0*, I, quite literally, laughed out loud when I read the description of my primary leadership strength: achiever. Did Gallup use secret camera footage of me when they wrote the description!? I am indeed the kind of person who is always busy, always accomplishing, whether at work, at home, or even on vacation (Rath, 2007). Combining that strength with an insatiable desire to learn, an analytical approach to plans and challenges, and the ability to have purposeful focus is a powerful formula for setting realistic goals and accomplishing them.

However, there are areas where I fall short. For example, to optimize my leadership skills, I need to connect with people who set lofty goals, people who can envision the impossible. Otherwise, I have to be careful that my pragmatic style does not hold me back. I need co-leaders who live in the moment so that they balance my incessant drive to project, predict, and analyze. People who excel at taking charge are an ideal balance to my hesitance to suggest

that others follow my lead. Just as *StrengthsFinder 2.0* states, you and I will never be strong leaders by leading through the lens of a strength we don't genuinely possess (Rath, 2007). We can, however, magnify our leadership lens with a focus on our collective, balanced strengths, when you focus on your powers and I on mine.

What are your strengths? What can you offer to your department? Your district? Our state language association? Our profession? And, above all, to our younger generations? How can your strengths balance those of your colleagues to the same end? What kinds of leaders can help you magnify your existing strengths and balance your weaknesses? To build the strong language community that our nation's students need, the contribution of *your* genuine strengths is paramount. Similarly, developing working relationships

with others who possess the skills you lack will enhance our collective leadership in the world language community.

In the words of Captain Planet and the Planeteers, "Let our powers combine!"

*Are you excited to connect with other language leaders to magnify your leadership lens? Please considering getting involved with your local, state, and national associations. Or, perhaps you have the charisma I lack? Feel free to reach out if you're interested in collaborating. You may reach me at [wilma@psmla.org](mailto:wilma@psmla.org).*

### References

Leadership Initiative for Language Learning. (n.d.). Actfl.org. Retrieved July 26, 2021, from <https://www.actfl.org/learn/leadership-initiative-language-learning>

Rath, T. (2007). *StrengthsFinder 2.0*. Gallup Press.



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# Please Help!

## The Administration is Cutting our World Language Program!

Thekla Fall, Ed.D.

Every so often when a world language program is being cut at a school, PSMLA gets a call for help. Often, the call comes after top school administrators and board members have already made decisions. Typical reasons include: money is tight, enrollment in language classes is too small, a new principal or administrator may not be a fan of world language study, and/or they just want to offer something different. At times, PSMLA can send an advocate to speak to their board but often it is already too late to change their minds.

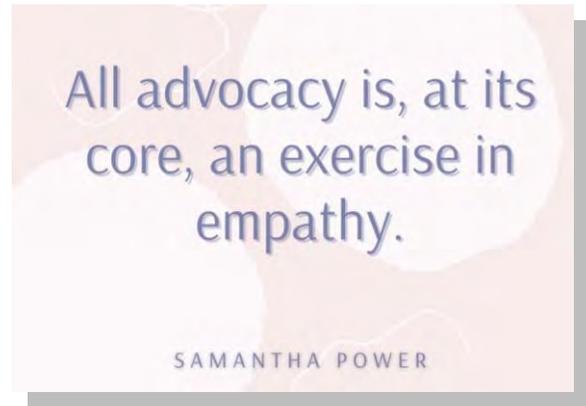
### What can be done?

Sadly, sometimes nothing! Frequently, teachers have done a fantastic job and programs are cut anyway. However, some teachers decide to be *proactive* and do what they can to successfully strengthen and promote their programs throughout each year to make it difficult for administrators to cut the program.

We can learn from a non-required subject like music. Parents will usually fight to keep music programs. Why do they get so much support? In part, it's because they are very *visible* and exude *vitality*! Most children will never be professional musicians. Many don't even play very well. But parents love to see their children perform and love to see them as special. Musical performances are proof that students are learning and that the program has *value*. Seeing and hearing one's child converse, sing, receive honors, and/or act in a foreign language is also very exciting and instills pride. What is needed is advocacy.

### What is foreign language advocacy?

Simply put, advocacy is a *proactive* effort to routinely devote time (both inside and outside of class) to increase the *vitality* of programs, to make programs more *visible*, and to educate the



school and the community about the *value* of world language study. The end goal of program advocacy is to maintain and build enrollments and programs—making it difficult to eliminate them.

Students, prospective students, parents, administrators, board members, and the taxpaying public must see how well students are doing in your excellent program and be informed about the many benefits of language study.

### Who can do this?

Individual world language teachers, world language departments, and students are the best advocates for their program. Advocacy must be a major instructional focus along with National Standards. If language learning is important, then it is worth the time and effort it takes to educate the school community of its value.

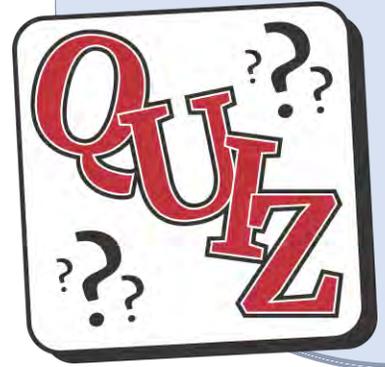
Some teachers may feel that they don't have time for this or that language learning should be valued on its own. However, when teachers are not active advocates, they put their programs at risk.

Students should help. They gain valuable information and public relations skills if they are recruited to serve as advocates and ambassadors for a program. Getting them actively involved leads to long-term retention.

PSMLA encourages world language departments to work together to design annual school advocacy plans. If that is not an option, there are things individual teachers can do.

## Are you a strong advocate for world language instruction? Find out with this quick self-check quiz!

We hope the following compilation of ideas from many different teachers, departments, and schools will provide some inspiration for those looking to expand their **proactive advocacy** efforts. Congratulations on all the wonderful things you already do! Check to see what else could be done in terms of program *vitality, value, and visibility*.



### Program Vitality

1. Do you inspire students with your enthusiasm? Enthusiasm is contagious. If you are not excited, why should they be? Do you demonstrate your love of the language and culture you are teaching? YES / NO
2. Do you include engaging classroom language and cultural activities, field trips, special programs, etc. that make students and their younger siblings want to take your classes (word spreads)? Do you on occasion invite administrators or parents to attend? (Even if they cannot attend, just inviting them makes it noteworthy.) YES / NO
3. Cross-grade interaction can be exciting and beneficial for both groups of students. Do you arrange for your students to interact with elementary or middle school students—for presentations, tutoring / conversation partners, cultural demonstrations, etc.? YES / NO
4. Is there a readily recognizable world language area within your school (with bulletin boards, flags, realia, student work) in the hall that says world languages are an important part of this school? Is it updated routinely to attract renewed attention? Do you ask your students to help? YES / NO
5. A part of advocacy is making sure good programs continue. Our programs need high quality teachers. Are you talking to your best and brightest students about becoming world language teachers? Do you help new, inexperienced teachers in your building? Do you mentor student teachers? YES / NO

### Program Value

6. Are your students able to clearly articulate *why* it is important to learn a foreign language and why they are studying the language? YES / NO
7. Do you involve students in online searches about the *value* of learning a foreign language? Do you regularly share FYI articles that promote foreign language study with administrators and parents? (They may not read more than the headline, but the point is made.) Do you use these articles to teach your students? Do you add some questions about the articles on quizzes or tests? (If it's not on a test, students think it's not important!) YES / NO

8. Have you kept in touch with students who use their language skills after graduation? Have you asked them to come speak to your classes? Do you share their information with students?  
YES / NO
9. Do you have a list of companies and organizations in your area that require languages as a primary or secondary skill? Do you invite guest speakers to come for career days? YES / NO
10. The PSMLA Exemplary Program (PEP) Awards provide outside validation of excellent high school programs. However, its value as a tool for advocacy depends on how widely the award is heralded throughout the school: to the administration, to parents, and to the broader community with banners, social media notices, a presentation of the certificate at an assembly, etc. Ask students to help. Is your school a PEP school? YES / NO

## Program Visibility

11. It is not so easy to cut a program when parents know and respect the teacher and the program. Do your students' parents know who you are? Do they know how wonderful your program is?  
YES / NO
12. Do you make sure that all world language events are reported on the school's media sites? Do you solicit student help to do this? YES / NO
13. Do you and/or your students maintain an up-to-date, interesting, social media presence? Even if your students can't make changes directly, they can contribute to the content with cultural items, interesting data, and informational items. These may include notifications of local community/citywide ethnic and cultural fairs, food festivals, and a listing of restaurants by cuisine, specialty stores, etc. YES / NO
14. Are parents invited to attend at least one world language program, cultural fair, or presentation, etc. per year? Are administrators invited to special classroom activities? (Again, even if they can't attend—the point is made!) YES / NO
15. Do you arrange for parental involvement? Parents can do more than chaperone trips. Parents may be willing to contribute culturally appropriate treats for special classroom cultural lessons or international school fairs. Teachers should consider the connections they may have to parents who are native speakers, etc. They can invite them to engage in story telling or act as conversation partners for small groups of students. YES / NO
16. Do your students participate in an annual world language competition? Did your program receive an award? Was one of your world language teachers honored? It is more difficult to cut award-winning programs. Have you widely publicized the awards to parents, board members, and tax-paying members of the community? YES / NO
17. Working within your district's guidelines, do you routinely send information about special events and trips along with photos (with parental permission slips) to local newspapers? Small local weekly newspapers are often more apt to print something—especially if it is well written and complete. Do you invite local newspapers to attend programs or special classroom events?  
YES / NO

## So how did you do?

Are all your yes responses in one or two categories (vitality, value, or visibility)? If yes, please consider implementing an activity in the other category. All three categories are important.

Give yourself a point for every **yes** response. Use the chart to determine your advocacy level.

# of yes responses	Advocacy Level	
0	Advocacy Newbie	It's time to get to work! Set a goal to accomplish at least one new advocacy strategy.
1-3	Novice Advocate	You're off to a great start! What is your next step to increase your advocacy?
4-7	Intermediate Advocate	You're on your way, great job! What has worked? What hasn't? Review and set goals!
8-11	Advanced Advocate	Wow! You are doing a lot for our profession!
12-14	Superior Advocate	Your advocacy is making a real difference!
15-17	Distinguished Advocate	You are an advocacy Rockstar! Consider writing an advocacy article for PLF!

Please note that activities that promote the visibility of your program are NOT a form of self-aggrandizement! Good school publicity is vital. It benefits the overall school and contributes to the survival of an important program-yours!

While we acknowledge that teachers can't be expected to always implement all 17 of these advocacy goals, we hope that teachers will expand their proactive advocacy repertoire, involve students when possible, and be involved in department-wide activities and events.

In just a few years, your high school seniors will be parents, taxpayers, and perhaps even a building principal or board member. What will they remember of your language classes? What will they remember about the value of world language study?

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Special thanks to Devin Browne (Pittsburgh Brashear High School) and Mina Levenson (Pittsburgh Allderdice High School, Retired) for their input and advice for this article



# A note about Peer Review

Christina Huhn & Nathan Campbell, editors, *PLF*

To our esteemed readers:

Although we did not receive a Peer Reviewed submission for this journal edition, we wanted to take a minute to answer some **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** about Peer Review in an academic journal.

## 1. What is Peer Review?

Peer review is a systematic process through which submitted articles (most commonly research or classroom studies) are reviewed by a small group of experts in the field. *PLF* is fortunate to have a panel of outstanding peer reviewers who have a combination of knowledge, language education, leadership in teacher training, and many years of experience.

## 2. Is it anonymous?

Yes, we use a double-blind process so that neither the names of the authors nor those of the reviewers are revealed. This preserves the integrity of the peer review process.

## 3. Peer Review sounds time consuming and I worry that my article will be rejected.

The *PLF* Peer Review process is intended to accomplish the exact opposite – provide feedback on your work and support your publication efforts.

## 4. Isn't peer review just for University Faculty?

No, it is part of the publication process for anyone who publishes an academic article.

**5. What if I want to do research on my classroom and am not sure where to start?** One of the most necessary areas of research needed is that of classroom research. Conducting research on your classroom offers several benefits:

- a deeper understanding of your students and their language proficiency
- excellent publicity and prestige for your school and school district
- stronger connections between our K-12 schools and universities

This is a long-standing need in our academic research. Rich Madel, in his Spring 2021 article, offered some possible explanations and practical solutions to help you get started:

Madel, R. Classroom Teachers' Role in Bridging the Research Gap in SLA: A Guide for Conducting Classroom Research. *PA Language Forum*, 92(Sp21), 30-45. Retrieved from <https://www.psmla.org/pennsylvania-language-forum>

## 6. What if I have additional questions?

Please contact the journal editors and we'll be glad to discuss potential projects!

## Call for Submissions – Peer Reviewed Articles

### Pennsylvania Language Forum: Peer Review Process

**Aim and Scope:** *Pennsylvania Language Forum (PLF)* is PSMLA's annual publication. The journal features a selection of original scholarly articles that are chosen by a peer review process.

The Editorial Board of *PLF* welcomes original scholarly, research-based articles that address issues directly related to world language teachers in Pennsylvania. Topics may include original, empirical research studies and application of high-leverage practices in the World Language Classroom. Peer Reviewed articles should maintain a classroom relevance for world language educators at all levels in Pennsylvania. Articles focusing on language proficiency development are also of interest. Articles on literary topics or interdisciplinary topics are welcome, provided the article is focused on classroom applications. Dissertations should be refined and re-focused, as dissertations are too long and detailed for a published article. Research conducted in the K-12 classroom is highly encouraged.

**Peer-Review Process:** All manuscripts follow a blind review process and are first reviewed by the editor(s) of the journal and then sent for blind review by members of the Editorial Board.

Manuscripts must follow the submission guidelines below.

#### Manuscript Preparation Guidelines

1. Submissions must be original work that has not been previously published or be presently under review by another journal.
2. Submissions must be written in standard academic English. Authors should follow APA guidelines consistently. Use [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html) as a reference as needed.
3. All submissions are initially read by the Editor(s) (first review) and then if deemed appropriate and *all* guidelines were followed, sent out to a group of appropriate experts for blind review. Submissions should include a title page as a separate document that includes:
  - a. Article Title
  - b. Article abstract
  - c. Name(s) of author(s)
  - d. Affiliation(s)
  - e. Language(s) taught
  - f. Intended level(s), when relevant
  - g. Release Form(s) for any images or materials (available at <https://psmla.org/pennsylvania-language-forum>)
4. The anonymity of the author(s) *must be ensured* by removing all identifiers from the manuscript. This can be done by referring to any identifying information as "Author X, University X, etc.)
5. All manuscripts must be submitted as .doc, docx, or rtf files. Use Times New Roman 12 point, double space.
6. Tables and Figures will be numbered sequentially and need to be prepared as either WORD or *jpeg* files. (Do *not* use *pdf* files for tables and figures.) They need to appear at the end of the article following References. Place a note [insert Table X/ Figure Y here] in text to indicate their suggested locations.
7. All in-text quotes require page numbers or paragraph sources for nonpaginated sources. Use *italics* for emphasis; not quote marks.
8. Word limitations are as follows: Title [15 words]; Abstract [150 words]; Key Words [5]; full article, [approximately 5,000 words (roughly 15 pages)].
9. Submissions must be submitted online using the submission link on the [PSMLA website](#).

10. All submissions will be acknowledged by the Editor(s) within 2 weeks of receipt.

11. Authors are responsible for securing publication rights when using images.

Submissions of empirical research for the peer-reviewed section of the journal should generally include the following sections

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Discussion or Results
- Implications for the Classroom
- Conclusion
- Acknowledgements
- Reference / Works Cited

Additional article types may be accepted but should follow the general constructs of academic research and be applicable to the World Language Classroom in Pennsylvania.

	<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Further Development Required</b>
<b>Relevance</b>	Article is very relevant and timely both to the Aim and Scope of the PLF and World Languages.	Article is relevant to Aim and Scope of PLF but some improvements should be considered by the editor(s).	Article topic not relevant to Aim and Scope of PLF.
<b>Citations</b>	Article is well cited, following APA citation guidelines as identified in the Author instructions.	Article is well cited, following APA citation guidelines, but there are a few errors that will require attention from the editors,	Article is missing citations or citations are largely inaccurate.
<b>Mechanics</b>	Article is very well-written, free of typographical or structural errors.	Article is well-written and free of typographical errors but may have a few sections that will require the editor(s) attention.	Article contains significant typographical errors or structural errors beyond what the editorial process can support.

Thank you to all our authors, reviewers and  
PSMLA ExCo for their support of and  
contributions to this publication!

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