

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 15 to be considered for publication in the Spring issue of *PLF* or by August 15 for the Fall issue.

Contributors have the option of submitting their article for peer review. To learn more about that process, please see the following page 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) for any photographs (available at [online](#))

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 not currently 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). All other questions may be directed to Christina Huhn or Nathan Campbell, Co-Editors of *PLF*, at PALanguageForum@psmla.org.

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.

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 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.

	Exceeds	Meets Expectations	Further Development Required
Relevance	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.
Citations	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.
Mechanics	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.



Pennsylvania State Modern
Language Association

*INSPIRING MULTILINGUAL
COMMUNICATION AND
INTERCULTURAL
UNDERSTANDING*

**The mission of the Pennsylvania
State Modern Language Association
(PSMLA) is to enhance world
language education throughout
Pennsylvania by:**



Promoting the teaching
and learning of world
languages and culture at
all levels (Pre-K through
university)

Providing
opportunities for
professional growth
and networking



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in the field

Collaborating
with local, state,
and national
organizations





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NEW GERMAN PROGRAM



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

Despite all the publicity surrounding language program cuts, this issue showcases that world language learning is alive and well throughout Pennsylvania. We are excited to release this Fall edition of the *PLF* as world language educators across the state prepare to meet once again at the PSMLA Fall 2023 Annual Conference! Take time to sneak a peek at the conference award recipients, presented on p. 11, and check out the various ads from our conference sponsors posted throughout the edition.

In the face of the recent cuts to language programs, advocating for what we do as language educators has taken on a renewed focus. In 2021, Thekla Fall (with help from Devin Browne (Pittsburgh Brashear High School) and Mina Levenson (Pittsburgh Allderdice High School, Retired), contributed a practical article on Advocacy for language program cuts. The article offers numerous actionable and thought-provoking ideas on advocating for language programs – whether facing current cuts or anticipating future ones. We've chosen to reprint Fall's article from Fall 2021 as it has renewed relevance in the current situation. It is a time for action - and the PSMLA Advocacy committee, led by Cherie Garret, has begun to organize a Task Force. Be sure to read both articles on p. 23 and p. 27 respectively. Cherie's article also highlights recent legislative efforts!

PSMLA's peer mentoring program is pleased to announce that it has selected its 2023 cohort, on p. 19. Furthering the support of our new educators, three graduating seniors from our state have been awarded scholarships from the Language Connect Foundation - supporting the language teacher pipeline (p. 16)!

Language study in PA isn't limited to just the traditional big three languages, and Devin Browne, hits it on the nose, as he shares his insight around the teaching of Russian as a less commonly taught language - including how to recruit students to enroll in the program.

Last, but certainly not least, officially in its second year, the PA Seal of Biliteracy continues to expand throughout the state - see the updated table on p.14 for the record setting award totals!

We look forward to seeing you at the conference!



Isabel Espino de Valdivia
President
Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association

I hope you are having an exciting new academic year. Once again, teachers are facing many challenges due to the lingering impact of the pandemic, threats to cut our world language programs, and the politicization and scrutiny of what we can or cannot mention in our classroom. In Japanese there is a saying, 三本の矢なら折れない (Sanbon no ya nara orenai) literary translated as three arrows cannot be easily broken, and now more than ever we must be united and advocate for our programs to continue providing a strong and equitable education to all our students. Please Join PSMLA as we work actively to advocate for our students, teachers, and world language programs.

This past August, PSMLA ExCo members came together in State College and worked diligently to advance PSMLA's mission: **Promoting the teaching and learning of world languages and cultures at all levels, providing opportunities for growth, recognizing excellence, and collaborating with local, regional, and national organizations.** The Advocacy Committee is leading a new initiative to create a task force to reinvigorate World Language study and teacher preparation. Soon, there will be a Call to Membership to get involved and take an active role in this endeavor.

Join us for the [2023 Fall Conference](#) at Seven Springs to reset, recharge, and connect with friends and colleagues. Our Keynote speaker, Dr. Jose Ricardo-Orsorio, Associate Professor of Spanish and Foreign Language Education at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, will inspire us by providing tips to rekindle our professional mojo.

I am very happy to announce that the Peer Mentoring program has selected the 2023 cohort, their first meeting took place in early September, and they will attend and meet in person at our Fall Conference. The goals of the PSMLA Peer Mentoring program are not only to support novice teachers but also to recognize and develop teacher leadership among experienced Pennsylvania World Language Educators.

PSMLA will continue hosting webinars and in-person workshops in Spring and Fall next year. The coffee hours in French and Spanish will have a new format and PSMLA teachers will be able to get ACT 48 credits. Please check out our website for updated information.

Thank you for being part of the PSMLA community! You inspire us to continue this great work, and we appreciate your ideas and recommendations.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the Fall Conference!



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2023 PSMLA Award Recipients



PSMLA Teacher of the Year 2023

Jennifer McGonagle

Jenn McGonagle has extensive teaching experience, and stands out for the enthusiasm, innovation, and caring she brings to her students. She has an MEd and Ph.D. in French Literature, with professional certification in both French and Spanish. Currently, she works as a French teacher at Taylor Alderdice High School in Pittsburgh.

She strives to render language learning a memorable, enriching and fulfilling journey -- an adventure wherein she shares her passion for French and Spanish while nurturing students' linguistic skills and cultural awareness.

Over her career, Jenn has taught at various educational institutions and has had the pleasure of guiding students from introductory levels in elementary summer school to advanced courses in colleges. She engages students through lively and eclectic teaching methods, and she is committed to addressing opportunity gaps. She has created dynamic curriculums that keep students motivated and eager to learn, making language learning not only educational, but simply fun.

Over the years Jenn has presented papers at multiple conferences, served as an AP Reader, as well as been awarded various language grants/scholarships (i.e., AATF, French Embassy, Fulbright).

Outside of the classroom, she has organized and facilitated cultural exchange programs and extracurricular clubs such as the Peers and Facilitators, Gay Straight Alliance, Global Minds initiative, Black Student Union, and the French Club. These experiences have enabled her to learn from her students and in turn helped her to then better facilitate a vibrant learning environment where both student and teacher can explore diverse cultures and perspectives. She is a firm believer in promoting tolerance, improving school climates, and championing social justice causes.

When not immersed in the world of languages, you might find her enjoying activities such as alpine skiing, rollerblading, and bouldering. She is also an avid film enthusiast and baker. Recently, she has been relishing her new role as a grandmother.

The PSMLA Teacher of the Year (TOY) is selected to compete at the regional level (NECTFL) and then potentially at the National Level as ACTFL Teacher of the Year. Congratulations to Jenn!

Congratulations

PSMLA Outstanding World Language Educator (K-12)



Amy Necci

Amy Necci began her teaching career in 2001 in the Pocono Mountain School district, teaching various levels of high school Spanish. In 2007, she joined the South Middleton School District team at Yellow Breeches Middle school. Currently Amy is the 8th grade Spanish teacher in the district, giving students a start in expanding their language skills. Amy earned her Bachelor of Science in Spanish education with a minor in Latin American Studies from Bloomsburg University, with study abroad experiences in Salamanca, Spain and Cayey, Puerto Rico.

Her Master of Education with a concentration in Reading is from East Stroudsburg University, and she is currently finishing up course work at Messiah University for a graduate certificate in Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Wellness.

A longtime practitioner of yoga and mindfulness, Amy loves weaving practices into the classroom. Amy says that she teaches not only Spanish –she teaches young human beings. She fully believes that kids are ultimately trying to figure out life, too, and that involves much more than learning about the content alone. As we all seek balance in our lives, Amy is especially passionate about serving youth and educators, and feels strongly that learning self-support strategies that help with this can benefit anyone at any stage of life. For Amy, mindfulness, mindful movement, and other creative forms of self-support all incorporate skills that can be taken out into life to empower each unique individual. In all aspects these practices have been powerful tools for helping her through anything that life might bring her way.

PSMLA Frank Mulhern Leadership Award



Cherie Garrett

Cherie Garrett has served as the chair for the PSMLA Advocacy Committee and PSMLA's JNCL-NCLIS representative for the past two years, and she was just elected as the second vice president for PSMLA in September. In the spring of 2020, she was recipient of the NECTFL MEAD Leadership Fellowship which encouraged her mission

to advocate for a state seal in Pennsylvania. From 2019-2022, she played an integral role in advocating for the PA Seal of Biliteracy which was made official in March of 2022. For the past several years, she has given webinars and presented at workshops and conferences about the Seal of Biliteracy. Moreover, she has served as an invaluable reference for PA schools who want to offer the PA Seal of Biliteracy. Currently, she is working to advocate for JNCL-NCLIS initiatives such as the World LEAP Program which would provide funding to improve and expand world language programs, and the BEST ACT which would provide funding to pay for proficiency assessments for the state seals of biliteracy. Cherie is also a full time Spanish teacher at Dallastown Area High School where she teaches upper-level courses and is the World Language Department Chair. During her tenure at Dallastown, she developed and continues to supervise the Intermediate World Language Program, the World Language Career Symposium, and the PA Seal of Biliteracy. Additionally, she is the advisor of the Global Scholars Program and coordinator of student trips to Spanish speaking countries.

PSMLA 2023 PEP Award Schools

GOLDEN GLOBE AWARD

Parkland High School, Parkland S. D. Allentown, 2023-24.

Pittsburgh Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh S.D. Pittsburgh, 2023-24 Plymouth Whitemarsh High School, Colonial S.D., Plymouth Meeting, 2023-24 Upper St. Clair High School, Upper St. Clair S.D., Upper St. Clair, 2023-24

BRONZE GLOBE AWARDS

Dallastown Area High School, Dallastown S.D., Dallastown, 2023-24

Delaware Valley High School, Delaware Valley S.D., Milford, 2023-24



GLOBE AWARDS

Boiling Springs High School, South Middleton S.D., Boiling Springs, 2023-24 Highlands High School, Highlands S.D. Natrona Heights, 2023-24

Lower Moreland High School, Lower Moreland S.D., Huntingdon Valley, 2023-24 Deer Lakes High School, Deer Lakes S.D., Cheswick, 2023-24

2023 PSMLA Exemplary Program (PEP) Award Schools and PSMLA Global Scholars awards have also been announced. The full list of awardees from all years, as well as program criteria can be found on our [website](#).

SAVE THE DATE
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2022-2023 PA Seal of Biliteracy School Districts

School District	# of Recipients	Languages	Supervisor	Email
Abington Heights High School	1	Spanish	Ashley Schwartz	schwartza@ahsd.org
Bellefonte HS	2	Spanish	Emily Zimdahl-McManus	ezimdahl-mcmanus@basd.net
Carlisle HS	4	Spanish	Heather Bosnyak	bosnyakh@carliseschools.org
Central Dauphin East HS	3	French, Italian, Spanish	Bonnie Paz	bpaz@cdschools.org
Dallastown HS	27	Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Spanish, Twi	Cherie Garrett	cherie.garrett@dallastown.net
Downingtown East HS	5	French, Spanish	Susan Tancredi	stancredi@dasd.org
Downingtown West HS	1	Spanish	Susan Tancredi	stancredi@dasd.org
Esperanza Academy Charter School	32	Spanish	Karen Sergovic	ksergovic@neacademy.net
Greater Latrobe HS	1	Chinese	Elizabeth Antolik	liz.antolik@glsd.us
Greensburg Salem HS	7	French, Spanish	Stephanie Grace	stephanie.grace@gslions.net
Greenwood HS	1	Spanish	Lindsey Peterson	lpeterson@greenwoodsd.org
Hampton HS	10	French, German	Jessica Heranic	heranic@ht-sd.org
Holidaysburg HS	3	Chinese, German	Raquel Lemelle, Kimberly Pope, Alicia Schmouder	raquel.lemelle@hasdtigers.com
Jenkintown HS	2	French, Spanish	Sarah Thatcher	thatchers@jtowndrakes.org
Manheim Central HS	8	German, Spanish	Nathan Campbell	campbelln@manheimcentral.org
North Allegheny HS	7	Chinese, French, Spanish	Kylene Butler	kbutler@northallegheny.org
Northampton HS	6	German, Spanish	April Krempasky, Scott Oste	krempasa@nasdschools.org
Penncrest HS	14	French, Spanish	Kimberly Riviere	kriviere@rtmsd.org
School District of Philadelphia	166	Albanian, ASL, Arabic, Bosnian, Cambodian, Cameroon, Chinese, Fulah, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Malay, Malayalam, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Serbian Croatian, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Wolof	Elizabeth Szylejko	eszylejko@philasd.org
Susquenita HS	3	Spanish	Christa Snyder, Rosario Eppley	csnyder@susquenita.org
Titusville HS	1	Spanish	Sandralee Kozlowski	skozlowski@gorockets.org
York Academy Regional Charter School	4	Spanish	Laura Riggs, Jacob Dunkleberger, Derik Bartrom	lriggs@yorkarc.org
Total school districts: 20	Total recipients: 308	Different languages: 26		





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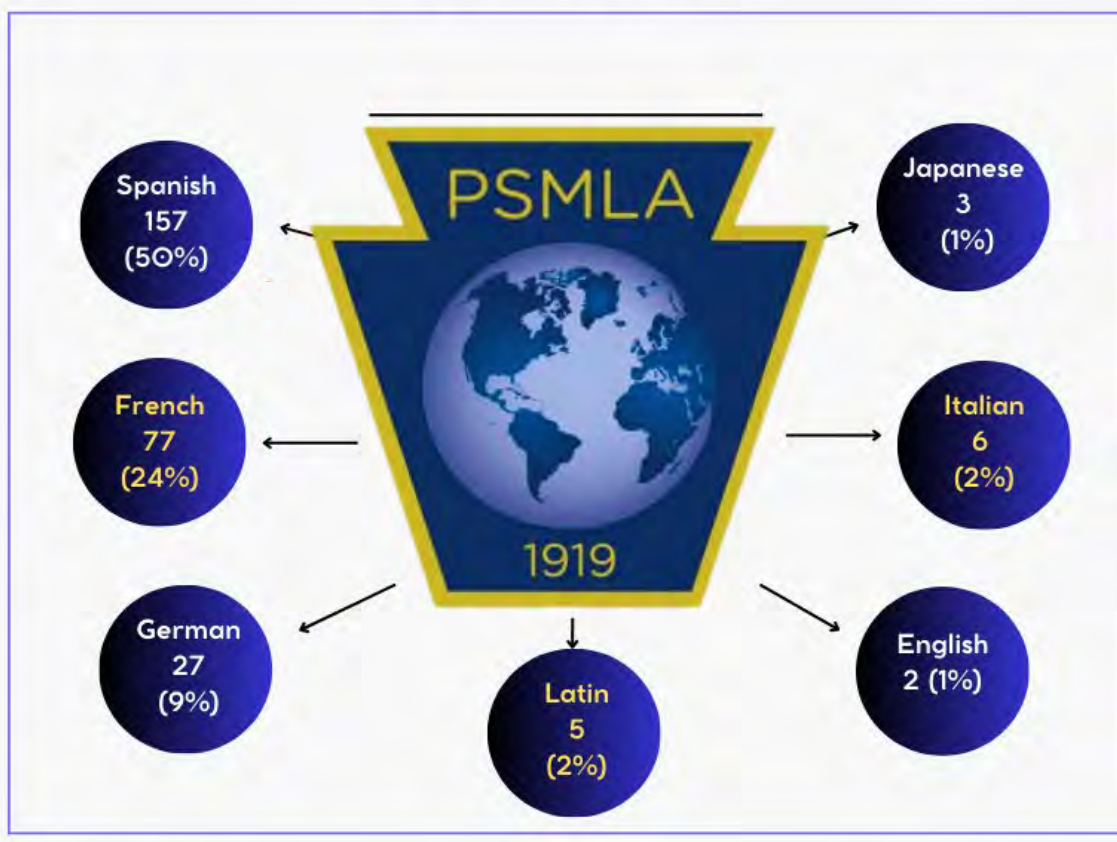
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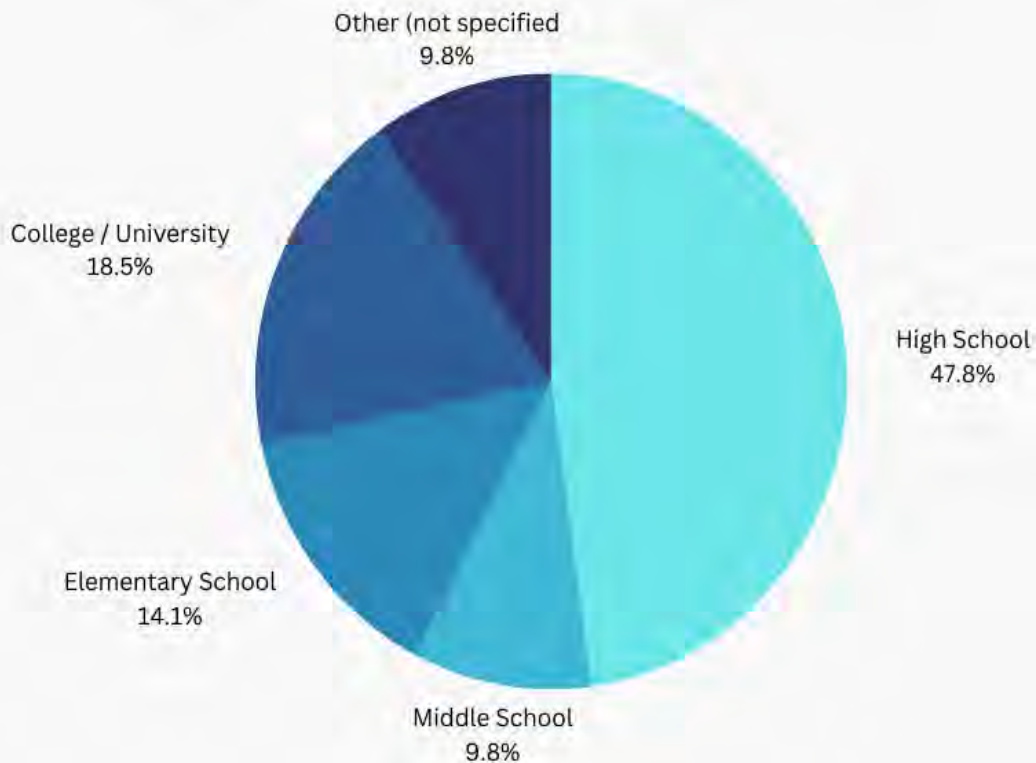
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PSMLA Peer Mentoring Program

Welcomes its 2023-24 Cohort!

The PSMLA Peer Mentoring Program welcomed its cohort of mentors and mentees for the 2023-24 school year. On September 6, participants met virtually to orient themselves to the program's theoretical foundation, core concepts, and expectations. By the end of the session, each pair developed a specific goal to support the novice teachers in their development of successful communicative language teaching. Mentors and mentees meet monthly to check in on their goals and discuss feedback, resources, and support as needed.

The PSMLA Peer Mentoring Program participants this year are:

MENTORS	MENTEES
Silvana Sarmiento Pantaleón <i>Spanish Teacher</i> Abington Senior High School	Hermenegildo Alvarado-Blanco <i>Spanish Teacher</i> Manheim Township Middle School
Brooke Starr <i>French Teacher</i> Cheltenham High School	Seth Thayer Pidot, Ed.D. <i>French Teacher</i> The Shipley School
Kent Dwyer <i>Spanish Teacher</i> State College Area School District	Adam Fisher <i>French Teacher</i> Parkway Center City Middle College

The PSMLA Peer Mentoring Program is designed to support novice world language teachers while simultaneously recognizing and further developing teacher leadership among experienced Pennsylvania world language educators. PSMLA members with fewer than three years of teaching experience are invited to apply to be mentees. Mentor applicants are also expected to be PSMLA members and should have at least eight years of experience teaching a world language. Applications are accepted through June 30 each year in order to match mentors/mentees for the following school year.



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Fall 2023

DUQUESNE
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p. 20

Sweating in The Nose

Teaching Russian is like teaching no other subject in the K-12 world language classroom

Devin Browne

Pittsburgh Brashear High School, Pittsburgh Public Schools

Author's note:

Research questions with answers submitted by Devin Browne

(dbrowne1@pghschools.org) to Maggie Broderick for her research on less commonly taught subjects. See citation at end of entry.



Teaching a less commonly taught content

What content area(s) and grade level(s) do you teach?

Russian, grades 9-12

Please share an anecdote (or more than one anecdote!) about what it's like to teach a less commonly taught content area at your school/district. What would you like people to know and understand?

Russian looks great on a student's transcript. Russian looks great on a school's course selection form. Russian looks great on documentation for the state to show ways in which we challenge our students.

Great, great, great!!

But building and maintaining a Russian program can be... challenging? Formidable? Maddening?? We do a recruitment day every year with the help of the University of Pittsburgh's Russian Club (cool hip young adults who want you to study Russian! And here's some Russian candy! And your name in Cyrillic!). We put up signs, daring students to take Russian ("Are you up for the Russian Challenge?") or appealing to their silly weird side ("Russian. It's not just for breakfast anymore.") or to their media motivated minds (here's a dozen images of Russian memes of bears and babushkas). We wear t-shirts that say ЭТО ФУТБОЛКА and hand out pencils that say ЭТО КАРАНДАШ and cajole students to sign up for Russian next year to figure out what they say.

We talk to middle school counselors and ask them to remind their students that Russian isn't really that bad (isn't it?) and that EVERYONE takes Spanish, but the cool kids take the Russian class with the other 10 students who had no idea what they were getting into either. Come on!

Heck, thanks to the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Russian, East European & Eurasian Studies and a local craftsman (shoutout to Pittsburgh costume artist Sam Hatbob!), my school has a full-body-sized Nose costume

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created in 2018 with federal money that random adults take turns wearing (and sweating in!) throughout our school (so students never really know who The Brashear Nose is) during the two weeks or so that our AP English teacher, Kristen (“What did I get myself into?”) Kurzawski, teaches Nikolai Gogol’s *The Nose*. **A giant Nose!!** Mysteriously roaming the halls at a distance, appearing in the cafeteria, popping up at a basketball game. It even has its own Twitter, Instagram and TikTok accounts (@BrashearNose — check it out!!).

We developed partnerships with government-funded (that means FREE) summer immersion experiences, either in Pittsburgh (Pitt’s summer STARTALK program) or in Latvia (University of Wisconsin’s NSLI-Y program). A summer in a college dorm away from your parents doing fun activities with other teenagers and regularly taking excursions — or dang, a summer *abroad* doing the same fun activities but across the Atlantic, in LATVIA (how could you not want to do this now that you’ve learned where Latvia is and have seen those amazing photos of former students coming out of a *banya* with birch tree branches??) — for FREE!!

Getting kids to enroll in Russian is full of arm-twisting and Russian-candy-giving and Pysanky-egg-dying and blini-eating and caviar-sampling (yes! you get to eat CAVIAR in our class!) and Uzbek-restaurant-dining and STILL it’s a challenge to get kids to sign up and stick with it.

Sometimes I just want to pull out my dusty unused English certification and settle in to a “normal” teaching gig.

But what keeps a Russian teacher going under these exhausting circumstances?

When you see that look of accomplishment once a student finally learns the Russian alphabet. When a student says you make a hard class fun. When a student barely makes it through level 1 then signs up for a second year (what were they thinking??). When former students quietly start working for military intelligence (😬). When a kid — no, a young man now — steps off a plane from 6 weeks in Latvia, eyes red from crying as he left new friends and loving host families and caring teachers, and he brings a gift to your house and says that you helped him to have a “life-changing summer.”

Moments like that make teaching Russian and all the ridiculous antics worth it.

Even sweating in *The Nose*.

Citation(s)

Broderick, M. (2021). Navigating the school as a smaller fish: Research-based guidance for teachers of less commonly taught content areas. In K. Pierce-Friedman & L. Wellner (Eds.), *Supporting Early Career Teachers with Research-Based Practices*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

*To see pictures of the Brashear Nose in action, check out the Nose’s [Instagram](#).

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



All advocacy is, at its
core, an exercise in
empathy.

SAMANTHA POWER

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.

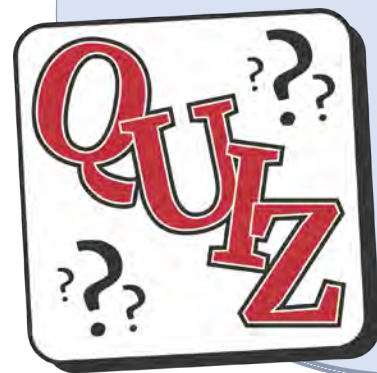
Some teachers may feel that they don't have time for this or that language learning should be valued on its own. However, when teachers are not active advocates, they put their programs at risk.

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?

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





Addressing World Language Teacher Retention and Strengthening the Teacher Pipeline

By Cherie Garrett
Dallastown Area
High School

The field of world language education has faced significant challenges in recent years, particularly in terms of teacher retention and the need to bolster the teacher pipeline. As global interconnectedness grows and cultural diversity becomes more essential, the demand for qualified world language teachers has surged. However, a shortage of educators and the struggle to retain them pose considerable hurdles to meeting this demand. This article delves into the various strategies and initiatives that are being implemented to address these challenges in Pennsylvania and what can be done by world language teachers and leaders in the state to avert the current crisis.

One of the major challenges at this time is retaining both novice and seasoned world language educators. To retain novice teachers, mentor programs have proven to be successful in providing support, developing communicative language teaching practices, and encouraging participation in world language organizations. However, the focus should be on supporting all world language teachers; thus, all world language teachers should have the opportunity to attend workshops, conferences, and online courses to learn the latest methodologies and to connect with other language teachers. Schools that foster a positive and supportive school culture that values language education retain their teachers longer (Bryant et al., 2023). Moreover, teachers should be encouraged to pursue advanced degrees in world languages or world language education. By becoming personally invested and feeling supported, it is more likely that teachers will continue in the field for an extended period (Bryant et al., 2023).

To strengthen the teacher pipeline, legislation was passed by Pennsylvania lawmakers in June of this year to offer student teacher stipends which provide financial support to student teachers and encourage them to pursue a career in education.

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Student teachers in Pennsylvania would receive a \$10,000 stipend while fulfilling their 12-week student teaching requirement in exchange for working at a Pennsylvania school for two years after graduation. If they work in high-demand areas that attract few student teachers or have a high number of open positions, there would be an additional \$5,000 stipend. This not only assists future educators in their training, but also encourages them to serve in critical educational settings. Moreover, a teacher overseeing a student teacher would be eligible to receive \$2500. Other legislation, passed by the House of Representatives, but not yet by the Senate, would provide a tax credit of up to \$2,500 annually for three years for a Pennsylvania resident after they become certified, or after they move to Pennsylvania with a state-recognized credential. Providing these incentives will not completely resolve the lack of world language teachers; however, it is a step in the right direction and when combined with other initiatives, will likely increase the number of educators to meet the current demand.

Student teachers in Pennsylvania would receive a \$10,000 stipend while fulfilling their 12-week student teaching requirement.

Another obstacle to becoming a teacher is that the path to becoming a certified teacher can often be lengthy and discouraging. Recognizing this, changes have been made to expedite the

application process for obtaining teaching certificates. This makes it more enticing for potential teachers to embark on a career in world language education. Additionally, efforts are being made to streamline the process for out-of-state teachers to obtain certifications in PA to expand the pool of qualified teachers. This reduces bureaucratic barriers and encourages skilled educators to bring their expertise to regions where their language skills are in demand. Moreover, there are inclusive initiatives such as allowing non-US residents to become certified teachers to contribute to a diverse and rich teaching environment. This encourages individuals with international perspectives and language skills to share their expertise and cultural insights with students and will help to bolster the pipeline for world language teachers. Also, many school districts are adopting the "Grow Your Own" program, which aims to cultivate local talent by offering scholarships to high school graduates, community members and paraprofessionals who wish to become certified teachers. This not only addresses teacher shortages, but also provides opportunities for career advancement to those already invested in the education field.

While it is imperative that government officials and administrators offer these programs and initiatives, it is essential that teachers provide students

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with positive insights into world language education. One way to expose students to world language teaching as a career is through the Educators Rising resources found on the ACTFL website. There are ten free ready-to-use modules in English, French, Spanish and Arabic that entice language learners to become language teachers. **The prime time to speak to students about careers is while they are in high school.** In fact, over 60% of teachers teach within 20 miles of where they went to high school (Reininger, 2012). Another recruiting method is to host a world language career symposium or career day at your school and include a panel of world language educators to spark interest in the world language teaching profession. Who better to represent world language than us, their teacher, speak to students directly in the classroom. Engaging students in conversation about world language teaching can have a lasting impact and greatly influence their career choices. One of the most powerful ways to whet students' appetites to pursue a career in world language education is to give students a chance to teach a world language. By offering an elementary world language program where high school students teach world languages to young learners, they experience first-hand the excitement of having their own class of students, and they learn how to follow a lesson plan and engage

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students in the target language. Most importantly, they remember the rewarding feeling that they had through the experience and the respect that they earned from the students.

In addition to recruiting students to enter world language education, it is essential that world language teachers produce students with cultural awareness and a high level of proficiency in the target language. By offering the PA Seal of Biliteracy at schools, students are more motivated to continue their study of world languages into higher levels so they can achieve a minimum of intermediate high proficiency upon high school graduation. This allows high school graduates to begin in an upper level of world language study as a freshman at the university level so they may reach advanced proficiency upon obtaining a college degree which facilitates teaching in the target language in a world language classroom.

To address the challenges of teacher retention and the teacher pipeline, PSMLA members are encouraged to establish a task force.

The PSMLA Task Force would be composed of world language constituents K-20 and would

collaborate to develop a comprehensive resource kit promoting world language

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teaching as a fulfilling career choice. The kit would include world language teacher success stories, the many benefits of the profession, lists of scholarship and award opportunities for both existing and future world language teachers, information on world language workshops and conferences in the state, guidance on pursuing teaching certifications, and more.

This task force would also advocate for a World Language Supervisor for the PA Department of Education to provide leadership at the state level. This supervisor would directly address retaining current world language educators and bolstering the world language teacher pipeline. Additionally, the state supervisor would develop state world language and culture standards and would provide guidance for implementing them K-20. Lastly, the task force would advocate for the forthcoming World LEAP legislation which would establish at the US Department of Education a grant program to establish and improve world language and dual language programs. Moreover, this program would

“open pathways for language and dual language teacher certification in order to diversify and expand

opportunities in the teacher workforce and offer accessible opportunities for

The PSMLA Task Force would be composed of world language constituents K-20 and would collaborate to develop a comprehensive resource kit promoting world language teaching as a fulfilling career choice.

paraprofessionals to gain full educator certification.” (*Advocating for Multilingualism and Language Education: 2023 Language Advocacy Days - Language Testing International*, 2023)

The shortage of world language teachers is a critical issue that requires innovative solutions. Fortunately, efforts to strengthen the teacher pipeline and retain educators are underway through government and administrative initiatives; however, PSMLA members can make a significant impact in increasing the number of dedicated world language teachers by joining the PSMLA Task Force, recruiting bilingual and world language students, providing teaching experiences, and offering proficiency-based programs where students develop their linguistic skills and

cultural awareness. Only by working together collaboratively will the current dilemma in world language education be resolved. Please be a part of the solution!

Citations

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