Dear colleagues,

It has been a busy school year, and now that the grind of the 2017-2018 school year has come to a halt, and the lazy days of summer are in sight, I hope that you will reminisce with more for a moment as we look to the highlights of our school year. Just over a year ago we celebrated the passage of our state’s Seal of Biliteracy, which was signed by Governor Malloy, allowing school districts across the state to certify that students are biliterate. This school year more than twenty school districts have awarded the Seal of Biliteracy to over 900 students that have earned this highly coveted distinction, which will be affixed to students’ diplomas. The number of students, the wide variety of languages and school districts is most impressive and is something that we will continue to help expand in the years to come.

Recently the 33rd state in the country signed legislation for a state Seal of Biliteracy, we are so fortunate to not only have the legislation in place, but school districts across the state that are willing and able to test students’ abilities in numerous world languages. I am so proud of the work that our Connecticut students and teachers have done over the past few years to prepare us to award the Seal to students this spring.

We continue to offer professional development to our members during our Summer Institutes, which have become very popular, with highly engaging, and well respected national/international presenters. This June we were fortunate to welcome Greg Duncan to Connecticut to help continue build our teachers’ abilities to teach for proficiency.

This spring we also celebrated student achievements through the CT COLT Poetry Recitation Contest, Rhyme Celebration, Poster Contest and Essay Contest. Each year, I am astounded by the amazing talents our students have; from memorizing and interpretation poetry, drawing/designing to drafting a piece of persuasive writing, we have amazing students in the state of Connecticut. I continue to be amazed by not only what our students know, but what they can do with their language skills. We would love to welcome new students and teachers to these events next year. Consider having your students get involved in some of these opportunities to explore language learning in a new and creative ways. We are always looking for teachers to join our committees, so I invite you to join us in helping to provide these unique opportunities for students across our state.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to our entire membership, board of directors, and executive board, who have helped to support me during my two years as president of this extraordinary organization. I know that the work that we have started will continue and will help to build language proficiency in students across the state. This June, as my presidency ends, I am excited to begin a four-year term representing Connecticut’s students and teachers on the board of directors for the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

This summer, where ever you may go, whatever you may do, take time to enjoy the friends and family that you have with you. Relax, rejuvenate, and rest!

Jimmy

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**Spotlight on Teachers**

**Dorie Conlon Perugini**

Who are you? What and where do you teach?

My name is Dorie Conlon Perugini and I teach Spanish in grades 1-5 at Naubuc School in Glastonbury.

How long have you been teaching?

This is my 13th year.

What has inspired you in this profession? What is a belief that you hold near and dear?

In thinking back to my own experiences learning languages beginning in seventh grade, I noticed a common thread throughout my language study; it was not the particular language I was studying that mattered as much as the people...
and cultures I got to know along the way. As a white, English-speaking Latina growing up in a predominantly white community with very little linguistic or cultural diversity, I was always intrigued by other languages and cultures. Despite the fact that I looked and spoke just like the majority of the members of my community, my Puerto Rican background always made me feel somewhat different. In an attempt to discover my own ethnic background, I jumped at the opportunity to take Spanish as soon as it was offered. Despite being a mediocre language student at the time, Spanish class was the first time I ever considered that different world-views existed and it changed my life. It’s the reason I have studied several languages since. And it’s the exact experience I strive to provide my students.

Favorite place ever traveled and why?
This feels like asking me who my favorite child is; I love everywhere I’ve travel for different reasons. If I had to choose one, I’d say Granada, Spain because it was my first experience leaving the country and got me hooked on international travel.

Favorite cultural dish?
Basically anything my Ugandan host family cooked for me especially the sweet potato and pumpkin with peanut sauce.

Advocacy

Glastonbury Foreign Language Students to Receive a Seal of Biliteracy on Diploma

By Maggie Furey

March 25, 2018 In response to a bill passed by the state in June of 2017, Glastonbury High School recently introduced a new policy in which all foreign language students will be given the opportunity to receive a seal of biliteracy to be displayed on their diploma for the first time at graduation this year.

Jimmy Wildman, Head Teacher of Foreign Language at Glastonbury High School and President of CT Council of Language Teachers (CT COLT), has had a significant role in facilitating the Seal of Biliteracy on the state and municipal level. The seal is a sticker resembling a medal that says “Biliterate.” Wildman possesses all of the state’s seals and plans to place them on qualifying students diplomas come this June.

While working as part of the CT COLT, Wildman and other members of the committee defined an overall goal of the seal. The website ctcolt.org describes the seal as providing “Immediate recognition of a critical 21st-century language and communication skill. This award is given by a school district in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in English and one or more other languages by high school graduation.” Wildman said, “If there is a question about it [the biliteracy seal and how to obtain it] and I can’t answer it, then no one can.”

In 2015, Wildman had the idea to expand the advancement to Glastonbury after hearing other states that have been awarding students with the seal for years, yet Glastonbury High School, a nationally-recognized foreign language institution, was lacking this performance recognition. Wildman “wanted to get on the bandwagon with everyone else.”
Wildman met with Dianna Wentzell, Connecticut’s former Chief Academic Officer for the Department of Education, and discussed his proposal in late fall of 2015. “She was really receptive,” Wildman said. Wentzell brought the proposal to the state Board of Education, and shortly after it was brought to Glastonbury with the help of Rita Oleksak, Director of Foreign Language for Glastonbury Public Schools.

In 2016, Sarah Lindstrom, co-head teacher of Glastonbury Foreign Language Department and Spanish teacher at GHS and Nayaug Elementary, travelled to Washington, DC, to voice her opinion. “I had a small role advocating for the Seal of Biliteracy in a national way two years ago while working in DC as Teacher-In-Residence at the American Council of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). We spent time speaking to members of Congress about the importance of recognizing students’ language achievements through this initiative. As a teacher, I wrote a letter to CT legislators encouraging approval of the Seal, as many other teachers did,” Lindstrom said.

Though Lindstrom served as a crucial member in the success of the seal being available in Glastonbury, she attributes the majority of the progress to Wildman and the COLT committee. She said, “He and the hard-working COLT executive committee did so much to make this a reality in CT.”

When asked what the process was like, Wildman repeatedly said, “We pushed.” He and his fellow contributors, including Wentzell, Oleksak, and Lindstrom, were adamant about making this happen for Glastonbury students. “It’s just a wonderful distinction for these kids to have, and its motivating, too,” said Oleksak.

In June of 2017, the proposition turned into a reality. A bill was passed allowing Connecticut’s education program to grant students the opportunity to expand their foreign language significance on a state and municipal level by taking what they’ve learned and proving that they can use it outside of the classroom. At that point Lindstrom “was happy and felt that something fair and right and good truly happened for language students and teachers statewide.”

Glastonbury was the first school in the state to jump on the bandwagon, Wildman said. Wildman, Lindstrom and and Oleksak, all noted that they had all been waiting so long for this to happen that when it finally did, they wanted to initiate it quickly and effectively. “We wanted Connecticut students to have the same opportunities for college and career readiness that students in other states already have,” said Wildman.

In order to obtain the seal, foreign language seniors of the GHS 2018 class were all required to take tests: the OPIc, Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer, and the WPT, Writing Proficiency Test. If a student takes Latin, he or she would take the ALIRA Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment.

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is the program Glastonbury High School uses to score the tests. ACTFL sets guidelines corresponding to levels of proficiency in foreign languages which are set on a scale ranging from novice to distinguished. Obtaining a seal of biliteracy requires a student to score at the “Intermediate Mid” level on the OPIc and the WPT and an I-3 on the ALIRA. Wildman describes these levels as “having the ability to communicate unfamiliar topics and navigate through time frames.” He noted that reaching the intermediate mid level “is a very realistic goal for any of our seniors.”

Glastonbury AP Spanish senior Michaela Collins, who took the OPIc and WPT tests in March, said, “I think the tests were a good way to test our Spanish speaking and writing abilities and how they would translate into the real world.” AP Spanish senior Katie Savinelli also took the tests and said, “The WPT was much easier than the OPIc” and Collins agreed, saying that “The WPT was more similar to what we do in class than the OPIc was.”
Wildman said he has minimal concerns about the accuracy of the test but is more worried about what the future could possibly entail. For many students the seal will carry on into their futures, but as Wildman said, “If you don’t use it [the language], you’re going to lose it. My concern at the moment is that we are going to have people who don’t actually have the skills of an intermediate mid person, that we put them out into the world saying that they’re biliterate, and they’re really not, because then we are discrediting this entire program.” But because this process is new, this issue is “just one of the kinks” that has to be worked out, and “CT COLT is really taking it on,” said Wildman.

Another potential downside to how this affects students futures is seen through college applications. Because the OPIc and WPT are not tested until March, most students have already applied to college and therefore do not know if they will be receiving the seal. Wildman said in future years he will tell students to put somewhere in their applications that they are eligible for a seal of biliteracy “to ensure a holistic representation of a student’s foreign language capabilities.”

Wildman notes that every foreign language student in the state is now eligible to take the test, but testing is costly and for many towns, these tests are not budgeted. Places like Stonington and Hartford do not pay for the test, whereas Glastonbury does.

When asked about the potential socioeconomic inequality controversy, both Wildman and Oleksak acknowledged that it has the potential to exist amongst towns across the state, but many students believe the test is worth it. Savinelli said, “I really like the biliteracy seal and I think it is a great way to show off GHS’s foreign language skills. It also instills confidence in students that their abilities will translate well into the real world,” Lindstrom agreed, “We want recognition for our students’ language abilities. It means a lot to be biliterate in our world today.”

Three Years of World Language Required for Newly Adopted Connecticut Certificate of Global Engagement

Eve Pech
World Affairs Council of CT Education Director

The State Board of Education adopted the Connecticut Certificate of Global Engagement on May 2, 2018. The Certificate program was developed by the International Education Committee of the CT Association of Public School Superintendents with lead sponsor, the World Affairs Council of CT, the CT Council of the Social Studies, and CT- COLT.

The program recognizes high school graduates who have successfully completed a global education curriculum and engaged in co-curricular activities and experiences that foster the development of global competencies and global citizenship.

There are three essential components of the CT Certificate of Global Engagement:

- Coursework required consists of a minimum of three years of world language and four additional courses with a global focus.
- A student must be involved in one or more extracurricular activities over three years with an international focus.
- A student must complete an action project which connects the student to a global community or is relate to a global problem.

A celebration of the pilot project’s Connecticut Certificate of Global Engagement Award recipients will take place on June 5, 2018 from 4:00p.m.-5:00p.m. at the State Capitol in the Old Judiciary Room on the third floor. There will be a brief reception followed by introductory remarks after which the Commissioner of Education will award the certificates:

“We want our students to be engaged as citizens at the local, national and global levels”, said Commissioner Wentzell. “This program emphasizes the importance of global knowledge and active engagement with problems and issues that have international dimensions.”

For more information about the CT Certificate of Global Engagement and for those interested in participating for the 2018-2019 school year, contact Steve Armstrong at the State Department of Education: Stephen.Armstrong@ct.gov

In addition to welcoming students to the many global programs we offer to the public, The World Affairs Council of CT offers multiple opportunities to World Language teachers and their students. We run an annual Model United Nations program attended by over 800 Connecticut high school students, recognize global engaged students through multiple award and scholarship programs and offer professional development and teacher study trips abroad. This year we held our Global Fluency workshop at Goodwin College. Here is a quote from one of the attendees:

“Ni Hao! Jambo! Alo! These are just a few of the ways in which I learned to greet people when I attended the Global Fluency Workshop hosted by the Connecticut World Affairs Council. However, global
fluency is so much more than learning another language; it is ability to seamlessly interact with people from all walks of life. The global fluency workshop is a fun and engaging way to learn about how to improve upon these interactions…. I highly recommend the training for all educators and business professionals in order to fully develop their global fluency.”

To find out more about our programs and resources, visit our website at www.ctwac.org.to to find out more about our programs and resources.

Students Say...

Reflections on Four Years of Studying Russian
Student of Russian, AITE

My time in Russian class from freshman to senior year was not only phenomenally instructive, but transformative as well. I have had the privilege to learn about Russian life in an environment that is collaborative and brilliant. I write ‘Russian life’ because we students were not only taught the rigorous rules of the Russian language, we were gifted with an erudition in their rich culture as well. The Russian classes (one through four) researched and presented on numerous widespread topics. From the greatest Russian authors to the greatest musicians and artists, the Russian class at AITE has studied many aspects of culture. It is very difficult to communicate through a written reflection how wonderful being a Russian student at AITE has been. I think a few examples are more than necessary. Not only did our Russian class learn vocabulary and complete exercises in observance of the holiday Maslenitsa, we celebrated as well! After learning vocabulary and grammatical cases, we put them to use watching the Russian One news channel and listening to native speakers report on their holiday (and also had a few crepes as motivation). Of course, there was nothing more exciting than when our classes constructed presentations on Russian icons. We had the pleasure to delve into a variety of topics, ranging from composers and authors, to artists and famous Russian cities. And believe me, these presentations were never dull! The composers were showcased through recordings and authors were represented through summaries and biographies. Russian class is at heart what every student wants in linguistic instruction: a seminar in culture, language, grammar, and applications. Now, even though I am not perfectly fluent in the Russian language, I can understand most conversations and have spoken numerous times with native speakers. I remember sitting in a piano lesson and reading one of my teacher’s paintings. The script on the canvas was all in the Cyrillic alphabet, and my piano teacher was quite shocked when I pronounced clearly and cleanly the excerpt of Russian. I remember so fondly learning the Russian alphabet with the help of the past seniors four years ago, and even more fondly helping to teach it at the beginning of my senior year. I believe that is how we have achieved so much through our work in Russian class, and why we are so close and helpful to each other. We are a part of a learning environment based upon collaboration and the knowledgeable enjoyment of our studies. I am very fortunate to have been a part of this experience, of this very tightly knit linguistic community...likely more fortunate than I will ever know. I do know however, that my own horizons as an avid reader, student, and musician have been widened markedly because of my Russian experience. For that I thank you, Mrs. Koltypin. Your years of knowledge, support, and unwavering dedication have given me this wholesome gift—one that I will carry as a piece of me for the rest of my life.
The Importance of Studying Latin

By James Acosta, student at AITE

Latin is an amazing class to take, that is what I would say to someone if they asked if they should take the class or not. The benefits and rewards that this class has to offer are so helpful to an incoming student to this school that it would be able to help them for the rest of their academic career. Taking Latin does something that no other language class can do, it teaches you something about multiple languages, whether you know it or not, as more than 60 percent of the English language is based off of Latin, and also Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian. Having a background in Latin would help in all future study of these languages, helping students see the roots of new words and they would be able to connect it with what they know from Latin to allow them to learn the vocabulary and language faster than a student who has no background in Latin.

This background knowledge in Latin is not only helpful in studying other world languages, it also helps with the study of world history. The governments of today are all based off of the Roman and Greek government systems of democracy and republicanism, knowing Latin history would assist in the study of our government and other governments in Europe, through a historical background in their formation and what they were based off of. Latin also helps create good habits as you study the language, you begin to mark the cases and tenses of the words you translate, helping you study the language in a logical way that helps you learn step by step, which could also be applied to other classes like mathematics and the sciences. Using the step by step process taught in Latin in your other classes will help you learn new materials and to help you teach yourself new materials, allowing you to be more independent in your studies of multiple subjects.

If you do decide to take Latin, you have much to look forward to, one of the best parts of the class is the people you meet. These people will be the best friends you have ever made and will stay with you for the next four years, and even beyond those four years. They will not hesitate to help you with any questions or work that you need help with, and they would do their best to help you learn the material so that you can start to do it yourself without the need for anyone’s help. Your fellow classmates aren’t the only friends

Winners of the 2018 Poster Contest.

Theme:
Being Multilingual: Making My Dreams Come True

Chairperson:
Karen Murano

GRAND PRIZE WINNER
Nicholas Donohew
Greenwich High School
Teacher: Elizabeth Fancher

GRADES K-2 DIVISION WINNER
Aarna Doshi
Western CT AIS Magnet School
Teacher: Maria Sorrentino

GRADES 3-5 DIVISION WINNER
Annabel English
Convent of the Sacred Heart - Greenwich
Sr. Julieta Agrelo

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION WINNER
Robin Murphy
Convent of the Sacred Heart - Greenwich
Teacher: Shuefung Wang

HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION WINNER
Zoe Seguin
Greenwich High School
Teacher: Elizabeth Fancher
you’ll make in this class, you will also get to meet one of the most caring and dedicated teachers in the school, Mrs. Koltypin. She treasures her students like they were family and does everything she can to help them. She takes her time to create study guides for the entire year for her classes and to plan fun events in her class like the Latin amazing race. It is the opportunities like those that show how much Mrs. Koltypin cares about her classes, and the opportunities she offers in class for you to be awarded for your dedication and work in the class. Opportunities, like the national Latin exam, which will give out awards and medals to you, and even a chance to be congratulated by the superintendent for all of your hard work in this test. Not only that but she also informs her students of scholarship opportunities and other opportunities like the study abroad program that the school offers.

This class has taught me much about multiple subjects, and for this I am thankful for the language, my teacher, and my fellow students. With all of the opportunities provided in this class, I feel like I have achieved many great feats and I am thankful for the opportunities presented to me because of this class. I have made some great friends in this class, and I will miss them dearly when I go off to college. This was a great class to take and I am very thankful for all of the hard work I did that allowed me to learn so much.

Why Study Latin?
By Lauren Burkhardt, AITE, Latin 3

Many people find that some foreign languages are similar. People who understand Spanish also understand Italian, because many of the words are the same. This is because both of these languages are Romance languages, along with Romanian, Portuguese, and French. All of these five languages are Romance languages because they are based on Latin, the language of the Roman empire that heavily influenced all of Europe. By studying and learning Latin, one is inherently studying and learning these five languages as well. Learning Latin may not make one fluent in French, but it can help one understand the language much more easily. For instance, when traveling through Europe, it will be much easier to read necessary signs because much of the vocabulary will be familiar. This can be the difference between easily finding one’s way through the airport and becoming a lost, annoying tourist.

However, Latin helps with many more languages than just these five. More than half of the English language comes from Latin roots. For example, the English word *augment* comes from the Latin *augere*, meaning to increase. The English word *dictate* comes from the Latin *dicere*, meaning to tell. There are many, many more. By simply expanding one’s Latin vocabulary, one can expand their English vocabulary as well. When reading a difficult text with advanced vocabulary, a basic knowledge of Latin will help one understand challenging words when context clues are vague. This helps especially for students studying for the SATs, where vocabulary is an emphasized portion of the test. It will make reading anything, from textbooks to novels to newspapers, much easier.

Latin vocabulary can even help immensely with the sciences. For anyone wanting to become a doctor, Latin is necessary. Every single muscle in the body is named in Latin. *Extensor carpi radialis longus* may sound like gibberish to a normal person, but to someone who has studied Latin, they can easily deduce that this muscle is the long muscle that stretches and extends the wrist. Latin is also used in prefixes for numbers, which can be very important in organic chemistry. Other suffixes such as *gastro-*, *heme-*, and *anthropo-*, relating to the stomach, blood, and man, respectively, can help one understand complicated terms in biology. All scientific names of plants are also given in Latin, so the language can also aid in environmental science. These subjects can prove to be very difficult, and understanding Latin can make a student’s life much easier.

But there is much more to Latin than just vocabulary. The language utilizes cases, so there are twelve different ways to say *the horse*, depending on how many horses there are, if the horses belong to anyone, where the horses are going, what they are doing, etc. This may seem very confusing, and it is. But it is not just specific to Latin. Many other languages utilize cases, such as German and Russian, so Latin helps with more than just English and the Romance languages.

Although English does not use this case system, learning how to analyze Latin sentences helps with this language. In American grade schools, grammar is not heavily emphasized. By taking Latin, one would finally understand what an antecedent or a principal clause is. This can cause one to create links between Latin and English and have a stronger understanding of English grammar. Taking apart these sentences causes you to be more analytical, which can again aid in students taking the SATs, who have to analyze English sentences for grammatical errors.

Latin is simply the most influential language. However, it is not only important to learn the way that the Romans read and wrote, but it is important to learn about their culture. Because of their extensive power throughout Europe, many of their buildings, statues, and teachings are still prevalent today. For example, many aqueducts that brought water to Roman cities are still standing, and some have been restored and are in use
today. But their influence carries past just Europe, and influences culture on other sides of the world. Our modern stadiums are modeled after the Colosseum, the architecture of the Romans can be seen in our nation’s capital, and our calendar was even created and perfected by the Romans. By studying the way Romans lived and the technology they used, our own history will make more sense. We can learn a lot more about ourselves and our culture and our languages by learning about how the Romans did it.

Why You Should Take Latin
Justin McArthur, AITE

Everybody should learn Latin. Many people do not understand the reasons for learning it, and surely everyone has his own, but it is undoubtedly a very important and very fun language to learn for everyone. Latin, being the root language for a great number of the world’s most important languages and still being used to day, has a strong presence in Western society and has great relevance to its cultures. I am most satisfied having taken Latin, and I would not change it if given the option.

If you’re not taking Latin for its own beauty, then it can still be incredibly useful in learning the other Romance languages and English vocabulary. It can help you learn those languages much faster than you would if you were to start from scratch. Latin has also had a major impact on the vocabulary of English, some sixty percent of its words are said to have come from Latin, and knowing it can be majorly beneficial in understanding unfamiliar vocabulary and otherwise sounding really smart. Latin, in its own right, is very beautiful, beneficial, and culturally important. It is a marvelous language, and the many poems and other writings of the Romans have a distinctly wonderful sound and look to them. And, its grammar is something to marvel at as well, working almost as a complicated puzzle. Deciphering that puzzle is not only very fun, but it has a great benefit in that it can improve one’s analytical reasoning and logic skills. Latin is also incredibly important to the culture of the Western world. Having served as the standard language of the academic world for centuries and, to some extent still, the world of Catholicism, there have been countless numbers of books written in the language. Latin carries with it the prestige of higher education like no other language because of this cultural importance, and it can seem very impressive to know it.
I took Latin for all of these reasons. Being Catholic, I wanted to learn the language that would better connect me to my Church and its members. I also had always had a fascination with it; it seemed very interesting, and I wanted to see why it was so important to our culture. One of my older brothers, older by one year, had also begun taking Latin at his high school, and it seemed very complicated and fun from what he had said about, so I decided to follow in his example; it is always more enjoyable to have someone else who can appreciate a language with you.

I do not at all regret my decision to take Latin at AITE. It was an incredibly fun and mind-opening class. I consider myself significantly better off having this foundation in Latin. It was because of this class that, in my freshman year, I began to research the etymologies, or the origins and transformations, of words so much. My studies in Latin at AITE have brought me to seek study in linguistics at college, and, now, much of what I do on a regular basis involves languages and their functions and histories. Of course, not everyone who takes Latin has to become a historical philologist (from the Ancient Greek philologos, meaning “fond of learning and literature”), but Latin can be a great source of knowledge and learning and fun for everyone who takes the class. I wish everyone in the world learn it.

Personal Perspectives

2018 Teaching for Proficiency Institute
By Amanda Robustelli-Price

The 2018 Teaching for Proficiency Academy was held on Thursday, 6/27, and Friday, 6/28 at Stonington High School, and featured the international presenter, Greg Duncan. (Greg is also the keynote speaker at our upcoming conference). CT COLT and the Rhode Island Foreign Language Association (RIFLA) worked together to coordinate the event. We hope you will consider attending next year’s Teaching for Proficiency Institute, scheduled in 2019 for Wednesday, 6/26, and Thursday, 6/27, which will also feature Greg Duncan, and will have a focus on curriculum and proficiency. Below please find some feedback about this year’s workshop from our attendees.

- This is worth EVERY. SINGLE. PENNY. I am thrilled that we not only attracted teachers from our parent organizations, but also from states like Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I am so happy that CT COLT and RIFLA are branching out and gaining a reputation for quality professional development with renowned, national speakers. I cannot
thank you enough and am so proud to be a member of CT COLT!

• It was an energizing way to end the year with a lot of ideas to start next year.

• I learned that producing students that possess proficiency requires action on two fronts: architecture and teacher practice. While many of us experience challenges in changing that architecture, we do have the power to change our own practice and improve the student experience. We need to get inspired, support each other, and elevate our practice, one step at a time! Thanks to Greg Duncan for his motivating presentation and to CT COLT for bringing him to us.

• This experience has refocused us to better our effective language teaching and learning.

• As a department chair who is working with a department to build our own curriculum, separate from textbooks, and shift to proficiency based language learning, this institute was exceedingly helpful for me, my department members, and our program. I know that what I learned during this institute will inform our practices this coming academic year.

• It was motivating!

• This was the first time I attended a Proficiency conference and I have a much better understanding of the levels. Greg did a wonderful job breaking down the information, and I can envision creating my grammar wall and more performance-based assessments/tasks. I am committed to attending as many offerings as I can - it’s crucial for any world language teacher who has a goal of a Proficiency-based classroom.

• It really helpful to put proficiency first before planning any lessons. I feel like have clear direction where to go for my teaching.

• Greg is very dynamic, and his workshops prepare teachers with the cutting edge tools to be effective in the classroom, effectively teach for proficiency targets and strategies to teach for the pathway to proficiency. Greg is extremely delightful to be around, and the conference is a great way to end the work year and begin the summer motivated to recharge and plan during the summer months.

**Methods, Materials, Resources**

**Navigating the Linguistic World in a Unique Way – Autism Spectrum Disorder and Language Learning**

By: Ann Kecskes

We all know how difficult it can be to learn how to communicate effectively in a foreign language. Not only are the writing systems, phonemes, and sentence structure different, but non-verbal language can also be starkly contrasting as well, with everything from personal space to gestures that could be reassuring in one culture but offensive in another. You have to hear a simple vocabulary word several times before you remember it, and when you go to use it there are some hesitations, and when you finally get it right, the grammar of the surrounding phrase is slightly off, or your intonation gives off a completely different emotion (or meaning in some languages!) This experience can be frustrating and embarrassing, it can prevent creating the social bonds as quickly and effortlessly as we intend, or if you are traveling alone in that country, it can delay getting your wants and needs met. God forbid if you get seriously injured and have to seek out help! These struggles are what keep many people from pursuing second language acquisition, but in the case of more than 3.5 million Americans with autism spectrum disorder, these struggles are a daily experience, only in one’s native language.

Autism refers to a range of abilities that include difficulties in social communication/interaction and restricted/repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. Working as a speech-language pathologist, I know that if a child has a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, they will qualify for services and should begin receiving speech and language intervention as early as possible. This way, any trouble with learning how to comprehend and use language, in a range from saying one-word to request juice, to having a back and forth conversation that talks about multiple topics, can be addressed. With the current prevalence of autism now being 1 in 59 children, this word could not be more timely. Couple this with the knowledge that at least one in five Americans speak a foreign language at home, one cannot help but presume that the number of individuals with autism born into bilingual families will also grow.

Another interesting point to mull over as one ponders the prevalence of autism in our society, is that many individuals
with ‘higher-functioning’ autism often go undiagnosed, attributing their social struggles to being shy or awkward. This is especially true in the case of girls with autism, as current diagnostic protocol is not sensitive enough to the unique manifestation of autism that takes place between the sexes. As many schools rightfully require second language instruction as part of their general curriculum, this could mean that there could unknowingly be individuals with autism in the classroom, or with the movement of mainstreaming children with special needs in general education classrooms, that students with a known diagnosis of autism could be present for language instruction, both foreign and native. Not to mention the amount of individuals with autism who learn second languages at home as a result of their family life, and how this can manifest in our community at large. Thankfully, our world is becoming smaller in that communities of non-English languages in our country are becoming more and more commonplace, so that when someone asks you for agua, no one is at a loss as to what they want. Hopefully, as time goes on this likelihood will continue to grow and expand across many languages representative of the different communities in our country.

However, what does this all mean for those students who struggle to learn and use language as they enter the school system? What about the ones who don’t know that they have this diagnosis and go through the motions of the schooling, taking not only English classes, but also learning a foreign language? What about the 3.5 million Americans who communicate just a little differently, but still desire the bonds, connections, and relationships that social communication brings forth? For this, it is important to have in our storehouse of language acquisition tools some techniques that are helpful for those who learn about the world in a unique way. Many of these techniques are also tricks that many neurotypical individuals learning a second language employ.

- **The use of visuals.** Many people with autism have a hard time properly digesting information auditorily, but visually they can excel. In your classroom, make sure to have many visuals to accompany and represent words and ideas. This can make the likelihood of comprehension even stronger.
- **Routines.** Having a routine and system to the way you run your classes can decrease unpredictability and free up a person’s mind to completely concentrate on the material rather than on wondering about what is happening next. Having a visual or written schedule of the activities of the day is also a tremendous help to individuals who may have a hard time with unpredictability. At the very least, try to prepare individuals for any big changes that are coming up, or talk about what the activity of the class will be first rather than jumping right into it.
- **Allow opportunities for not only practicing new vocabulary, but also role-playing** their use in various situations. This can help bridge the gap between textbook knowledge of words and phrases and their actual social connotation.
- **Provide scripts** of what to say in particular social situations, such as ‘como estas?’, ‘bien, y tu?’, as many individuals with autism learn words in phrases or chunks, rather than as individual units.
- **Be cognizant** of any potentially distracting or disturbing sensory interference, such as lights that are too bright or high-pitched beeping from any technology in the classroom. Be respectful before getting too close in one’s personal space.
- **Don’t be concerned** by any behaviors that may seem odd but are harmless and the person is enjoying, such as rocking back and forth or playing with a fidget. These are ways that many people with autism calm down or focus, and everyone has a behavior like this, like shaking your leg or playing with your hair. In addition, don’t assume that a person is uninterested just because they are not engaging in eye contact. This type of non-verbal communication can be a challenge for individuals on the autism spectrum, but it is also very acceptable in some cultures.

These are just some ways to create a space that is likely to be inclusive of the strengths and needs of someone with autism, although each person truly is unique. Our world is growing more connected and, hopefully, growing more tolerant of differences across individuals. With the prevalence of autism rising, we will have more and more students with autism in our classroom and our hearts. By being aware of the unique needs of individuals with autism and learning how we can best meet them where they are, we are then free to focus on the great abilities and personalities of these fellow humans, and love and tolerance is a language that all can understand.

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**Technology**

**Twitter 101: An Introduction**

By Lisa Urso, John Winthrop Middle School

When I saw my colleagues in the teaching profession start to establish presences on Twitter, I was skeptical. How could one use 140-280 characters to express their thoughts? Out of all of the forms of social media, this was the one I was most weary about.
But I couldn’t ignore the rise of Twitter’s influence. I would go to weddings and baby showers, and would be asked to attach a hashtag to tag any pictures I took of the bride, groom, or parent-to-be. I started going to conferences, and would be provided my swag bag, certificate for attending—and my hashtag.

I forget which was the conference where I really started actively using Twitter. At first, I was a follower. I started retweeting my colleagues’ thoughts about workshops, links to important articles, and announcements about upcoming events. It wasn’t long before I started tweeting my own thoughts, links, and announcements. When I did, I started accruing followers, as well as have my tweets retweeted.

I didn’t realize, however, the full power of Twitter as a professional learning network until this past February, when I attended NECTFL. Here I was, about to start posting at my latest workshop, when I received a tweet from Laura Sexton (@SraSpanglish): “What do you look like? I need to meet you!”

At the time, my Twitter avatar was a picture of one of my cats. At that point, I needed to change it to what I looked like in real life.

It turns out, Señora Spanglish herself was sitting right behind me. She then introduced me to several other members of my “twibe”: Dawn Carney (@DawnCarney3), Julie Speno (@MundodePepita), and Meredith White (@PRHspanish). I couldn’t believe I was meeting well-known, respected educators from around the county at this one little gathering at NECTFL—and they knew who I was!

I enjoy tweeting at conferences and getting to know people online. It is even better to meet them in real life! I know that, in the era of severe budget cuts, many teachers are unable to attend many conferences. I send out the number of tweets that I do so that teachers may virtually experience the workshops that I am attending, and that they may learn as much as I am.

I continue to be astounded by the power of Twitter as a positive force in the world language community. It has become one of the best PLNs that I have ever experienced. I am amazed at how much I can learn not just from educators across the country, but all over the world.

Different communities of educators will use different hashtags to have live chats during the week. One of the most popular hashtags for world language educators is #langchat. Thursday nights throughout the school year, world language educators gather online to talk about different topics such as interpersonal communication, comprehensible input, and using Can-Do Statements in the classroom. Another popular hashtag is #earlylang. This is a hashtag that has been popular for K-8 language educators. These communities have become very popular because of the supportive environment they provide educators, and it’s free—a very important aspect in an era where budget cuts have sadly become the norm.

That said, for a Twitter novice, it can be overwhelming to navigate the world of hashtags, retweets, know who to follow, and who to ignore. Even though Twitter can be a terrific source for online professional development, there are users who spread negativity and harsh opinions. I have been fortunate, thus far, in my Twitter use not to experience too much harsh criticism. It is important, though to keep in mind that, as professionals, we have a responsibility to decide when and how to respond to someone who disagrees with our opinions.

If you are interested in starting to use Twitter, here are some suggestions:

- **Follow people you know**, either within your building, or your professional association. Start reading and
following along with whatever they are tweeting, and pick up their patterns.

- **Start slowly with the hashtags.** I recently saw an infographic that listed 62 hashtags for educators to follow online. I suggest starting with #langchat, and if you are a K-8 educator, add #earlylang. Get to know the format of the chats first (this will be in another article), before you start investigating more.

- **Be very careful of what you say.** As with any social media platform, you leave a digital footprint! If you are using Twitter as a professional, and not as a personal account, you need to be especially mindful of what you put out there.

I plan to write a series of articles over the coming year about using Twitter as professional development. What more would you like to learn about it? Contact me on Twitter @milesraurso, and let me know your thoughts. I look forward to learning together!

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**CT COLT News**

**Greg Duncan to Give Keynote Address at the CT COLT 50th Anniversary Fall Conference**

After serving as a high school teacher of Spanish, a high school administrator and then as Coordinator of Foreign Languages and International Education for the Georgia Department of Education, Greg launched a career in 1993 as an independent consultant. His work includes professional development of teachers and administrators, curriculum and assessment design, program development and evaluation, and he serves the professional organization community as a frequent invited speaker at state, regional, national and international language conferences. He has authored and collaborated in the authorship of numerous publications in the field of foreign language education, and he has led the development of Emmy Award-winning distance learning programming in Japanese and Spanish. He has been honored with numerous state, regional and national awards in addition to being recognized by foreign governments for his work to further language education. Greg’s responsibilities take him throughout the United States and to numerous other countries in any given year. His academic studies were undertaken at la Universidad de Salamanca, la Universidad Complutense de Madrid, the University of Georgia, Georgia State University and Kennesaw State University. He resides with his family in Atlanta, Georgia.

More detailed information may be found at [http://www.interprepinc.com/interprepinc.com_wwwroot/About_Greg_Duncan.html](http://www.interprepinc.com/interprepinc.com_wwwroot/About_Greg_Duncan.html)

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**2018 CT COLT Rhyme Celebration**

By Kate Krotzer and Kristen Tagg
Rhyme Celebration Chair and Host

The twenty-seventh annual CT COLT Rhyme Celebration was held on Thursday, April 5, 2018. The event took place at Farmington High School and was hosted by Kristen Tagg, elementary Spanish teacher at Noah Wallace School. The Rhyme Celebration is an opportunity for children from kindergarten to sixth grade to promote an early love for world languages. Participants represent approximately 14 towns, over 12 school districts, and about 29 schools (both public and private) from around the state. This year, there were 179 student participants with over 37 world language teachers and world language administrators supporting the children in their recitations.

This year’s theme was “A Rainbow of Rhymes” The rhymes, songs, poems and tongue twisters are chosen by the world language teachers and are presented by students with costumes and props. The students and teachers practice for months. Some groups performed in world languages learned in school, while other performances represented languages learned at home. This year, we had rhymes and poems in Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Marathi, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, Telugu and Vietnamese. Each elementary student received a certificate of participation.
printed in the language of the recitation, an illustrated souvenir program booklet (with all of the rhymes), a Rhyme Celebration button and a “goody bag.”

The Rhyme Celebration traditionally begins with a warm up rhyme and a theme song to get the students and the audience prepared. This year, the Blue Ribbon Singers from East Farms School led guests via pre-recorded video with “True Colors.” What a great way to kick off the event in song!

Jeri Chamberlain, World Language coordinator of Farmington Public Schools, welcomed guests, parents, teachers, and students with the importance of bringing the school districts together with such an event. Veronica Ruzek, Farmington Public Schools Curriculum Director, also showed her support for language learning and her enthusiasm to have Farmington be the host for all of our talented students and teachers participating in the Rhyme Celebration. Jimmy Wildman, CT COLT president thanked all parents, teachers, administrators and students for their work in supporting language learning and presented a plaque to Kristen Tagg, elementary Spanish teacher in Farmington, her work in hosting the event.

The students did a wonderful job reciting their rhymes with props and enthusiasm. Their skill and practice and joy for language learning are evident as they performed on stage with smiles. Students rhymed about the colors and foods of the rainbow, springtime, and the itsy bitsy spider all while exploring the language and the culture of places around the world.

CT COLT Rhyme Celebration Chair, Kate Krotzer, believes that children who attend the Rhyme Celebration develop their 21st Century Skills by building their language skills and their appreciation of world cultures. Each year, we are excited to have children come to the celebration and perform on stage in languages other than their own because they not only develop communicative skills, but also gain understanding of language diversity.

Additional event information, photos and a video link order form, are available at www.ctcolt.org. Please contact Rhyme Celebration chair, Kate Krotzer with any questions at kate.krotzer@gmail.com.

We are looking forward to next year’s event hosted by West Hartford Public Schools and will honor CT COLT’s 50th anniversary.

**Announcement of the Winner of the 2018 Essay Contest**

This year CT COLT conducted the seventh (7th) annual WORLD LANGUAGE STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST. For 2018, students explored the following theme: Being Multilingual: Making My Dreams Come True. In a formal essay-response, students researched and wrote about the following subtopics related to multilingualism:

1. What has multilingualism meant for you during your time in middle or high school? What are the possible benefits for our or other educational systems?

2. What has multilingualism meant for your understanding and/or outlook on our world today?

3. What are the potential benefits of multilingualism for countries and their citizens who participate in the global economy?

4. How will multilingualism help you to reach your personal and professional goals in the future?

5. Do you have any recommendations or advice for future students in your school district that will be starting to learn a foreign language, with regard to multilingualism?

Students were required to craft well-organized arguments,
constructed from objective, fact-based information, in addition to drawing upon personal experience from their own learning of foreign languages. The essays were submitted by world language students from various high schools (5) around Connecticut (Southington High School, Stonington High School, St. Luke’s School, Thomaston High School, and Cromwell High School) and read by CT COLT Board Member(s). Essays were then scored according to a contest writing rubric which included the following criteria: (1) citations and accuracy of facts cited; (2) persuasiveness of arguments; (3) conventions of writing and (4) organization of essay. CT COLT and all board members would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank all student writers and their teachers for participating in this year’s contest. All students who submitted essays for this year’s contest will receive a 2018 Certificate of Participation from CT COLT.

This year’s committee is proud to announce that the winner of the 2018 CT COLT WORLD LANGUAGE STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST is Alina Vigdorchik of Southington High School. The committee and CT COLT applaud Ms. Vigdorchik for her excellent essay which references both fact-based arguments and personal experiences. In a well-argued and organized essay, Ms. Vigdorchik frames her arguments by referencing the roots of her own immigration and multilingualism as a journey that began in Eastern Europe that has taken her to the US, to high school in present-day Southington. Alina continues to make several compelling points about how learning English helped her significantly to adopt American culture and facilitated and expedited her own communication, thus allowing her to succeed in US schools. Ms. Vigdorchik continues to discuss the numerous, other benefits of multilingualism to the individual – skills enhancement, expansion of cultural and world outlook, global economy and trade, politics and diplomacy, study and work abroad, increased job prospects, improved cognitive abilities concerning problem-solving, creativity and memory, just to name several. Finally, Alina closes her essay with some advice to her fellow and to future students at Southington High School – to take advantage of opportunities that promote multilingualism (world language classes, cultural experiences, study abroad, etc.) in order to broaden one’s horizons and make a positive impact on the future and in the world.

We are pleased to present Alina with a $50 award. In addition, we are happy to provide her teacher, Ms. Kristin Bellis, with a $50 Carlex voucher. Once again, we thank all student and teacher participants in this year’s contest and look forward to next year’s CT COLT Essay Contest in 2019. Please continue reading to read Alina’s winning essay.

John R. Rook, Chair for the 2018 CT COLT Essay Contest

The Winning Essay for 2018

Alina Vigdorchik
Southington High School Class of 2019 Ms. Bellis
Spanish III

To whom it may concern,

In today’s society, multilingualism, which is an ability to freely speak more than one language, has become an extremely valuable quality in all aspects of people’s lives. Nowadays, immigration and traveling are so common that it is nearly necessary for a person to be able to understand and speak multiple languages, so that one could feel comfortable when visiting other countries.

From my personal experience I can confidently say that multilingualism has had an enormous effect on my life, especially during the middle and high school years. I was born in Ukraine, and I moved to the U.S. four years ago. Starting in second grade, I was lucky enough to be learning four languages; English, Russian, Ukrainian, and German at the same time, and then also stated learning Spanish in ninth grade. My knowledge of English significantly helped me adopt to the American culture, as well as helped me communicate with people without any hesitation. Some benefits of multilingualism to our educational system include an ability to grasp cultures of other nations and to easily communicate with people all over the world.

Multilingualism has helped me understand our world better because learning a language involves observing the culture of those who speak it. Today, I can proudly say that I am familiar with literature, music, cuisine, and even politics of countries like America, Russia, Spain, Germany, and Ukraine. Multilingualism removes the “tunnel vision,” and allows to see beyond the domestic culture and events. Critics might argue that multilingual people, especially children, might come across “problems of communication or of alienation from the child’s cultural and linguistic background” (Levecke). However, multilingualism only enhances one’s communication skills and expands his or her cultural outlook rather than compresses it.

There are many benefits of multilingualism for countries and people who participate in the global economy, including an easier worldwide communication, improvement of domestic businesses, and establishment of alliances, which serve as a potential trade source. According to the European Union, “Better language skills enable more people to study and/or work abroad and improve their job
prospects" (European Union). Knowing multiple languages not only exposes a person to other cultures, but also allows him or her to gain skills that are used worldwide, which serves as a precedent that would then go back to his or her country.

Multilingualism will help me reach my personal and professional goals in the future because it is a quality that is greatly appreciated and even required in the majority of businesses. According to the report, Not Lost in Translation: The Growing Importance of Foreign Language Skills in the U.S. Job Market, "In 2010, there were roughly 240,000 job postings aimed at bilingual workers; by 2015, that figure had ballooned to approximately 630,000," (New American Economy). There is clearly a growing demand for multilingual workers, so my ability to freely speak multiple languages will increase my potential of finding a job I want in the future.

I highly recommend taking advantage of the opportunities that the Southington Public Schools provide because multilingualism allows a person to understand today's world better and improves one's cognitive abilities such as problem-solving, creativity, and memory, (Northwestern University). There are no detrimental effects of being able to speak multiple languages, while an ability to do so only helps a person and has a positive impact on their future. Hence, each student should expand his or her horizons and learn as many languages as possible starting at a young age to be able to communicate with the rest of the world.

Sincerely,
Alina Vigdorchik

Works Cited:


EdCamp CT COLT

Maureen Lamb
Kingswood Oxford

It was a great day for learning and collaborating on May 5, 2018, at Connecticut Central State University, as 51 teachers from around Connecticut participated in discussions about teaching languages. Edcamps “are peer-led, participant-driven professional learning opportunities for educators that use an “unconference” model to build teacher networks and share best practices (https://www.edcamp.org/). Teachers and soon-to-be teachers arrived at CCSU and wrote the topics that they wished to discuss on a sticky note and put them on the bulletin board. These topics were then arranged into categories for the session board, which listed where the different discussions would take place. Some of the topics discussed included collaborative learning, classroom management, instructional strategies, project based learning, effective assessments, can-do statements, and integrated performance assessments, travel with students, and using the target language. Teachers were so excited to discuss these topics that the first session ran a little over time to accommodate more discussion. During both sessions, teachers shared ideas, brought up problems, and discussed solutions and steps moving forward. There were virtual note pages for each session where teachers could share their takeaways from the sessions. After the second session, all participants gathered for a smackdown where they shared tips and resources. Responses to the exit survey expressed that teachers came away with an overall positive impression of the day. Teachers enjoyed learning from others and attending
sessions on topics that they wished to discuss. Sponsors for the event included the EdCamp Foundation, CT COLT, CCSU, Farmers Insurance, Participate, and Teacher’s Discovery, who funded the food, the venue, and swag bags. The event was organized by Amanda Robustelli Price, Matthew Mangino, Gina Gallo, and Maureen Lamb. If you missed it this year and want to join us next year, be sure to stay tuned for next year, tentatively scheduled for next year on May 4th, 2019 at CCSU.

Link to our presentation:  https://bit.ly/2FLVJtO

Organizational News

36th Annual National Russian Essay Contest and Results
By John Rook
This past year’s topic: “Why we study Russian? (Почему мы учим русский язык?)

Middle and high school students of Russian language in the US took the National Russian Essay Contest in November of 2017. There were over 1,200 student registrations with a number of no-show’s. When approaching the topic, students first read a quote from the former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill who once stated that “Russia is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma.” Perhaps this is how some students felt about the Russian language when they began to study it and its culture. During the course of their Russian studies many students have thought about why people study Russian in general and why this language, in particular. As a student of Russian language and culture, the goal for this year’s contest was to write an essay in Russian of no more than two pages in which they discussed and detailed why we (they) study Russian. In their essays students touched upon topics such as family heritage, language, literature and the arts, travel, politics, or international relations. They also considered classroom activities that appeal to them, plans to use Russian beyond the classroom, or even their contact with native Russian speakers. Some even wrote about the simple fact that they like the beautiful way that spoken Russian sounds.

A summary of the 2017-2018 results and medal designations are detailed in the table below. The topic for next year will be released to participating teachers just before the contest window opens in November 2018. Have a great summer and we look forward to reading your essays in the 37th National Russian Essay Contest.

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McFarland Memorial Book Awards

Alliance Française de Hartford

The Alliance Française de Hartford honored 4 middle school students and 16 high school students with the McFarland Book Award on Thursday, May 24th at Central Connecticut State University. The students received both a book and a certificate of merit. Each nominating teacher highlighted the academic achievements and accomplishments of their individual students and spoke of their passion for the language. Family, friends and teachers joined the students for a reception immediately following the ceremony.

These awards are presented each year in honor of our AFH past president and longtime Simsbury resident Mr. Robert McFarland as an outreach to the academic community. Mr. McFarland had a passion for the French language and for teaching. Middle School and High School teachers from the Hartford area nominate students who demonstrate this same passion for the language and commitment to its study. The purchase of book prizes is funded through donations from the McFarland family and other donors.

For information about the McFarland Award, please contact Betty Perlot, bperlot@snet.net.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iris Yu</th>
<th>Avon Middle School</th>
<th>Kathleen Hickey</th>
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French Movie Night and Family Background Surveys Make Language Learning Relevant and Exciting

Gina Reichert
West Haven High School

French students at West Haven High School and some friends enjoyed three “Dinner and Movie Nights” this year. In October, they came back to school at 6:00 P.M. to watch “My Afternoons With Margueritte,” in French with English subtitles, about the friendship between an illiterate man and an elderly woman. In December, they watched “The Hedgehog,” the story of a bright, sensitive young girl who makes the tenants in her Paris apartment building the focus of her video-making hobby. In May, they watched “Bienvenue Chez Les Ch’Tis,” about a post office manager in the South of France. To please his wife, he tries to cheat his way into a job transfer to the French Riviera. But instead he is sent to Bergues, France’s northernmost city, whose inhabitants he had negatively judged before realizing how much he would come to love them. Each time, the students enjoyed good company, pizza, snacks, and got to sample delectable French desserts made by Samantha Romano, former student, who owns Sammi’s Sweets. For the final movie night, instead of just a French dessert, West Haven High School’s fabulous Culinary Department, led by their teacher Mr. Dana Kent, prepared croque monsieur sandwiches and crème brulee for the participants. They also enjoyed quiche and French cheeses with baguette.

Students received a grade for returning the completed survey, signed by a parent. Responses were shared in class and discussion generated to foster appreciation of various cultures, and pride in one’s own culture(s). In general, the responses from parents were positive. A few were concerned as to why they were being asked where they were from, and they received the prompt response from teachers that this was simply a way to get parents to discuss their family’s culture and customs with their children, in connection with the culture of the countries/languages being studied in their foreign language classes. Many commented that they enjoyed sitting with their child and discussing their family ancestry. One parent commented that their family, as far back as she knew, didn’t come from anywhere else, and that she was at a loss as to how to fill out the survey. Next year, therefore, the survey may be somehow tweaked to include the importance of the culture of a family whose ancestors have been here for generations, rather than simply assuming that everyone came from somewhere else.

I decided to add a comment at the end of the survey stating, “If you are from or have lived in a French-speaking culture, would you (parent) or family member be interested and available in coming to our French club after school? If so, please let me know and include your preferred contact info here. Merci!” To my delight, two of my students’ parents with ties to the French language and culture responded that they would like to be guest speakers! So I arranged it so that they could come in to speak to one of my French I classes at the end of the day, and to anyone else who wanted to stay after for “French Club” that day. I provided fabulous snacks, of course, and I got about twenty students to stay!

I plan to distribute the survey again next year, and to continue with my French Dinner and Movie nights, as I have found both to be a way to foster enthusiasm for foreign culture. If anyone has any questions or feedback, please contact me at Gina.Reichert@whschools.org. Happy summer to all!
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CT COLT Website:  www.ctcolt.org

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CT COLT: Then and Now – Still One Voice!
Our 50th Anniversary Celebration
Pre-Conference Celebration - Sunday -10/21
Culture Workshops, Presidents’ Reception,
Awards, Latin Dance Lessons

Annual Fall Conference – Monday – 10/22
Featuring Greg Duncan, Keynote Speaker & Presenter
Informative, Professional Workshops

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Newsletter Submissions
Deadline for next newsletter: October 30, 2018
Help us keep our membership records updated!
If you have moved or had a name change, please fill out the Information update form at www.ctcolt.org/pages/information_update_form.asp.