

September 2, 2014

Dear member,

Welcome to the 2014-2015 School Year! What an exciting time for teachers of world languages! So many new opportunities for growth and success.....where to start? - with your network - **with FLENJ!** This school year holds the promise of the classroom on that first day- fresh new faces, eager to connect to the wider world through the portal of success you create for them. Your network of dedicated world language professionals is here to support what you do in the classroom, each day. Check out what FLENJ has been up to - www.flenj.org

1. a **year of great professional development:** click [here](#) to see the professional development series for the new school year. As always, the FLENJ P.D. team has endeavored to create a series of professional development workshops that provide just what you need, now. Engaging, current and durable: our P.D. series helps make your year successful!

2. the **great NJEA Convention in Atlantic City:** click [here](#) to see the schedule of workshops. Remember that FLENJ is a key affiliated group of the NJEA and offers varied sessions both conference days to meet your classroom needs- **free, high quality professional development**, what more could we ask for? Well- there is also the beach! A bit chilly, perhaps in November, but a fun weekend could be yours in Atlantic City.

3. **preparing for the new venue for our annual conference-** <http://conference.flenj.org/2015/> this year we are honored to host **Stephen Krashen** in NJ: bringing the latest and the greatest to you! Plan now to join us for a sensational two day conference, this year in New Brunswick.

There is also something new and exciting happening at FLENJ- check the website often to see the most up-to-date information. Bookmark the site- www.flenj.org is your best resource when designing new lessons or units- check with FLENJ first and see where a quick visit takes you.

FLENJ also supports teachers beyond the classroom. Check out our teacher mini-grants http://flenj.org/awards/mini_grants/ - we are proud to provide financial support for classroom teachers to improve their practice. What do you need to take your teaching to the next level? Use your imagination and apply for that grant! We are ready to support your creative ideas.

Do you remember that former student who comes back to tell you how well he is doing and how important his world language skills have been to his success in college or career? Do you remember how proud and validated that made you feel? Now there is an avenue for you to share your excitement and to encourage other world language teachers in the process! FLENJ is launching a new initiative that involves recognition of our students' involvement with world languages after they graduate from NJ high schools. In the **FLENJ Hall of Fame** section of our website, we would like to build a repertoire of stories about students who take what they learn in our world language classrooms and apply it either to college or career. Please help us to demonstrate how learning a world language is a 21st Century skill that contributes to students' future success by nominating a graduate of your program. Click here <http://flenj.org/hof/> to learn more about the nomination process for the **FLENJ Hall of Fame**.

Last year, FLENJ partnered with New Jersey Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages / New Jersey Bilingual Educators (NJTESOL/NJBE) by creating a pilot program for the **Seal of Biliteracy**. Administrative representatives from seven pilot districts (Linden, Mahwah, Perth Amboy, Plainfield, Princeton, Vineland and Washington Township) joined Jean Modig of FLENJ, Elizabeth Franks of NJTESOL and Lori Ramella from the NJDOE to launch the pilot. Approximately 250 New Jersey graduating seniors became the first to receive the Seal in June 2014.

The **Seal of Biliteracy** honors graduating seniors who have attained multiple language proficiencies and signals their achievement to colleges and potential employers. Students who qualify receive a certificate with a seal as well as an annotation on their high school transcript. Pilot districts may present the certificates at local awards ceremonies or at high school graduation. The design of New Jersey's Seal, the embossing of seals and printing of certificates are being funded by NJTESOL/NJBE and FLENJ for the 2014-2015 pilot.

Many states are moving to recognize their students' proficiency in English and one or more world languages. The **Seal of Biliteracy** has been legislated in California, New York, New Mexico, and Washington. New Jersey and several other states are piloting the Seal as they seek legislative support and approval. If you would like your district to be part of the 2014-15 pilot, please attend an informational meeting on **September 19 from 9:30-12:30 at Middlesex County Community College**. For further details about the Seal, please click here: <http://flenj.org/biliteracy/index.shtml>. To register for the informational meeting and to sign up to participate in the 2014-15 pilot,

Please click here http://flenj.org/biliteracy/docs/invite_to_info_mtg2014.pdf

Looking for a new opportunity? the NJ Department of Education is looking to fill the position of Coordinator of World Languages, International and Gifted Education. Click here for more information:

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/048.pdf>. Cheri Quinlan, the indefatigable champion of world languages in our state, after an extraordinary career in public service, she retired. Now we need someone to fill those giant shoes, whose impressions are a key to the success of many world language educators in NJ.

I could go on and on (and usually do!) but you have lessons to prepare and lots more work to get ready for an outstanding new school year. Remember- FLENJ is your network. We, the members of the executive board, are dedicated to your success. Have a question or a great new idea? Reach out to us <http://flenj.org/board.shtml>. You'll find we are a friendly bunch. Fresh from the summer retreat- the board is ready to dive into the new school year with a renewed vision and energy from our teamwork. We are working to make FLENJ stronger for you and stronger for NJ's students.

As I begin my presidency and return to my classroom to teach (remember those fresh, eager faces I mentioned above?), I am humbled by the awesome task before me. I have been given the chance to connect to a better future. Each child matters and each lesson is a chance for discovery. This makes it exciting to teach world languages in NJ!

All the best,
Christopher Gwin
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