



TRI-STATES CONSULTANCY: PPS DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM

November 2022



A professional network of 57 public school districts in CT, NJ, and NY that aims to enhance student performance through a continuous improvement process



Includes a self-study by members and a triennial cycle of review by teams of fellow educators whose districts also belong to the Consortium



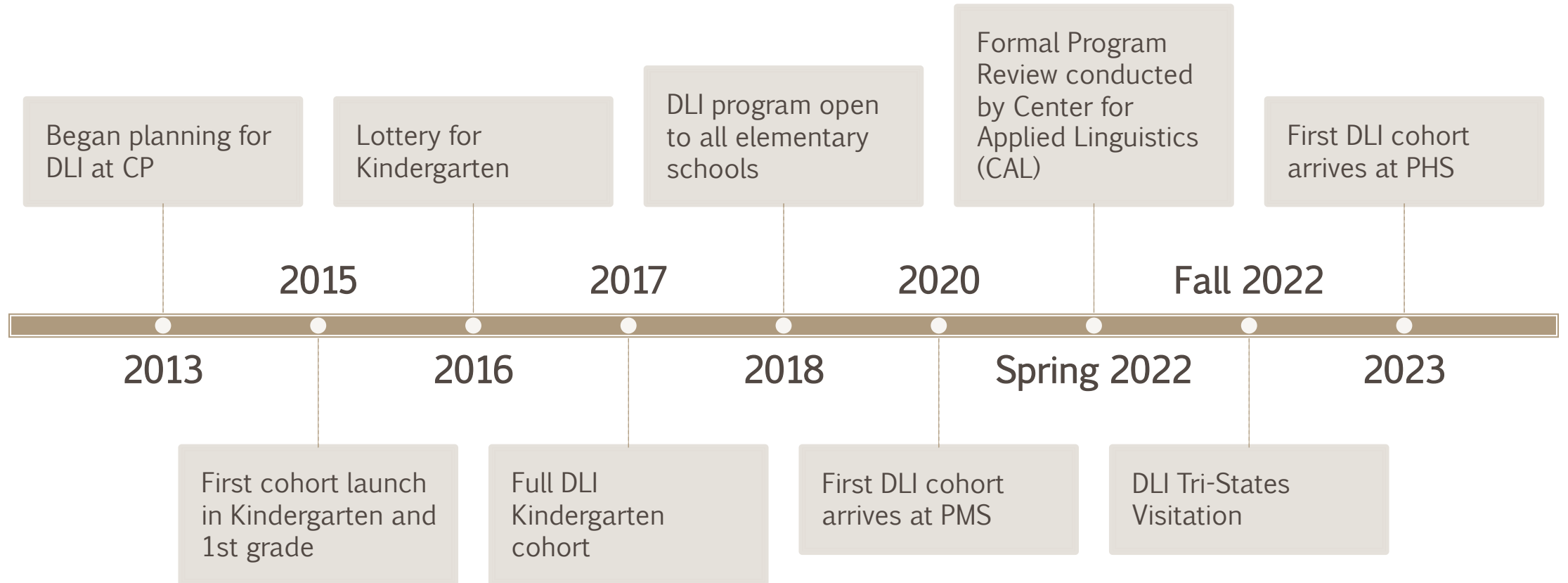
Serving as critical friends, these teams provide Tri-State districts with external feedback about current strengths and promising next steps



The Tri-States Team was provided three essential questions to frame their visit of our DLI program

What is the Tri-States Consortium?

DLI at PPS





PPS TRI-
STATES
EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

- Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent
- Dr. Kim Tew, Assistant Superintendent of C&I
- Micki Crisafulli, Director of Student Services
- Priscilla Russel, Supervisor of WL, DLI, ESL, & Bilingual Programs
- Dineen Gruchacz, Principal of Community Park School
- Jason Burr, Principal of Princeton Middle School
- Sarah Moore, Supervisor of Elementary Education
- Trinidad Rodriguez, Community Liaison, PMS
- Katie Nash, English Teacher Partner, CP
- Damaris Rodriguez, Spanish Teacher Partner, CP
- Adam Blejwas, Spanish Teacher Partner, CP
- Laura Avila, Spanish and AIS Teacher, CP
- Kristina Fellin, Spanish Teacher, PMS
- Liz Marmo, School Psychologist, CP
- Rosanna Paco, Bilingual Special Education, CP

Breakdown of the Three-Day Visit



- Fourteen Bilingual Visitors from DLI programs in Mamaroneck, Ossining, North Shore, Bedford, Scotch Plains, and Herricks school districts
- Reviewed collection of artifacts that included:
 - Assessment Results
 - PPS Curriculum
 - Instructional Materials
 - DLI registration materials
 - Schedules
 - Student Work Samples and Artifacts
 - CAL DLI Program Report
- Conducted:
 - Classroom Observations at CP and PMS
 - Focus groups of parents, students, staff, and BOE members
 - Focus groups were conducted in English and in Spanish
 - Interviews with PPS administrators



Essential Questions for the Consulting Team

- To what extent is there a shared vision for the Princeton Public Schools DLI program across the district (Central Office, Community Park, and Princeton Middle School) ?
- To what extent does the DLI program reflect the following:
 - appropriate admissions criteria,
 - staffing,
 - research-based curriculum, instructional practices, and assessment?
- To what extent does the DLI program meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all learners (e.g., native Spanish speakers, native English speakers, students with disabilities, students who require tiered academic support)?

Essential Question #1

- To what extent is there a shared vision for the Princeton Public Schools DLI program across the district (Central Office, Community Park, and Princeton Middle School) ?

EQ #1: A Shared District Vision: Commendations

- Community Park Elementary School offers a strong program with a visionary leader
- The District is commended for expanding the program into the middle school, with plans to expand to PHS in 2023-24
- The teachers, K-8, are open to feedback and seek professional growth opportunities
- PPS recognizes the linguistic richness of the Princeton community and seeks to partner with families and community-based organizations to foster multilingualism and multiculturalism (connection to strategic plan)
- Students are proud of their emerging bilingualism and seek to strengthen their reading and writing capabilities
- Parents and students feel a sense of belonging to the program

EQ#1: Shared Vision Recommendations

- Cultivate a district vision rather than a two-school vision
- Develop an action plan for next steps as well as a communication plan about the benefits of the program and goals to reach the wider community, particularly native-Spanish speakers
- Engage high school staff in creating a K-12 vision for DLI
- Consider ways to link the DLI program to the Strategic Plan and Profile of a Graduate
- Think about the "end game" for students participating in the program and communication about the benefits of being bilingual
- Allow time for DLI staff across the district to attend program-specific PD and collaborate
- Promote the program (in Spanish) to PPS's Spanish-speaking community, including registration processes, interest meetings, outreach to native Spanish speakers in other PPS elementary schools, and more

Essential Question #2

- To what extent does the DLI program reflect the following:
 - appropriate admissions criteria,
 - staffing,
 - research-based curriculum, instructional practices, and assessment?

EQ #2: Admissions, Staffing, and Curriculum, Instruction: Commendations

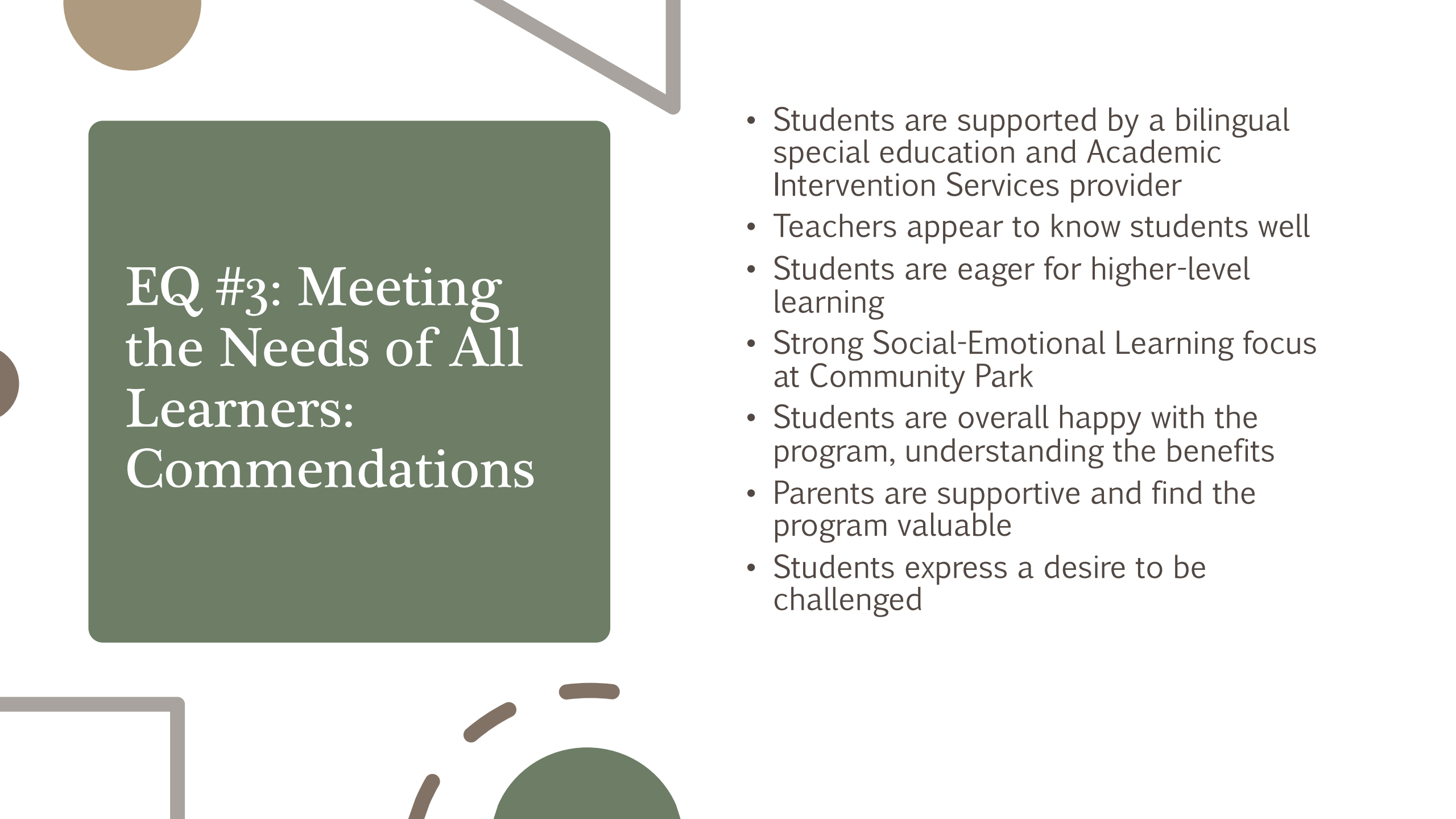
- Opening the program to any students within the district (District-wide program)
- Providing transportation for students to attend the DLI program
- Finding bilingual/Spanish-speaking staff (aides, liaisons, Special Education teacher, MS Social Studies teacher)
- Investing in research-based materials such as Benchmark
- Fidelity to the target language in classrooms and interviews
- Students demonstrate proficiency in Spanish (they can maintain a conversation)
- Excellent internal resources that may be able to showcase and encourage provide best practices for teaching and learning
- Staff offer creativity and flexibility in the materials they provide to students and families

EQ #2: Admissions, Staffing, and C&I: Recommendations

- Consider innovative benchmarks and measures of success/proficiency in the program
- Identify multiple assessments (in both English and Spanish that align with measures used across the elementary schools, i.e. AAPPL assessment)
- Consider a wide array of recruitment strategies to attract Spanish-speaking families to the program
- Include more information about the program on the district website (provide this information in Spanish as well)
- Provide training for all staff on the use of Benchmark curriculum materials
- Tap into peer coaching, classroom visitations, and looking from within for best practices
- Complete a District-wide audit of the ELLs at other schools to determine exactly how many students are not accessing the DLI program and why
- Ensure that the DLI program fully supports ELLs in their academic skills and growth
- Enlist the support of the other principals in encouraging parents of native Spanish speaking students to explore the benefits of enrolling in the DLI program

Essential Question #3

- To what extent does the DLI program meet the academic and social-emotional needs of all learners (e.g., native Spanish speakers, native English speakers, students with disabilities, students who require tiered academic support)?



EQ #3: Meeting the Needs of All Learners: Commendations

- Students are supported by a bilingual special education and Academic Intervention Services provider
- Teachers appear to know students well
- Students are eager for higher-level learning
- Strong Social-Emotional Learning focus at Community Park
- Students are overall happy with the program, understanding the benefits
- Parents are supportive and find the program valuable
- Students express a desire to be challenged

EQ #3: Meeting the Needs of All Learners: Recommendations

- Establish/identify the outcomes for the DLI students; share and promote the results of the AAPPL test
- Collect, study, annotate, and celebrate exemplars of student work
- Attend to the master schedule at the MS level so that it maintains and supports the ability of students to participate in the DLI program
- Establish grade-level benchmarks in content areas and proficiency
- Incorporate academic vocabulary into lessons
- Consider exploring options for obtaining the New Jersey Seal of Biliteracy so that students have an “exit goal” for the program

Overall Takeaways from the Visit



Tri-States consultants were greatly impressed by the students' level of proficiency in Spanish and ability to contribute to extemporaneous, complex conversations



The team also admired the level of professionalism and energy of our staff and administrators



Consultants deemed the program an "unpolished gem" that could greatly benefit students, particularly native Spanish speakers

Next Steps



Conduct site visits of other model DLI programs and provide time for staff to collaborate to ensure best practices in:

- Curriculum
- Instructional Models
- Assessment



Consider focusing attention on K-5 Programming, while still providing:

- Advanced Spanish at the middle school level
- Advanced Spanish at the high school level (goal of AP Spanish by 10th grade)
- Courses in Spanish at the high school level (i.e., La Horticultura)
- Seal of Biliteracy attainment (Future Goal for PHS)



Form a district committee to develop a communication plan that:

- Advocates the benefits of DLI programming
- Focuses on outreach to Spanish-speaking families
- Utilizes community connections to promote the program
- Develops registration materials in English and Spanish about the benefits of the program
- Leverages various forms of advertising (Social Media, Community Newspapers, signage, and more)

Thank You!

- A special thank you to the following groups who helped make our Tri-States visit a success:
 - Our Tri-States Executive Committee
 - Our PPS Administrative Team
 - CP and PMS Staff
 - CP and PMS Focus Group Students
 - Our K-8 DLI Parents
 - The PPS Board of Education
 - The C&I Office (particularly Gi Byzewski)

