

Visitor from Harrisburg

We had the opportunity to introduce Dr. Wil Del Pilar, acting deputy secretary of postsecondary and higher education, Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), to Center for Literacy. Our CEO, Michael Westover, led a tour of our classrooms while discussing the direction of the organization. The tour was followed by an insightful discussion regarding blended instruction and how Pennsylvania can engage with the field in different ways to offer options for the different ways people learn.

An emphasis was made on spreading technology throughout the city. One of the ways Center for Literacy has already embraced this idea is with the implementation of myPLACE. myPLACE is a citywide initiative to connect adult education providers under one student intake process. Once this was explained to Dr. Del Pilar, he became interested in the opportunity to replicate something similar to apply to the whole state of Pennsylvania.

When asked how web-based and elective instruction counts toward PDE standards, Dr. Del Pilar replied that, “we want to engage with the field in different ways to see what the concerns are so we can adjust our policies to reflect the different ways people learn. We want to make things better and this is no exception.”

Following that discussion were topics including early childhood education, pre-K providers, creating career pathways from youth to professionals and the need for more advanced manufacturers. Reentry programs in the prisons also peaked an interest when talking about our work with The Mayor’s Office of Reintegration Services (RISE) and the attempt to prevent further incarceration.

While touring our classrooms, a group of students in an intermediate math class welcomed Dr. Del Pilar and were excited to take a picture.