Despite the torrential rain and strong winds on the evening of March 12, about 30 Korean educators gathered in a Flushing church classroom to share information on how to become certified in New York State as Korean language teachers. These educators (some are licensed in other subject areas and some are in the process of acquiring their NYS certification), showed great interest in becoming involved in language education in order to promote the teaching and learning of the Korean culture and language. While the new Korean immigrant student population has decreased within the past few years (currently comprising 0.8% of NYC ELL population), second generation Korean immigrants and non-Korean language background students and their parents show great interest in learning or maintaining the language. PS 32 in North Flushing, for example, has a unique Korean dual language program from Kindergarten through the 3rd grade. (Click here to see the chart of Korean language programs in NYC.)

The purpose of the workshop on March 12 is to prepare to address the potential need for Korean certified teachers. On February 11, the Korean America Teachers Association of New York (KATANY) hosted an information session for educational administrators on establishing Korean language and culture programs. Dr. Eileen Moon from the Korea Foundation spoke at the meeting, expressing willingness to fund Korean language and culture programs in K-12 schools.