



Exchange Opportunities with the Spanish Ministry of Education

Joe Wiemelt

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Exchange Visitor Program with Spain

- International cooperation program between the Spanish Ministry of Education and the Illinois State Board of Education
- The program started in New York and California in the 1980s

Objectives

- Connect communities from Illinois and Spain
- Promote multiculturalism
- Impact the education and the lives of students in PK-12 in Illinois and Spain

Participants

- Students and Schools
 - School exchanges, Ruta Quetzal, AP Spanish Programs, International Spanish Academies
- US Teachers
 - Visiting teachers in Spain, Language and Culture Assistants in Spain, PD activities,
- US School Districts
 - Exchange Visitor Program: Visitor Teachers from Spain

Visiting Teachers from Spain in US (Urbana)

- Teachers become employees of the school districts for 1-3 years on J-1 Visas
- More than 200 NEW teachers come every year to the US
- Approximately 1000 teachers from Spain are in the US annually
- Participating States: 28
- More than 750 schools
- Number of visiting teachers in IL in 2011-12: 70

Visiting Teachers from Spain in US (Urbana)

- Teachers receive a J-1 Visa sponsored by ISBE
- Teachers go through three rounds of screenings
- Teachers are proficient in English: ISBE tests their proficiency level in March in Madrid
- District representatives interview applicants in Madrid in April (Administrator's travel is paid by the Spanish Ministry of Education)
- Teachers are Highly Qualified in Illinois
- They teach in: Dual Language, Bilingual, and World Language Programs
- EC-12th grade Certificates in any subject area

Spanish Ministry's Responsibilities

- Screen candidates, verify credentials & experience
- Provide a pool of candidates to interview (Urbana had 30 applicants for 4 positions)
- Support teachers during evaluation process
- PD in July before teachers start
- Ongoing support and PD for teachers

USD 116 Responsibilities

- Logistic support during teachers' arrival: teacher mentors
- District orientation
- School and “cultural” mentoring
- Feedback and positive reinforcement
- PD opportunities
- Same benefits and salary as any teacher based on experience and university hours

Teachers' Responsibilities

- As fulltime teachers, they are expected to fulfill the same requirements as any teacher
- Teach a full teaching day
- Annual Evaluations
- Etc.

ISBE's Responsibilities

- Sponsor the teachers' visas
- Ensure the districts fulfill commitments
- Conduct trainings
- Work along the Spanish ministry of Education advisor (Jorge Berne) towards the success of the program

Why Participate in the Exchange Program?

- It promotes a better quality dual language and bilingual program
- Fosters knowledge and appreciation of the cultural similarities and differences of US and Spain
- Addresses problems associated with the availability of bilingual certified and native Spanish speaking teachers
- It enriches the educational opportunities for students, staff, and the community at large and fits nicely with our district's strategic plan and initiatives