



NYC Principals Invited by France to Celebrate Model Exchange Program

New York, January 12—Teach French, will travel! For the first time ever, an official delegation of New York public school principals will travel to France, from February 7 to 13, to discuss how to consolidate French language classes in innovative American public schools and how to deepen bilateral educational ties through school pairings and exchanges. The delegation, whose travel expenses will be covered by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, will meet with high-level government officials from the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs in Paris, and will then head to Montpellier in southwestern France. French authorities are hoping that the Montpellier regional school district will sign a comprehensive educational agreement with New York City.

The New York delegation will include the principals of several schools that have worked with the Cultural Services of the French Embassy to promote the teaching of French, including five public primary schools that have launched French-English dual-language programs, one high school with French immersion classes, two high schools with French Heritage programs, and one international school. A representative from the NY Department of Education, Shimon Waronker, will also be part of the delegation. Mr. Waronker was previously the principal of Bronx’s Jordan L. Mott school (CIS22), which was one of the first three NYC schools to offer a French-English dual-language program. The eight principals are:

- **Rafaela Espinal** (PS125 in Harlem)
- **Giselle Gault** (PS58 in Brooklyn)
- **Jason Goldner** (PS151 in Queens)
- **Jean Mirvil** (PS73 in the Bronx)
- **Linda Rosenbury** (MS22 in the Bronx)
- **Michael Soet** (the International Lycée in Brooklyn)
- **Robin Sundick** (PS84 in Manhattan)
- **Joaquin Vega** (the International Lycée in the Bronx)

The great success of these various French-language programs has inspired French authorities, who are keen to pursue and deepen educational exchanges with the United States. In particular, they are eager to encourage a wide-ranging educational agreement, formally known as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), between the Montpellier regional school district and New York City, modeled on the 12 other MOUs that have been signed between French regional school districts and U.S. states (see list below). Such an agreement would facilitate school pairings, the sharing of best practices, and student and teacher exchanges. More intense cooperation would create a taste for America, which would be bolstered by the international American section at the Jules Guesde high school in Montpellier.

As a foretaste of the potential of such an agreement, the U.S. principals will be given information about the Jules Verne program, which would offer French and American educators an opportunity to spend a year in each other’s countries in order to learn from one another. In Montpellier (located on the Mediterranean coast, near the Pyrenees Mountains), the New York principals will meet their counterparts from their sister schools, as well as the regional superintendent of Montpellier schools, Christian Philip, who is particularly enthusiastic about international exchanges. They will also meet with 20 French teachers-in-training who will intern in New York schools for 3 weeks starting on February 20.

The establishment of memorandums of understanding is a priority for the French government, as they help put French-language education on a solid footing in the U.S. while also introducing French educators to American educational practices. In order to accommodate the federal nature of America’s educational system and encourage decentralized bilateral ties, such agreements are generally signed between a specific U.S. state or large city and a French regional school district that encompasses several local districts. As of today, 12 MOUs have been signed, and 3 are being negotiated with a view to being signed in 2010 (see list below).

Press Contact :	Amaury Laporte	XXX	XXX
Website :	www.frenchculture.org	Press Room	username: xxx password: xxx

ABOUT THE FRENCH-ENGLISH DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM

www.frenchculture.org

The French-English dual language program consists of immersion classes in French and English which are geared toward mixed classes of Francophones, Anglophones and bilingual students. The first three French-English dual language programs were launched in 2007, at the initiative of Education Française à New York (EFNY), a grassroots parents' organization, and with the strong support of the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and the New York City Department of Education. The French Cultural Services provide French teaching materials, teacher training and other logistical and financial support. In the current 2009-2010 school year, six New York City public schools have offered French-English dual language classes: PS125 (Harlem), PS58 (Caroll Gardens - Brooklyn), PS73 (Bronx), CIS22 (Bronx), PS84 (Upper West Side) and PS151 (Astoria – Queens). In all, more than 500 students in 20 classes benefit from this program, six times more than in 2007-2008, the program's launch year.

ABOUT THE FRENCH HERITAGE LANGUAGE PROGRAM

www.facecouncil.org/fhlp

The French Heritage Language Program (FHLP) is designed to support and enrich the teaching of French to students of Francophone backgrounds, who are often recent immigrants. The program helps these students develop proficiency in French and maintain a connection to their culture and identity, while increasing their opportunities for success in their new environment. Launched in New York in 2005 by the French Embassy's Educational Service and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with strong support from the Alfred & Jane Ross Foundation, the Heritage Program is run by the non-profit French American Cultural Exchange foundation (FACE). In New York, the Heritage Program is offered to 120 students in six locations: the Brooklyn International High School, the Bronx International High School, the International High School at Prospect Heights (Brooklyn), the International High School at Lafayette (Brooklyn), the International Community High School (Bronx) and PS125 (Harlem). It has also expanded to Miami, Florida, in 2009.

ABOUT THE CULTURAL SERVICES OF THE FRENCH EMBASSY

www.frenchculture.org

The Cultural Services of the French Embassy promote the best of French arts, literature, and education to cultural and academic institutions across the United States, with a strong focus on contemporary works and on innovative programs. Its role is advisory, conceptual, developmental, as well as promotional and administrative.

ABOUT FACE (FRENCH AMERICAN CULTURAL EXCHANGE)

www.facecouncil.org

FACE (French American Cultural Exchange), is a New York-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to nurturing French-American relations through innovative international projects in the arts and education. FACE is administered by a French-American Board comprised of Trustees based in both New York and Paris. It works in partnership with the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States.

MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MOU SIGNED	MOU SIGNED	MOU IN PROGRESS
Kentucky / Dijon Signed in February 2002	Louisiana / Rennes Signed in March 2007	Missouri / Lyon To be signed on the 24th of February, 2010
Connecticut / Toulouse Signed in February 2002	Oklahoma / Amiens Signed in March 2007	Chicago / Paris To be signed in 2010
Nebraska / Besançon Signed in June 2005	South Carolina / Clermont-Ferrand Signed in March 2007	Ohio / Rouen To be signed in 2010
Indiana / Strasbourg Signed in July 2005	Delaware / Créteil Signed in June 2008	New York / Montpellier
Wisconsin / Aix-Marseille Signed in April 2006	Maine / Nantes Signed in February 2009	Washington / Nantes
Wisconsin / Bordeaux Signed in April 2006	Utah / Grenoble Signed in January 2010	