

More than 70 Teachers from French-Speaking Countries Travel to Louisiana to Teach in 11 Parishes

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BATON ROUGE, LA—More than 70 teachers from French-speaking countries across the globe including Africa, Belgium, Canada, and France will gather for an orientation meeting, welcoming them to the state that ranks first in the nation for student enrollments in French language and French immersion programs.

This new contingent of teachers, known as the French Foreign Associate Teachers, is sponsored by the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), the General Consulate of France in New Orleans, the Louisiana Department of Education, and the Wallonie-Bruxelles Office in Louisiana.

The French Foreign Associate Teachers will attend an orientation meeting to help them adjust to their new posts before being dispersed throughout the 11 parish-area in the state. The orientation will be held at the Baton Rouge Holiday Inn from July 30-August 1. The program includes presentations on culture shock, the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum, and classroom management. On Tuesday night, the teachers will participate in Show Time, a special event that showcases their individual talents and themes from their different cultures and different countries.

According to the Louisiana Department of Education, student enrollment in French immersion programs has been on a steady increase since the early 90s. “In 1991, we had 405 students enrolled. In 2007, that number climbed to 2,755,” said Terri Hammatt, World Language Director for the Louisiana Department of Education.

“It is refreshing to note that Louisiana schools are leading the United States in our foreign language immersion programs,” added Hammatt. Among the 91 schools nation-wide with French immersion programs, almost 30 are in Louisiana according to the Center for Applied Linguistics.

“These numbers are even more impressive when you consider the size of our state when looking at that ratio,” added David Chermie, executive director of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL). “Nation-wide, there are more than 12,000 students enrolled in immersion French immersion programs. Louisiana hosts one-fourth of the nation’s students enrolled in this rigorous curriculum,” explained Chermie.

“We were worried about the impact the 2005 hurricanes would have on our recruiting efforts,” said Arnaud Sgambato, Attaché Pédagogique for the General Consulate of France in New Orleans based in the LSU College of Education French Education Project. Sgambato was responsible for the recruitment in France.

“In fact, it was just the opposite,” added Sgambato, “We had a tremendous outpouring of interest. All of the teachers we recruited were passionate about this program and dedicated to improving the French heritage in Louisiana.”

The teachers will participate in a three-day series of meetings and workshops with school administrators, Louisiana Department of Education officials, CODOFIL representatives, and LSU College of Education

French Education Project personnel before deploying all over Louisiana to begin working in the public schools in early August.

On Tuesday, dignitaries such as David Chéramie, Executive Director of the CODOFIL, Eliane De Poes-Levaque, Permanent Representative for the French-Speaking Community of Belgium in Louisiana, Aude Ghespière, Attachée de Coopération pour le Français, and Terri Hammatt, World Language Director for the Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Student Standards, Assessment, and Accountability, will be at the orientation meeting and available for comment.

For more information,
David Chéramie
Executive Director, Council for the Development of French in Louisiana
1-800-259-5810

Welcoming Orientation for French Foreign Adjunct Teachers

Detailed Schedule Attached

Location

Holiday Inn Select
4728 Constitution Avenue
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808

Monday, July 30, 2007

9:00 a.m. – 7:45 p.m.

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

9:00 a.m. – 5:45 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENT: 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.

Show Time: Teachers showcase their talents and their cultures

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Additional Resources

Center for Applied Linguistics
www.cal.org/resources/immersion/

CODOFIL
www.codofil.org

General Consulate of France in New Orleans
<http://www.consulfrance-nouvelleorleans.org/>

Louisiana Department of Education
www.louisianaschools.net

Wallonie-Bruxelles Office in Louisiana

www.wbri.be