

Bilateral Educator Exchange Program 2020



The Bilateral Educator Exchange (BEE) Program between Indiana and Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil started in 2018 when Jill Woerner (Indiana) & Roberta Pegoraro (Brazil) were exchanging ideas about education, travel, Sister Cities and much more. In February 2019, the first group of 9 Brazilian teachers came to Indiana and had a fabulous experience. In June 2019, 14 Indiana educators will go to Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil to complete the 2-way exchange program.



A 2-way Exchange program is one where the individuals on both sides experience the life of their counterpart. So, the teachers will go to school with one another, live in each other's homes, shop together and much more. This type of experience provides a much more enriching cultural experience than that obtained by staying in a hotel and using chartered transportation. For teachers to truly be able to explain "culture" to their students, it is best if they experience it for themselves first.



The costs involved in this program are pretty straightforward and are pretty low when considering two-weeks abroad. Priority will be given to participants who will both host and travel as that is the best experience since you'll know you'll have the same partner for both halves of the experience. Other candidates can/will be accepted as space allows. The hosting teacher will cover meals, housing, transportation and entertainment for their partner teacher. The fee above covers the meals, housing, transportation and entertainment AND the roundtrip flight from Indianapolis to Porto Alegre, any hotel stays needed prior to return travel, 2 orientations (one fall and one spring), and all logistics and planning prior to hosting and traveling. What is not covered in the fee includes the cost of a passport, visa (\$40), meals in transit, personal expenses and optional travel insurance/immunizations.

The benefits of this program are innumerable. Through a cultural exchange, you will see/hear/live another culture providing you with stories, anecdotes and real information for your students and classes as well as for your personal enrichment. You will have created a life-long educator companion in another country with whom you can create projects with between your classrooms. You will have a lot of fun while hosting your teacher both in your home and in your school. You'll be able to exchange ideas about instruction, students, school policies and more. You'll expose your administrators and your students to a way of life potentially similar and/or different from their own. And of course, you'll experience the food, entertainment and shopping of a new country as Adriane did in Southern Indiana!



To get involved in this program in any capacity, complete the following Google form:

<https://goo.gl/forms/ybJmSNir1SGesQi2>. Feel free to share this information with colleagues and administrators who you think might want to know about this opportunity. Costs will be established in July 2019 when airfare for summer 2020 is available. Orientation dates will be established during summer 2019 so you can get them on your calendar early. If you would like to hear from a teacher in the 2019 cohort, please contact Jill Woerner at JWInterculturalED@outlook.com and she can connect you to a participating teacher until the website is up and running with testimonials, photos & videos.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. **Do I have to host to participate?** No, but priority will be given to a teacher who can host so that the exchange is truly a 2-way experience. If you cannot host, consider partnering with a colleague who isn't interested in traveling or a retired colleague and you two can "share" the teacher during their time in Indiana. This becomes a rich experience for even more teachers and students and is totally acceptable.
2. **Do I need to know Portuguese to participate?** No. Having some knowledge of Portuguese, Spanish or Italian is certainly beneficial, but it is not a requirement. Just know that most, not all, of the teachers coming to Indiana have at least a basic proficiency in English. We will do our best to pair teachers according to interests, language, content and special/dietary needs.
3. **Do I have to pay for the entire program upfront?** No. There may be an incentive offered to those who are able to pay upfront, but a payment schedule is available for those who need to pay over time. There will be a non-refundable deposit asked of participants in late summer 2019 to secure the participant's spot!
4. **Will I be partnered with a teacher in my same content area?** Not necessarily. As this is an "opt-in" type of program, we will do our best to partner teachers together based on interests, including content area, but exact matches are not guaranteed.
5. **How do I work with my administrator to get their approval?** First, share this information with your administrator as ask for his/her blessing. Second, let them know that you will be provided with profile information and the criminal history check from the teacher's local government at your fall orientation. If the administrator wants to do a local background check as well, he/she is welcome to do so. Also, let them know of the rich intercultural dialogs that will take place between your partner teacher and your students during their time here. Your counterpart can present information to your students about Rio Grande do Sul and Brazilian culture. Your administrator may also contact Jill Woerner with any questions or concerns.
6. **Should I participate in this program?** YES! If you made it this far in reading about the program, your



interest is peaked! Jump in and take the risk. You will participate in 2 orientations to help prepare you for both the hosting and traveling portions of the program and you will not be alone while you participate. You will have new friends both locally and abroad and you'll be forever changed for the better! It's worth it!