

Sister Cities Association of Wilmington

School Partnerships

The Sister Cities Association of Wilmington (SCAW) encourages teachers and principals in New Hanover County and in its sister cities to consider international exchanges to help students develop global skills early in a students' life. The objectives for school partnerships are: 1) to encourage schools to add a global perspective to their curriculum by fostering relationships with classrooms and schools in Wilmington and Wilmington's sister cities or other international partners; 2) to enable teachers and school administrators to share best practices in their classrooms and schools; and 3) to give students the desire and opportunity to learn other cultures and languages. Our role is to promote the concept of giving Wilmington's students access to a global education and to proactively identify schools in our sister cities that are interested in becoming a partner school.

If you are an educator or school administrator interested in establishing a cross-cultural relationship with one of Wilmington's sister cities (Dandong, China; Doncaster, England; Bridgetown, Barbados; and San Pedro, Belize), or an international city interested in doing the same with a Wilmington school, you simply begin the process by sending an email to: membership@scawilmington.org and put "School Partnership" in the subject line. You will be contacted by a SCAW volunteer who will speak with you about the steps to get started.

Getting Started

1. Identify a primary contact person for each school.
2. Information is exchanged between schools in the form of a school profile – size of student body, grade levels taught, average classroom size, languages spoken, outstanding programs and special achievements.
3. Participating schools determine the scope of the relationship, both short and long range goals and create a plan for the development of projects and or exchanges.
4. Partnership is formalized through an exchange of documents signed by the principals (SCAW provides the school partnership document).
5. If a pen pal exchange is being established participating classroom teachers will then prepare a list of students for the partner school and submit to the matched classroom. If the exchange is electronic, meaning using school-based email accounts or an appropriate web portal, participating classroom teachers will organize the start-up. SCAW recommends using TakingITGlobal* for middle or secondary school classrooms interested in accessing an international student forum of global citizenship. TIGed has an educator database based in Canada and has offers resources and virtual panels for school exchanges.
6. Teachers or administrators are asked to submit a summary report to SCAW on an annual basis. This report is due on June 15 and should include: number of students participating by grade level; objectives for the exchange; and results (as it relates to objectives).

Suggested Activities

1. E-mail exchange
2. Class blog

3. Pen pal exchange
4. Postcard exchange (schools on both sides can see their sister city – you or your students can take digital photographs of your city and print them in-house)
5. Create a school photo album or culture box to send to your sister school
6. Create an arts-based lesson plan for exchange (students draw pictures of school, city, themselves, their families, etc. to send abroad)
7. Have students research specific aspects of their sister city culture and report on what they learned
8. Create website about your school to share with your sister schools (if you currently have a school site, include the link in your profile). If your school does not have a site and you don't have the time or resources to create one, you can design a page to post on the SCAW website.
9. Contact the consulate from your sister city country to invite them to your school and to meet your students.
10. Create a cookbook to exchange with your sister school. You might speak with your parent teacher association about possibly selling the cookbooks as a fundraiser for a school trip or project. Permission would need to be obtained from the partnering school and school officials if made for sale purposes.
11. Work with other schools paired with your sister school to exchange information and ideas.
12. Create a bulletin board in your school about your sister city.
13. Create a joint lesson plan and arrange for a video conference with your sister class if you are in a time zone that would allow that during the school day.