

LETTER OF INTENT

The Secretariat of Public Education of the government of the United Mexican States (henceforth called the Secretariat) and the Florida Department of Education (henceforth called the Department),

Considers the following:

- The historical and cultural affinities that exist between Mexico and Florida;
- The growing importance and vitality of the population of Hispanic origin in Florida;
- That a significant portion of this population comes from the Mexican Republic or is of Mexican descent, many of whom are youngsters;
- That the education is the best way to promote the understanding and solidarity between countries;
- That the Department maintains as one of its priorities the understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, and that, following this tenet, has established innovative educational programs for students whose heritage is not English, migrant, education and programs for Spanish for Spanish-speakers;
- That the government of the United Mexican States maintains as one of its foreign-policy priorities the care of those Mexican communities that are beyond its frontiers, and that, among the programs designed to meet this priority, educational programs are most prominent;
- That the governments of Mexico and Florida find themselves at the threshold of a new era of closer ties of friendship, solidarity and cooperation, which is manifested on this date with the visit of the largest delegation from any State of the United States, headed by its Governor that has ever visited any country;
- That the Secretariat's and the Department's mutual interest and convenience coincide to establish collaborative mechanisms that permit jointly addressing the educational needs of the population of Mexican origin of Florida; Have convened to subscribe to this document to ensure the attainment of the following:

OBJETIVES:

- Institutionalize permanent ties of educational and cultural cooperation that expand the frame of the bilateral relationships and benefit from the experiences of both
- Establish the foundations for the exchange of information and experiences and for the future accomplishment of comparative studies that allow the recognition of pedagogical and technical innovations that relate to various educational areas;

-Promote the exchange of educational specialists through educational and cultural programs that foster and elevate the academic preparation and mutual knowledge of human resources dedicated to education;

-Explore innovative joint projects that support migrant education, programs for students whose heritage language is not English and Spanish for Spanish-speakers programs;

-Maintain a permanent communication mechanism to discuss, develop, implement and follow-up programs;

-Eventually underwrite specific agreements for programs such as, but not limited to:

- Mutual visits of administrative personnel from Mexico's and Florida's educational systems;
- Mutual teacher preparation programs for Florida teachers in Mexico and for Mexican teachers in Florida;
- Participation of Mexican teachers in selected Florida school districts with Mexican-born or Mexican-descent student populations during an entire school year.

This document will go in to effect the date it is signed by the Secretariat and the Department, and the same will be for all other agreements that are subsequently developed. The document will be in effect for two years, to be automatically renewable for the same amount of time, unless one of the parties expresses the contrary to the other in writing and within ninety (90) days.

Signed in two original documents, one in Spanish and another in English, both equally valid in Mexico City on July 13th, 1999.

For the Secretariat of Public Education
of Mexico Education

For the Florida Department of
Education

Carlos Mancera
Undersecretary of Planning and
Coordination

Tom Gallagher
Commissioner of Education