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SISTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM TO BENEFIT FROM NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH iEARN-USA  
*Partnership will Link Students, Teachers & Classrooms across 132 Countries*

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WASHINGTON-- Sister Cities International and the International Education and Resource Network (iEARN) are joining efforts to bring global learning and cooperation into classrooms worldwide. The partnership reaches across 132 countries and can match any teacher in the United States with a classroom anywhere in the world.

The partnership brings together two vast networks. Sister Cities International has 2,400 communities in its international network and specializes in linking communities in the United States with communities abroad to build understanding. iEARN supports online educational programs in 22,000 schools and engages over a million students and teachers in collaborative educational projects.

“Even if your community does not have a sister city relationship, you can participate in the Sister Schools Program,” said Tim Honey, executive director of Sister Cities International. “The partnership will make it even easier to connect youth online and conduct projects together that benefit both communities.”

“Through the Internet, students and teachers have the opportunity to go beyond international simulations and engage directly with students in other countries,” said iEARN-USA director, Edwin Gragert. “Students have the opportunity to both learn and teach through direct interaction, enabling them to gain knowledge about new topics and the ability to work with other cultures. These are important 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.”

Some sister city programs have already worked with iEARN-USA. The Sister City Program of the City of New York uses iEARN-USA in an ongoing exchange program for fifth-graders begun in 2004 with its sister cities Budapest, Jerusalem, London, Madrid, and Rome. Students used an online forum to compare and contrast parks in their respective cities. The final project asked the students to design their own ‘dream park,’ drawing on the positive characteristics they observed about parks in their sister cities.

During the program’s launch year, iEARN-USA will offer partial scholarships to members of Sister Cities International to access iEARN’s global learning resources and tools. For only \$50, a teacher will have access to thousands of projects around the world, as well as curriculum and professional development resources. An entire Sister School can get the benefits of iEARN-USA membership for only \$180 through this partnership.

“The program not only creates globally literate young people but it also about makes it easier and more attractive for teachers to introduce international elements into lesson plans. This collaboration is a valuable step,” said Danielle Segall, the program manager for the project. Teachers who would like to get involved can go to [www.sister-cities.org](http://www.sister-cities.org) and click on “Sister Schools.”

Representing more than 2,400 communities in 132 countries, Sister Cities International is a citizen diplomacy network creating and strengthening partnerships between the U.S. and communities abroad. Begun in 1956 after a White House summit where U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower called for people-to-people

exchanges, sister city partnerships are tailored to local interests and increase global cooperation at the grassroots level. Sister Cities International promotes peace through mutual respect, understanding and cooperation by focusing on sustainable development, youth and education, arts and culture, humanitarian assistance and economic growth programs.

iEARN-USA (International Education and Resource Network) has pioneered online collaborative education among countries of the world since 1988 for the purpose of enhancing learning and connecting youth to make a difference in the world. iEARN is currently active in 22,000 schools and youth organizations in 115 countries. It was awarded the 2003 Goldman Sachs Foundation Prize for Excellence in International Education and is a 2004 Tech Museum Laureate winner for “technology benefiting humanity.” Please visit [www.iearn.org](http://www.iearn.org) and [www.us.iearn.org](http://www.us.iearn.org).

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