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Princeton Middle School World Languages Teacher Recruited for National Oceanic and Atmosphere and National Science Foundation Project Slated for January

Mark Eastburn, a K-5 Spanish teacher at Johnson Park School in the Princeton Regional School District, has been chosen as one of two teachers to participate in a science project in South America sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Science Foundation.

Eastburn, a one-time Peace Corps teacher, has been selected as an "American Teacher in the Field." He joins Ana Maria Varela, a high school teacher from Buenos Aires, Argentina, in Bolivia, beginning January 17.

Eastburn and Varela will be part of the South American Low-Level Jetstream Experiment (SALLJEX) in Bolivia, collecting data for the weather-related project. They will then travel to Buenos Aires to work at the Universidad de Buenos Aires to help researchers analyze the data.

In Buenos Aires, both teachers will host several live worldwide web broadcasts. In addition to teaching classes and preparing lesson plans as part of the program, they will keep daily logs, take photographs, interview scientists and work with other teachers and students in Buenos Aires.

Eastburn will return to Johnson Park School in February. More information is available online at: www.ogp.noaa.gov/salljex.

The SALLJEX program is one of the many programs Governor James E. McGreevey, Commissioner of Education William L. Librera and the Department of Education encourage for both teacher growth and innovative lessons for students in the state.

Specifically, the program is an example of the DOE mission statement: "The New Jersey Department of Education will provide leadership for a superior education by utilizing multiple and diverse paths to success for all children in New Jersey.

On Sept. 17th, the Governor and Commissioner hosted an Educational Summit in Trenton, where they outlined the Administration's 21-point plan for educational reform. The 21-point plan is available on the Department of Education's website: www.state.nj.us/education.

The four key components of the 21-point plan are: involving teachers at all levels of decision making; creating a more professional environment for teachers; better preparing teachers and administrators for the challenges they face in their classroom and in their schools and supporting them once they begin their work; and continued emphasis on recognizing and celebrating excellence.