

Support the J-1 visa Teacher Exchange Visitor Program

Since 1961, U.S. State Department exchange programs have built a foundation for peace through first-hand experiences of other cultures. Exchange Teachers support this mission and benefit American schools.

Prepare U.S. Students to Excel in Global Contexts

- Education experts agree that **global awareness is a key theme through which students should study core subjects like math, science, and world languages.** Cross-Cultural Skills are also listed as **essential life and career skills.***
- Exchange teachers are **uniquely suited to bring global awareness to the classroom.** The program requires that exchange teachers organize a minimum of two cross-cultural learning activities each year. Routine classroom interactions also become opportunities for cross-cultural learning.
- Cross-cultural learning activities, such as a virtual exchange with students in an exchange teacher's home country, enlarge students' understanding of the world and help them **develop critical- thinking skills** that take into consideration cultural variance.

Bring International Diversity into U.S. Classrooms

- Experts agree that it is **critically important for cultural differences to be represented and addressed in diverse classrooms.**†
- Exchange teachers are one part of broader efforts‡ to **diversify school faculty and better serve our students.** Studies indicate non-native teachers may be additionally beneficial to students who perceive themselves as outsiders in some way and to minority students.§
- Learning from an exchange teacher offers American students the opportunity to develop early and meaningful relationships with individuals from other countries and cultures.

Meet Critical Teaching Needs

- The Teacher Exchange Visitor program supports **broader efforts to address well-documented teacher shortages** in world languages and subjects like science, math and special education.**
- Exchange Teachers **represent less than half a percent (<0.44%) of the 3.581 million people teaching** in U.S. classrooms.**

Professional Development for U.S. and Exchange Teachers

- A 2014 study in the *Peabody Journal of Education* finds that exchange teachers **learn American teaching methodologies and apply them in their home countries.****
- **U.S. teachers likewise learn from international peers.** Face-to-face interaction with international teachers is a valuable form of professional development. In fact, the same 2014 study suggests **U.S. schools could do more to take advantage of the learning opportunities afforded by exchange teachers.**

* The Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21), "Framework for 21st Century Learning." P21's founding members include the National Education Association and the U.S. Department of Education. † Jessica Besser-Rosenberg, *Teach for America*, "The Research Says: Diversity in Teaching Matters." ‡ Jessica Besser-Rosenberg, *Teach for America*, "Student Diversity, TFA, and the Teaching Workforce: What the Numbers Tell Us." § Katharina Bense, "International teacher mobility and migration: A review and synthesis of the current empirical research and literature." ** Stephanie Aragon, *Education Commission of the States*, "Teacher Shortages: What We Know." †† Based on estimates drawn for U.S. Department of State J-1 visa data and projections from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics. ††† Kara D. Brown and Doyle Stevick, "The Globalizing Labor Market in Education."