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.