

Frequently Asked Questions about the U.S.-China Teachers Exchange Program

What are the goals of the U.S.-China Teachers Exchange Program?

The U.S.-China Teachers Exchange Program addresses the following three goals:

- ❖ Enriching teacher and student understanding of the other country and culture
- ❖ Introducing or strengthening Chinese studies in American schools
- ❖ Helping to improve English language instruction in participating Chinese schools

The program allows for the exchange of ideas, experiences, ways of teaching, and ways of doing and being. It does not require the a one-to-one exchange of an American teacher for a Chinese teacher. A school may opt to send only or to receive only.

How long has the program been in existence?

The only bi-lateral national program for professional teachers, the U.S.-China Teachers Exchange Program began in 1995, and has been administered by the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations since 2002. Established in 1966 as a private, non-partisan, non-profit educational organization, the National Committee has more than four decades of experience developing innovative programs at the forefront of U.S.-China relations.

Why should an American teacher spend a year teaching in China?

A responsibility of American teachers is to help prepare today's students to live and work in a rapidly changing world. China is playing an increasingly prominent economic and political role in the world, yet many teachers do not have deep or direct knowledge of the country. The personal and professional rewards of teaching in China are tremendous, as teachers gain first-hand knowledge of China and its people and culture, enjoy the respect of their Chinese students, and return home with increased knowledge and experience to share with their American students and colleagues. In addition, U.S. teachers enhance understanding of contemporary English and American culture among their students and colleagues in China.

How do U.S. schools and districts benefit from having a teacher go to China?

U.S. teachers return to their schools with new knowledge and experiences and the ability to be a major force for building a focus on China in their schools. Returned teachers actively teach about China in their own classrooms and many also provide professional development on incorporating China into other curricular areas, prepare materials related to China for other teachers, and work to sustain Chinese studies in the curriculum. Other benefits for districts include advancing student exchanges with China, improving relationships with Asian students, and strengthening school-community connections, especially in those communities with, or desiring, a sister city in China.

Who can participate?

Experienced American K-12 teachers of any level and any subject are invited to spend a year teaching oral/aural English in Chinese secondary schools. We seek teachers who will return to the United States committed to improving teaching about China in American schools.



National Committee on United States-China Relations

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May my spouse and children accompany me to China?

Yes. Arrangements for family members are made on an individual basis as circumstances differ for each person. Some spouses and children accompany the program participant in China; others stay in the United States and visit during the school year.

What support is provided to American teachers before and during their year in China?

Since its inception the program has been generously funded by the Freeman Foundation. In-kind and financial support is also provided by participating schools, and by individuals who believe in the goals of the program. Participants receive partial salary replacement from the National Committee as well as a stipend from the host school in China.

All participants receive the professional and personal support necessary to adapt to a very different working and living environment. During the summer before the exchange year, the National Committee sponsors an intensive orientation program in the United States. The orientation covers “survival Chinese,” teaching English as a foreign language, an introduction to China and its schools, and discussions about adapting to an unfamiliar culture.

Throughout the academic year, National Committee staff members remain in close contact with all participants through e-mail, site visits, and conferences. In addition, the China Education Association for International Exchange (CEAIE) provides ongoing support to the American teachers in China.

When do teachers leave from and return to the U.S.?

Teachers leave the United States in late August for the school year that begins on September 1, and generally complete their teaching duties in late June. Some return to the United States immediately; others travel in China or elsewhere before going home.

Where are the participating Chinese schools located?

Currently American teachers are teaching in Anqing, Beijing, Jiangdu, Luoyang, and Suzhou. In the past teachers have also lived in Changzhou, Chengdu, Dalian, Hefei, Hohhot, Nanjing, and Yangzhou.

What is the typical teaching assignment in China?

American teachers typically teach oral English language classes for up to 14 periods per week to classes of 30-55 students.

What type of housing is available?

Teachers usually live in an apartment on the school campus or in an off-campus apartment that is provided by the school.

How can I learn more about teaching in China?

Visit the program’s web site at <http://www.ncusr.org/TeachersExchange/index.html> or contact Margot Landman, senior director for education programs, via email at mllandman@ncusr.org or by letter to the Teachers Exchange Program, National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, 71 West 23rd Street, Suite 1901, New York, NY 10010.



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