

## Visiting Chinese Language Teachers from Taiwan Program

### BACKGROUND

Beyond foundational knowledge and skills, students need exposure to a broader range of subjects and disciplines, including world languages. As detailed in *Each Child, Our Future*, world languages comprise part of Ohio's Well-Rounded Content learning domain, which broadens students' knowledge, aspirations and passions.

To address the need for Chinese language educators in Ohio and to promote international educational and cross-cultural exchanges, the Ohio Department of Education collaborates with the following partners to recruit and bring highly qualified Mandarin Chinese language teachers from Taiwan to work in Ohio schools:

- Ministry of Education of Taiwan;
- Taipei Economic and Culture Office in Chicago.

Working cooperatively under a longstanding Memorandum of Understanding, these partners identify and select highly qualified language teachers who meet the qualifications for obtaining Ohio's Visiting International Teacher License.

The visiting international teacher program encourages Taiwan's professional Chinese language teachers to teach in Ohio school districts for a period of up to two years. Visiting teacher candidates are highly qualified, having attained undergraduate or postgraduate degrees in addition to certificates for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language issued by the Ministry of Education in Taiwan. All candidates will have completed an educator preparation program and student teaching internship. Additionally, they will have taught for a minimum of three years at or very near the grade levels they will teach in the United States.

Many of Ohio's public districts, community schools and chartered nonpublic schools are interested in serving as host institutions for visiting international teachers. Given the limited supply of visiting international teachers, host institutions must complete a rigorous application process. Once approved, host institutions are matched with visiting international teachers. Before entering the classroom, the visiting international teachers experience a thorough onboarding process to help acclimate them to teaching in the United States. Details for these processes are found below.

### OHIO APPLICATION PROCESS FOR HOST INSTITUTIONS

- The administrators of a prospective host institution must express interest in the program by submitting a completed application packet to the Department. The application packet can be found on the Department's website by visiting the [International Teacher Exchanges page](#).
- A Department review team determines the appropriateness of the position(s) each school or district seeks to fill with a visiting Chinese language teacher from Taiwan. The Department then communicates the approval status of each application and position to the applicant.

## SELECTING QUALIFIED TEACHERS

- The Department shares the approved applications of potential host institutions with the Taipei Economic and Culture Office in Chicago, which then works with the Ministry of Education to identify suitable candidates to fill the positions.
- The Ministry of Education in Taiwan approves the requests for Mandarin language teachers and contacts the appropriate education agencies in Taiwan for their teacher recommendations.
- Once appropriate teacher candidates are identified, the Ministry of Education in Taiwan sends the applications and resumes of prospective candidates to the Department to review.
- The Department conducts initial screening interviews with the candidates to ensure their suitability for the rigors of the program, as well as their eligibility for Ohio's Visiting International Teacher License.

## MATCHING QUALIFIED TEACHERS WITH HOST INSTITUTIONS

- The Department forwards the results of the prescreening interviews to the prospective host institutions. If a school or district is interested in a recommended candidate, the Department will introduce the host institution's administrative contact to the teacher via email.
- The host institution arranges an online interview to confirm the candidate's selection and informs the Department whether it would like to employ the candidate or not.
- The host institution issues its desired candidate a letter of intent to hire, which details the position, its starting and end dates, the prospective salary and benefits, expected payroll deductions and any other details pertinent to the hiring process. Both the host institution and teacher sign and date the letter.
- Once the Department receives the signed letter of intent to hire, the Department works directly with the visiting teacher candidate to secure the required J-1 visa.
- The host institution secures the approval of the local board of education or other governing entity to hire the teacher. A community school secures final authorization from its sponsoring organization. A finalized teaching contract is issued.

## VISITING TEACHER ONBOARDING PROCESS

- Selected candidates undergo initial program orientation in Taiwan prior to departure.
- Upon arrival in Ohio and prior to the start of the school year, the visiting teacher participates in a week of federally required cross-cultural orientation and professional training provided jointly by the Department and Ohio Foreign Language Association. The host district pays for the required orientation and training of teachers it hires.
- Each host institution has a support team that attends the final day of orientation and training for an informational session covering the program's requirements and teacher onboarding process. Upon conclusion of this joint training session, the team transports the new visiting teacher and the teacher's belongings to the community.
- The host institution provides the newly arrived teacher with a host family at no cost for up to three weeks. An appropriate host family is one that is willing and able to assist the teacher with initial settling-in tasks, such as opening a bank account, identifying a local doctor, renting an apartment, securing renter's insurance, applying for a social security number and identifying a means of transportation.
- The host institution provides new employee orientation and a qualified mentor teacher to each visiting educator.
- The host institution pays the visiting teacher a salary and benefits commensurate with the teacher's level of education attainment and officially recognized prior teaching experience in accordance with the host district's salary schedule and any bargaining unit requirements.
- The host institution reimburses the teacher for the costs of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (commonly known as SEVIS) fees and J-1 visa fees.
- The host institution assists the new visiting teacher with all activities related to securing the Ohio Visiting International Teacher License, including background checks, setting up an OH|ID account,

- securing an Ohio educator identification number and completing the online application for the license.
- The host institution supports the attendance of the first-year visiting teacher at a one-day professional development and networking workshop hosted by the Department in mid-October.
- The host institution provides the visiting teacher with active support throughout the duration of the stay and maintains an open line of communication with the Department.

### TEACHER ASSISTANCE FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OF TAIWAN

The Ministry of Education provides the following support to its visiting international teachers:

- Predeparture training program, which all visiting teachers must complete before they leave Taiwan.
- One-time reimbursement of round-trip airfare to and from the United States airport nearest to each teacher's assigned community (Up to USD \$1,530).
- Monthly living and housing stipend (USD \$1,200 per month).
- One-time Mandarin teaching materials stipend (USD \$300).

The Ohio Visiting International Teacher Program is critical to the success of Ohio's students. These important cross-cultural exchanges expose students to a global economy while preparing them to be world citizens.

### PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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