



January 5, 2024

Exchange Visiting Teachers from Spain Program Agreement

Introduction

The Exchange Visiting Teachers from Spain (EVTS) Program is an exciting venture between the Iowa Department of Education (Department) and the Ministry of Education and Culture of Spain (MECS). The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the two educational organizations in April 2008.

The EVTS program was created to mitigate a shortage of qualified Spanish teachers in the state. The program provides local school districts and accredited nonpublic schools with the opportunity to fill vacant Spanish positions. With this program, Iowa school systems have the option of recruiting highly qualified Spanish educators for a period of up to three years. Visiting teachers from Spain are certified Spanish language educators with at least two years of experience. Local school districts and accredited nonpublic schools may hire visiting teachers in accordance with all other local policies in terms of salary scale, licensure, and local system requirements.

The EVTS program in Iowa is overseen by the Department and adheres to the conditions and regulations of the U.S. Department of State's J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. This program provides foreign teachers with the opportunity to teach in accredited U.S. elementary and secondary schools, learn and practice U.S. teaching methods, engage in rich cross-cultural experiences and bring an international perspective to U.S. classrooms. The purpose of the U.S. Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program is to promote cultural and educational exchange between citizens of the United States and those of other countries. The program provides foreign nationals with opportunities to participate in exchange programs in the United States and then return home to share their experiences.

Conditions and Requirements for Exchange Visiting Teachers in Iowa

All Iowa Accredited District and Nonpublic School Administrators (Administrators) and Exchange Visiting Teachers (EVTs) **should carefully read the following program requirements and initial to indicate their understanding of each requirement** and assured compliance with them at all times. These agreement obligations protect EVT's, ensure the well-being of EVT's (J-1 visa holders), and satisfy U.S. Department of State and Homeland Security regulations.

- a. Exchange Visiting Teachers will be placed under contract in guaranteed, year-long, full-time positions and be paid the same salary that districts and schools would pay any other teacher, commensurate with their level of educational attainment and years of documented prior service in both the United States (if any) and abroad, and based on the local salary scale. An initial one-year contract can be followed by contract renewals of one or two years if all parties agree, and based on a positive annual teacher evaluation. EVT's should receive the same amount of sick/personal leave as other teachers in the district or school. In districts or schools where collective bargaining agreements (unions) are in place for all teachers, compensation and benefits for EVT's must comply with the terms of those agreements. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**

- b. To ensure compliance with federal J-1 visa regulations, districts and schools will not request an EVT to teach any subject not approved by the Iowa Department of Education (“Sponsor”) for the duration of the entire school year. The district/school guarantees that the position will not be eliminated due to budgetary cuts, reduction in force, tax levy failure or other factors which result in adverse changes in district/school finances and staffing levels. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- c. To ensure compliance with federal J-1 visa regulations and to meet the purpose of the program, districts and schools are committed to offer annual contracts to EVT’s for up to 3 years (with the option to extend an additional two years). Failure to comply may result in immediate removal from the program, suspension, and being reported to the federal program at the U.S. Department of State. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- d. To ensure compliance with federal J-1 visa regulations and to meet the purpose of the program, EVT’s are committed to meeting the purpose of the program for up to 3 years, and will then return to their home country. Failure to comply will result in immediate removal from the program, suspension, and being reported to the federal program at the U.S. Department of State. **(Exchange visitors)**
- e. To ensure compliance with federal J-1 visa regulations and to meet the purpose of the program, EVT’s commit to depart the United States at the conclusion of their program. Failure to comply may result in immediate removal from the program, suspension, and being reported to the federal program at the U.S. Department of State. To ensure compliance with federal J-1 visa regulations and to meet the purpose of the program, EVT’s will not apply for a waiver or make inquiries about changing teaching licenses during their participation of the program. Until the teacher fulfills the purpose of the program, which includes completion in the program and returning to their home country, applying for and obtaining a waiver or change in teaching license will be considered a change of the intention to meet the purpose of the program. Failure to comply may result in immediate removal from the program, suspension, and being reported to the federal program at the U.S. Department of State. **(Exchange visitors)**
- f. Contracts offered to EVT’s must ensure adequate due process and intervention safeguards if their performance falls into an unsatisfactory status or if there is an allegation of misconduct. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- g. Districts and schools will ensure safe and sanitary working conditions for EVT’s that are conducive to teaching and learning at all times. The Sponsor will visit the EVT after the EVT begins teaching to confirm that the working conditions are as specified, and will visit the school at least one more time during the school year, while school is in session. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- h. Each EVT must have the following types and minimum amounts of insurance coverage required by the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Homeland Security, and the Iowa Department of Education at all times, beginning on the day the EVT arrives in the United States, through their last day in the country:
 - a. Employee health insurance
 - b. Medical evacuation insurance (minimum of \$50,000 coverage)
 - c. Repatriation of remains insurance (minimum of \$25,000 coverage)
 - d. A deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness. **(Exchange visitors)**
- i. Districts and schools will ensure that EVT’s teaching load is always appropriate and manageable and that adequate time for planning and preparation is built into the EVT’s daily schedules. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- j. EVT’s are required to attend the Iowa Department of Education’s orientation as required by the U.S. Department of State’s J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor Program. **(Exchange visitors)**

- k. Districts and schools will help the EVT with numerous tasks associated with settling in, such as applying for a social security number, opening bank accounts, locating and furnishing an apartment, buying and insuring a car, etc. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- l. EVT's will receive scheduled mentoring provided by the district or school, with trained mentors who will regularly observe and work with the EVT over the course of the entire school year. The mentoring program should emulate the mentoring that is received by other first-year teachers in the district or school. **(Districts and/or accredited schools, Exchange visitors)**
- m. Districts and schools will deduct applicable federal, state, and local income taxes, union dues, etc., from EVT's pay just as they would for any other teacher. However, per the U.S. IRS Publication titled Alien Liability for Social Security and Medicare Taxes of Foreign Teachers, Foreign Researchers, and Other Foreign Professionals, which details an exemption for nonresident aliens who are temporarily living and working in the United States under authority of a J-1 visa, districts and schools will not deduct FICA (i.e., Medicare and Social Security) taxes while the EVT is working under contract as a visiting educator during their first two calendar years in the U.S. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- n. If a new teacher orientation is held or professional development is provided prior to the start of classes, the EVT should be included. If a stipend for these events is paid to the regular teaching staff, the EVT must also be given the same compensation. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- o. Districts and schools will allow EVT's to attend the Iowa World Language Association (IWLA) conference in the fall. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- p. EVT's acknowledge that Iowa's Spanish Exchange Visiting Teacher Program is, first and foremost, a cross-cultural program designed to increase cultural understanding on the part of all local and foreign program participants. Additionally, EVT's will participate in the required, two-way cross-cultural exchange activities with a school in their country of origin and cultural sharing activities with the greater district or school community as required by the U.S. Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program. Finally, each EVT must submit an end-of-year report to the Iowa Department of Education detailing their high-quality, cross-cultural exchange activities and experiences, which is also required by the federal government. Failure to comply with all required cross-cultural exchange activities may result in immediate removal of the program and the teaching license will be void. **(Exchange visitors)**
- q. EVT's acknowledge that the purpose of the U.S. Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program is to promote cultural and educational exchange between citizens of the United States and those of other countries. The program provides foreign nationals with opportunities to participate in exchange programs in the United States and then return home to share their experiences. Exchange Visiting Teachers commit to comply with the purpose of the program for up to 3 years. **(Exchange visitors)**
- r. Districts, schools, and regular teaching staff will immediately report to the Iowa Department of Education any infraction of the law or educator code of conduct that is allegedly committed by an EVT. Districts, schools, and the Sponsor will ensure that EVT's receive due process in the event an alleged violation of the law or educator code of conduct occurs. **(Districts and/or accredited schools)**
- s. EVT's will immediately report to the Iowa Department of Education any issue or incident relevant to their teaching position and position as an exchange visiting teacher. **(Exchange visitors)**
- t. When leaving and entering the country, EVT's must have updated DS-2019 forms. These forms must be signed every six months to a year for all EVT's and family members. EVT's commit to ensuring the forms are up to date prior to leaving the country. **(Exchange visitors)**

Iowa Exchange Visiting Teacher Program Acceptance

Exchange Visiting Teacher Acknowledgement

As the Exchange Visiting Teacher, by signing this document, I certify that I acknowledge and accept the conditions and requirements for participating in Iowa's Exchange Visiting Teachers Program and will ensure compliance at all times. I have carefully read this Agreement and understand that failure to comply with any of the conditions or requirements necessary for meeting the purpose of the program indicates that the purpose for participating in the program may have changed, therefore, I will face immediate removal from the program. This document serves as acknowledgment of the Exchange Visiting Teacher's commitment to meet the purpose of the program.

EVT Printed Name: _____

EVT Email: _____

EVT Signature: _____ Date: _____

Iowa Accredited District and Accredited Nonpublic School Administrator Acknowledgment

As the Administrator for the district/school listed below, by signing this document I certify that I acknowledge and accept the conditions and requirements for my district/school to participate in Iowa's Exchange Visiting Teachers from Spain Program and will ensure compliance at all times. I have carefully read this Agreement and understand that failure to comply with any of the conditions or requirements necessary for meeting the purpose of the program indicates that the purpose for participating in the program may have changed, therefore, the district/school will face immediate removal from the program. This document serves as acknowledgment of the Administrator's commitment to meet the purpose of the program.

District or School Name: _____

District or School Address: _____

Administrator Printed Name: _____

Administrator Email: _____

Administrator Signature: _____ Date: _____

Sponsoring Institution: Iowa Department of Education

Authorized Official: Stefanie Wager, Responsible Officer, EVTS Program

An initialed and signed copy of this agreement must be submitted by mail or email no later than June 30.

Stefanie Wager

Responsible Officer, EVTS Program
Iowa Department of Education, Grimes Building
400 E 14th St
Des Moines, IA 50319
Phone: 515-419-2876
Email: stefanie.wager@iowa.gov