



J-1 Sponsor Checklist

Use this checklist to compare sponsors side-by-side.

BridgeUSA Designation

- ☐ Confirm the sponsor appears in the BridgeUSA's official [Sponsor Search](#) database
- ☐ Verify their designation covers the "Teacher" program category
- ☐ Check for any geographic restrictions on their designation

Compliance Track Record

- ☐ Ask how many reportable incidents occurred and how each was reported and resolved
- ☐ Confirm their SEVIS record management procedures, including status updates, extensions, and end-of-program reporting

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Teacher Eligibility

- ☐ Confirm teachers hold a degree equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's in education or their teaching subject
- ☐ Confirm whether credential evaluation happens before or after candidate presentation
- ☐ Ask how teaching experience is verified beyond a resume (references, documentation, direct school contact)
- ☐ Confirm at least two years of teaching experience per candidate
- ☐ Ask what English proficiency assessments are used (test scores, interviews, teaching demonstrations)
- ☐ Confirm background and character screening practices for both home country and U.S. standards
- ☐ Does the sponsor understand your district's goals?
- ☐ Does the sponsor have international teachers that align with your cultural exchange vision?

State Certification Alignment

- ☐ Ask which states the provider has placement experience in
- ☐ Confirm how they verify alignment with your state's specific certification requirements
- ☐ Ask what support they offer if a teacher needs added credentialing after arrival
- ☐ How does the sponsor determine qualifying credential evaluations for their states?

Program Support

- ☐ Confirm what pre-arrival documentation and coordination your school will receive
- ☐ Ask what housing and transportation assistance the provider offers
- ☐ Confirm ongoing support channels: emergency contacts, regular check-ins, issue escalation
- ☐ Ask about cultural integration resources beyond baseline compliance activities

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Track Record and References

- ☐ Request testimonials from host schools, principals, and past exchange visitors
- ☐ Ask for teacher retention rate (percentage completing a full program), how many were district related and exchange participant related
- ☐ Request contact information for other schools who've worked with the provider

Before You Sign

- ☐ Request a service agreement outlining provider and school responsibilities plus escalation procedures
- ☐ Designate one primary school contact for provider communication
- ☐ Schedule regular check-ins for the first year of the partnership
- ☐ Confirm placement timeline against your school year start date (typically 3–6 months from engagement to arrival)

Save this checklist and bring it to every conversation with a potential partner. It keeps the evaluation consistent, no matter how polished the sales pitch is.

Notes