



School District #22

Homestay Manual

2010/2011

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I. Introduction

Welcome and Thank You

Thank you for becoming a member of the International Student Program family! Your role as a Host Family is a vitally important one. You are the primary caregiver and support system for an international student who has made the significant decision to move to Canada to study and learn about Canadian culture.

This experience will be rewarding. Students can bring so much to your home and your family. This is a wonderful chance to experience another culture and a different way of life. See this as an opportunity to not only share your culture and experiences, but to learn about someone else's.

The most important thing to remember is that everyone in School District #22 is here to help make your experience the best it can be. This means that if you ever have any questions or concerns, you should not hesitate to ask. We have Homestay Coordinators (HSC), International Student Programs (ISP) staff, and many others who are all here to make your job that much easier. Don't forget to ask for help when you need it!

International Student Program

The International Student Program in School District #22 exists in all of the secondary schools in the district and a significant number of the elementary schools as well. There are dedicated staff in each of the secondary schools who are there to act as advisors and support for the international students. Most students will become very familiar with these staff members as the international teachers are the student's first point of contact for any school or academic-related questions or concerns.

The ISP is administered out of the School Board Office. This is who deals with the paperwork and supervisory aspects of the program. If you ever have any questions about the program, your first call should be to the International Student Program office at the School Board (250-549-9295).

See attached ISP Contact List

Philosophy

The homestay portion consistently ranks as one of the most important parts of a student's study abroad experience. You are taking in a new member of the family. It is important to recognize that while there may be bumps in the road this can be one of the most worthwhile experiences a family can have. We believe that the experiences and memories the students have with the family will far outlast any classroom activity they might participate in. Be sure to take this to heart and get as much out of the experience as you can.

You have taken on the responsibility of looking after this child's welfare and aiding in their education. We ask that you treat this child as you would your own child; give them the love, support, and structure that is needed by any child of any culture or background.

While the International Student Program is the legal custodian for the student in Canada (more on that later), you are the primary caregiver. We trust your judgment to do what is right and what is in the best interest of your student. If questions or situations arise where you are not sure of the right path, always feel free to contact your Homestay Coordinator. They are there to help.

Staff

The role of the Homestay Coordinator (HSC) has many facets. The HSC will interview and screen prospective host families. She will place students according to family and student profiles,

ensuring that the match is made to the best of our abilities. Ongoing supervision and support as well as mediation and conflict resolution are also significant portions of the HSC's responsibilities. Essentially, you can rely on the HSC to be there for you if you have any questions, concerns, or just want to talk about the experience.

The HSC will also act as a support network for the students directly. They will be encouraged to call or email their HSC with any questions or concerns. Often, you might find that the HSC hears things before you do. This is normal and the HSC will do everything she can to facilitate the lines of communication between host families and students.

Generally speaking, our Homestay Coordinators work with specific secondary schools as listed below. If you are unsure of your coordinator please contact the ISP main office and they will advise you (250-549-9295).

Janice Foster, Homestay Coordinator 250-306-0290

jfoster@mliesl.com

Jeanine London, Homestay Coordinator 250-549-4866

jlondon@mliesl.com

II. Program Basics

Room/Facility Set Up

In order to be a host family, you are required to provide the following for your student:

- a private room
- a bed, complete with suitable bedding
- a dresser (or place to store clothing and items)
- a desk, chair, and lamp
- access to bathroom and bathing facilities, including towels
- access to laundry facilities
- adequate heat, light, and ventilation
- access to the home at all times by providing a key or access code
- internet access

Host Family Expectations

Additional services that the host family is to provide:

- Three meals per day, seven days per week. Adequate supplies of various food groups and snacks need to be available at all times.
- Meet reasonable transportation needs including airport transfers, occasional social outings or to sports events, lessons, or doctor's appointments. Families are encouraged to familiarize students with public transportation (where available) and soliciting rides with other families participating in similar events.
- Provide support and assistance where emergency or health situations arise. If situation is serious, please ensure the HSC and the ISP office are kept informed.
- In conjunction with the HSC, make short term arrangements for the supervision and accommodation of the international student if the host family needs to be away.
- Assist student in obtaining and completing paperwork on time. This might include health care and immigration documents.
- Access to various Canadian cultural experiences and family outings.
- Support and supervision as needed to assist in the student's academic success. This includes supervision of homework, reviewing assignments and report cards, and, for ESL students, practicing English.
- Holding your student to the same rules and expectation that you hold your own children to. There should not be a separate set of rules for your student as there is for your children, unless dictated by age-appropriateness.
- While you are requested to provide support to help students achieve academically, School District 22 staff will take responsibility when there are academic problems. Please contact your homestay coordinator if you have concerns about academic problems.

Expectations of the Student

The student is expected to adhere to the rules and regulations outlined in the Student Participation Agreement and the Homestay Participation Agreement (see appendices for samples).

Screening Process

All families are required to go through a stringent screening process to become host families for the International Student Program.

Placement and Matching

Every effort is made to appropriately match students and families. Students complete a profile form when they apply to the Vernon School District International Student Program outlining

interests, hobbies, and preferences. Based on the Homestay Coordinators' knowledge of the host family she will then place the student.

Please note that every effort is made to accommodate both the family's and the student's wishes but it is not always possible to meet each and every request. Therefore, the HSC's are trusted to use their judgement and experience to prioritize the most important qualities on both sides. If the host family has any questions or concerns about the matching process, they are encouraged to contact their HSC directly for more information.

Custodianship

Unless the international student has family in the Okanagan who will act as custodian, Dave Lee, the ISP Principal will be named as custodian of all students in the International Student Program.

A custodianship document is a notarized declaration signed by the custodian in Canada (the agency will also have completed a similar document in the home country which is signed by the natural family). The custodianship declaration states that adequate arrangements have been made for the custodian in Canada to act in place of a parent in times of emergency, such as when medical attention or intervention is required. For younger children, a broader declaration may be required. Broad declarations must state that the custodian is not only responsible in times of emergency but also for day-to-day care and supervision.

In the event that someone needs to make an emergency decision on behalf of a minor child in the custody of School District #22, every effort should be made to seek Dave Lee's authorization or at least inform Dave of the situation. Should Dave not be reachable, the host families are trusted to make decisions in the best interest of their students. Should advice or direction be needed, the HSC or any administrator from the ISP can be contacted.

Homestay Fees

Homestay fees are paid by the student to the ISP office. Please note the monthly fees paid by students includes both homestay costs paid to families and monitoring fees paid to coordinators. Fees are paid to cover the costs associated with hosting the student, including full access to home facilities (bedroom, common space, etc.), meals, reasonable transportation within the community, and daily and ongoing support of student. Homestay fees are not income, remuneration, or compensation for services provided. Income taxes are not charged on the fees.

Payments are made at mid-month by direct deposit. Host families are encouraged to complete a direct deposit bank form. This will facilitate the transfer of funds.

Please note that in the event of student moves, fee payments may need to be adjusted. Discuss this with your HSC in the event of a mid-month move of your student.

Conflicts with Students and Hosts

Families are encouraged to use their own mediation and discussion skills to manage any problems or conflicts that arise with an international student. Often if families treat the situation as they would an issue within their natural family, the problems are easily resolved. Communication is the most important part of establishing good relationships. However, should the host family or student struggle with the rules and expectations, please involve the HSC to assist with liaising and mediating. Every effort will be made to keep the student in the family and to resolve the issue to mutual satisfaction. It is possible that a viable solution cannot be found, in which case the student will be moved to another host family.

Student Moves

Every effort is made to ensure students and families are a good match from the beginning. However, not every match will be ideal. In the event that students need to be moved, a determination will be made by the ISP administration or the HSC (in conjunction with the family and the student) to make a decision in the best interest of everyone involved. Depending on the nature of the move, the student may be moved at the end of the month or may be moved immediately. Host family feedback on this issue is always welcome.

It is important for host families to note that student moves may be initiated for any number of reasons, some of which may have nothing to do with the effort and work you have done as a family.

Should the host family wish to discuss the option of removing a student from their home, the first step is to contact the HSC to discuss the matter.

III. Airport Pick-up and Drop-off

Airport pick-up and drop -off at the during the program is the responsibility of the host family, the cost of which is included in the regular homestay fees. If for any reason you are unable to transport your student to the airport please contact your homestay coordinator and they will arrange for transport. The cost of this transport will be deducted from the homestay fees.

Travel information for the student is often a last minute thing. Rest assured you will be provided with the relevant travel details once it is received. **Be sure you have the flight number and confirm the flight information before departing for the airport.** Be aware that often international flights can be delayed and that there is always a possibility that a student might miss a connection. Every effort is made to ensure delays are communicated to you. It is important to remember that while the delays may cause you a slight inconvenience, it is certainly more stressful and overwhelming for your young student.

Use the airport arrival as an opportunity to build a strong relationship with your student by welcoming them to Canada. If you have young children in your family, having them create a welcome sign with which to greet your student is a wonderful idea.

Lost Luggage

As many of us have experienced, arriving at your destination without your luggage can be extremely stressful. It is especially difficult for a student who is in unfamiliar surroundings and perhaps doesn't have a strong command of the English language. In the event that your student's luggage does not arrive, please assist in liaising with the airline to file the appropriate paperwork. The vast majority of the time, luggage is merely delayed and will be retrieved within a couple of days. In this instance the student will need access to basic necessities.

IV. First Few Days

As you can probably imagine, the first 24-72 hours are not going to be an indication of your student's behaviour and personality. This period of adjustment will be a time where you need to be flexible, patient, and understanding.

Call Home

Once you have reached home, the first thing your student needs to do is call home to let them know he/she has arrived safely. We ask that you kindly allow the student to make a brief call home on your line, even if he/she hasn't obtained a calling card yet. If you wish, you could pick up an inexpensive calling card at the convenience store and have it ready for your student's arrival to save time and inconvenience.

Jet Lag

Many of our students are traveling through multiple time zones and on multiple flights to arrive in Vernon. Depending on their point of origin, it is possible that the student has been in transit for more than 24 hours. It is important to balance rest time to recover from the exhaustion of travel and the need to get on the local time zone. The adjustment will be easier if your student adjusts his/her watch to local time right away. Food, lots of water, and fresh air and exercise will also assist in the adjustment.

It is not recommended that those recovering from jet lag sleep for long periods of time during the day as this only prolongs the jet lag effects. Maintaining a normal schedule as soon as possible is vital to the transition.

Theories suggest that it can take one day for every hour of adjustment a body must make. Don't plan too many activities for the day of arrival. By the time the student completes the travel formalities, arrives at your home, has a tour of your home and meets your family this will be quite a lot for one day. Perhaps save the welcome festivities for day two.

Unpacking

You may want to provide your student with some time to unpack and explain where to store extra luggage or off-season clothing. Also assist in finding a secure location for important items like passport, plane tickets, insurance documents, and money.

House Tour

Please do a thorough tour of your home – both inside and out. Show students how to use appliances, security measures, and discuss common and personal spaces. Students may not know simple things such as having the shower curtain inside the shower stall, or how to use an alarm system or garage door keypad. *It may feel silly, but it is not possible to over-communicate with your student.*

Things to consider:

- tap water is safe to drink
- not everything can or should be flushed down the toilet
- shoes off when entering the home
- recycling – what is recycled, what isn't
- thermostat or temperature adjustments
- computer access
- fire extinguisher
- emergency phone numbers (911 is a North American phenomenon)
- entertainment equipment
- kitchen appliances, including stove, oven, microwave, dishwasher

Discuss things like meal times (does your family eat together or is it everyone for themselves), meal preparation, and clean up. Most students will carry a lunch to school. The traditional North American bagged lunch may not be familiar to your student so it is suggested you review common lunch items and ask your student for input on what he/she would like to have for lunch.

Establishing Rules and Expectations

Once your student has settled in, you will want to begin by outlining your household rules and expectations. It is very important during this process that you leave nothing unsaid. Language and cultural barriers can pose challenges as you establish your rules. **Remember: don't assume anything! It is always better to overstate things than to leave things implied.**

Many of our students come from family homes that are very different than our own. It is possible they have never cooked for themselves, done laundry, or even been expected to make their beds. Others might be accustomed to various chores. You are able to establish your own expectations for your home – just be sure that you adequately explain these expectations and, if needed, provide training and support for the first while.

Some general rules and guidelines which are strongly recommended by the ISP are:

- Students must let you know where they are at all times.
- Students are expected to perform some light chores or assist with tasks in the house, as suitable for your family.
- Students should ask ahead of time for rides to special events and appointments.
- Students must attend school every day. If the student is ill, the host family should inform the school office of the excused absence.
- Immigration regulations prohibit international students from holding jobs.

Culture Shock

Your student will face many challenges as he/she adjusts to the new surroundings. Culture shock is a phenomenon which affects most people who move into a new culture, and that there is no easy definition or solution. Awareness, understanding, and patience are vitally important.

The initial phase of culture shock is usually called the “honeymoon phase”. This is when the student is quite excited and happy to be in their new surroundings. Everything is new and thrilling.

Once the novelty wears off, the student may go through a phase of disenchantment, where everything is dissatisfactory. At this point, the student will often compare everything to home (food, friends, environment, etc) and will voice unhappiness with everything, even things they had previously enjoyed. It is very important to remember that this is a normal process of adjustment and does not necessarily reflect a rejection of you and your family and your life. Patience and understanding will greatly assist the student in coming through this difficult phase.

One of the best countermeasures to this dissatisfaction is for the student to keep busy. Students who spend significant amounts of time online, in their rooms, or isolated from people will find the transition much more difficult than those who immediately begin to interact with others. Finding an activity of interest will greatly facilitate this transition.

Following the disenchantment phase, the student will often return to a more balanced perspective. This can take some time. Each student goes through the culture shock process differently. Just be sure to be aware, be supportive, and ask for help if you are concerned.

V. Communication with Your Student

The most important thing to remember is that you cannot over-communicate with your student. Don't assume anything. Discuss everything – even things you believe to be common knowledge. Especially if your student has a low level of English comprehension, it is very important to ensure understanding of the concepts. Be sure to ask your student to repeat important things back to you in his own words to ensure he understands. You will also find yourself looking for creative ways to convey concepts. Using different words, charades, and all manner of communication tools will become commonplace.

Privacy

Standards of privacy and personal space can vary significantly across cultures. Explain to your student the idea of personal space in the household. It often helps to explain that you will respect his personal bedroom space by knocking prior to entering and ask that he do the same in return.

It can also be helpful to be aware that both cultures and individuals can have different standards of personal space. Watch your student to see how he/she interacts with others and monitor whether or not this warrants a discussion. Some people are able to sense a change in personal space and some are not.

Rules

Generally speaking, it should suffice just to talk about household rules with your student. However, depending on the level of English language comprehension, you may find it useful to put some basic rules in writing. Often for a student, rereading a list results in quicker understanding than hearing them spoken. It also makes it easier to revisit the rules should further discussion be warranted.

Family Events and Activities

You are encouraged to include your student as a member of the family for various activities and outings. Everything from family visits, to sporting events, to grocery shopping are all events that your student might be interested in trying. The best part of the international student experience is often the homestay, often due largely in part to the simple day-to-day activities.

Discuss with your student his desired level of participation in family activities. Generally, students do like to participate in family events; your student will be the best source of information on this. For the first few weeks, you may need to gently encourage the student's active participation. However, once he settles in, you will likely find he needs no encouragement.

Some students may not seek a high level of involvement. Some students are here to focus on academics and will spend the bulk of their time studying. Others prefer more individual time. Use your judgment to evaluate the student's state of mind and seek further advice if you are concerned about the amount of time the student spends alone.

Asking for Help

The Homestay Coordinators and the staff of the ISP are all here to help you with any questions or concerns you might have. Please involve your HSC as soon as you can in any situation. Don't feel that you shouldn't "bother" the HSC – this is her job. Often, questions and concerns can be easily addressed.

VI. Homestay Guidelines

The following are some general guidelines which are recommended by the International Student Program.

Curfews

The ISP encourages families to explore the option of having an established curfew for the students in their care. It is important to discuss this with the student and explain the reasoning for this. It is possible that your student is used to having more freedom than you are comfortable with, or perhaps he will choose this time to test boundaries. A well-established and mutually-agreed upon curfew will provide everyone with some peace of mind. Recommended curfew times are: 10 pm weekdays and midnight on weekends.

Schedule

Go over a sample weekly schedule with your student, being sure to touch on “busy” or “peak” times in the day. For example, if everyone gets up in the morning at the same time and must prepare for work and school by sharing a common bathroom, be sure to find out what time your student will need to get ready and how that will fit into your established routine. It is possible that all members of the family may have to slightly adjust their schedule. Discussing the process can help alleviate stress.

If you have regularly scheduled lessons, events, or appointments, be sure to include your student and let him know how this will affect him. For example, a hockey game might result in the family dinner hour being delayed.

Chores and Duties

Your student is encouraged to actively participate in the household duties required of any family member. Please be aware that many of our students may come from homes where they are not required nor expected to do any chores. This may be an adjustment for your student. Explaining how your family differs from theirs and why it is this way will help. Training, supervision, and support through the first few tasks may also make the transition easier.

Each family will divide tasks differently and this is certainly the prerogative of the family. However, it is important that the student be treated as a full member of the family. This means that, generally-speaking, your international student should not be expected to perform tasks and chores that would not be expected of your own children. The flip side to this is you are not expected to be your student’s servant. Your student is a member of the family – not a guest.

Phone

Immediately upon arrival, you should establish telephone expectations, especially with regards to international calls. It is reasonable for a student to want to phone home on a regular basis; it is important to find the most logical and accessible way for calls to be made.

If you have an internet package, Skype is a valuable software package which allows you to make calls to other Skype users for free, or to regular phone numbers for a very low per-minute rate. This is an ideal set up as students can create their own accounts. Visit www.skype.com for more information.

If you have a cable phone (through Shaw Cable, or some similar) investigate whether or not a set number of international minutes are included. If so, and you do not currently use them, perhaps it would be acceptable for the student to use some of the free minutes. If you choose this option, be sure to monitor usage so as not to exceed any limits you might have.

Cell phone and direct dialling are STRONGLY DISCOURAGED for international calls. Please be aware that these methods can come with hefty charges. The ISP will not be responsible for collecting monies owed on phones.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are a way of life for teenagers. If your student would like to obtain a local cell phone during his stay, please assist with appropriate research. It is likely that students will need to get "pay as you go" phones as they are not eligible for a credit rating here in Canada. **It is not recommended that you sign for a contract on behalf of your student.** The ISP cannot be responsible for collecting money from students on cell phone bill, etc.

Computer

Many students will arrive with laptops in tow. Should your student have his own computer, consider how he might gain access to the internet. Can you provide a router for wireless access? This means is quite inexpensive and will greatly facilitate his communication with home.

If the student does not bring his own computer, be sure to discuss usage of a family computer. Who needs to use it? When? Are there time limits? Also be sure to discuss suitable games, programs, and web surfing.

Meal Times/Family Expectations

Discuss with your student what your family expectations for meal times are. Do you always sit down together to eat? Are meals often at varied times depending on schedules? Be sure to explain how your family works and what your expectations of your student are with regards to meal times.

School Lunch Preparation

Are students expected to prepare their own lunches to carry to school? Many students will have very little – if any – experience at making bag lunches. Be sure to go over the typical bag lunch contents and discuss with your student what appeals to them for lunch. Host families are responsible for providing suitable foods for carrying to school for lunch. If the student chooses to buy lunch at school, he will need to pay for this himself.

Laundry

Do you want your student to do his own laundry or do you prefer to do all the laundry yourself? Many students will not be familiar with laundry facilities and will require instruction and supervision as they begin this process. Be sure to establish guidelines to avoid confusion and misuse of appliances.

Sleepovers

As they make new friends, students may wish to stay overnight at a friend's house. The judgment as to suitability of this is left to the discretion of the host family. Please be aware that as the legal custodians of minor children while they are in Canada, we are asking you to use your good judgment and parenting skills in order to ensure the student is well-cared for. Please ensure you are aware where your student is at all times and that he is being supervised by a responsible adult for the duration of the visit.

Babysitting

While students are not in your home to act as care-givers for other children, it is acceptable to make arrangements with your student to do some temporary, occasional, short-term supervision. Be sure your student is comfortable and responsible enough to handle this.

Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking

International students are often held to higher standards of behaviour than local students due to the fact they are visiting and away from their families and social networks. As students adjust to the Canadian way of life, they will come across some of the more dangerous aspects of social life. As your student begins to make friends and go out, be sure to discuss how to make the right decisions and what is expected of the student should he find himself at a party where drugs or alcohol are present. We do not want them to be home every weekend for the duration of their stay, but we need them to follow the rules in order to continue their participation in the program.

The use of drugs is strictly prohibited and may result in removal of the student from the program. All students sign a participation agreement when they arrive which outlines the severity of the consequences for infractions such as this. If you become aware of usage (or even have strong suspicions) please discuss this immediately with your Homestay Coordinator who will contact the Principal of the ISP. It is vitally important to the safety and well-being of the student that the administration is made aware of infractions as soon as possible.

Underage use of alcohol is prohibited by law and may result in removal of the student from the program. As we are all aware, the use of alcohol is not uncommon in the social scene of the high school student. Please discuss with your student the realities of high school parties and social outings and discuss with them the consequences of their decisions. It is important to note that our international students will have a range of experience (or inexperience) with alcohol. In some cultures, teenagers are permitted to consume reasonable amounts of alcohol at family-related events. Other students may come from very conservative cultures where alcohol is not available in their country. Have a conversation with the student regarding alcohol and your own lifestyle. You should not have to change your own choices, but may want to discuss it.

Smoking is discouraged in the International Student Program; however some students may be of legal age to choose to smoke. If you permit the child to smoke outside your home, provide a location and rules about disposing of the remnants. Should you prefer to be matched with a student who does not smoke, please address this with your Homestay Coordinator.

Driving

Even those students in possession of a driver's license from their home countries are not permitted to drive while in Canada. Exceptions may be made for students over 18 years of age. Any requests for exemptions must be made by the student through Mr. Dave Lee, Principal of the International Student Program and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the student's natural family and host family.

Host families are strongly discouraged from permitting their students to drive while in the program. The School District and International Program will not be held responsible for any damage done through the illegal operation of vehicles and other motorized equipment.

VII. School and International Student Program

Attendance

All students are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Should your student be ill and unable to attend school, it is your responsibility to contact the school for an excused absence. Students are not permitted to skip classes or show repeated unexcused absences.

The schools will hold the international students to the same attendance standards as the local students. Should attendance prove to be an ongoing issue, please be sure to discuss this with your HSC or the Principal of the ISP.

Rarely, a student may need to miss extended periods of time due to international travel (e.g. return home due to a family illness). Please contact the ISP office if this becomes a consideration.

Expectations

In school, international students are held to the same standards as local students. This means they are expected to adhere to all rules and regulations as outlined in the school handbook and discussed during the student orientation when the student arrives. However, due to language barriers, it may be useful for you to review the school handbook with your student at home.

Academic Performance

International education systems have varying standards for grading and marking. It may take your student some time to adjust to the way marks are assigned in Canada. If your student shows concern over his results, please encourage him to discuss it with his teachers (the ESL teacher is always a good place to start).

Homework

Students are expected to complete all homework assignments. Please consult with your student and provide assistance and supervision as needed.

Report Cards

Report cards will be made available at the school and will be forwarded to the agent in the student's home country within 2 to 3 weeks of the report cards being issued.

Tutors

Tutors are available through the schools as needed. There are a number of options available including peer tutors (at little or no cost) and professional tutors (who charge a pre-established hourly rate). Should your student wish a tutor, please contact the ISP for more information.

VIII. Money

Spending Money

Students are encouraged to arrive with access to some pocket money from their first day. It could be they will need to exchange currency or get to a bank.

Lending Money

The administration of the ISP strongly discourages host families from lending money to their students for any reasons. If you have concerns over the financial resources of your student, please discuss this with your HSC. In the event that you choose to lend money to your student please be aware that the ISP will not be able to assist with the collection of the funds.

Banking

Long term students are well-served to open a bank account in Canada. It would be helpful if you could assist the student with the initial visit to the bank to open the account. It is often ideal for you to choose the bank you use personally as you have an established relationship with them. Please note you should not be directly involved in the banking (no co-signing or shared accounts) and the student should be personally responsible for the account and the money.

In many cases, the student and his natural parents will set up an account in the home country with a bank card which can operate here in Canada. This allows the natural parent to monitor spending and regulate access to additional needed funds.

Employment

International students are prohibited by law from gaining employment while in Canada to study. They may not earn income during their stay as a secondary student.

Volunteer Opportunities

Students are encouraged to volunteer for school events, clubs, or community-based events. This is an excellent way to get involved in community life and to meet others with common interests.

“Extras”

Students are directed to budget \$150 - \$250 per month for the extras that are not covered by the fees they have paid for their program. This money should cover social outings with friends, gifts, and additional personal supplies not a part of the homestay agreement. Some students will arrive on strict budgets and have very little disposable income. Other students will have access to large pools of disposable income. If you are concerned about your student's spending habits, please discuss this with your HSC.

IX. Travel

With the Host Family

Families who wish to take their student on short trips during the student's stay are encouraged to do so. This is a wonderful opportunity for the student to meet more people and see other parts of our country. In the event you do choose to travel together, be sure to inform the student's natural family (preferably in writing) and also your HSC.

If you are traveling within Canada (by car) you will not require any official permission from the student's natural family. However, it is recommended that you communicate any travel plans to the student's family.

If you are crossing international borders (by car or otherwise), you will require official permission from the student's natural family. This should be a written permission with a signature attached. The letter should include dates of travel, destination, and with whom the child will be traveling. A letter from the ISP office can also be helpful as the Principal of the ISP is typically the student's legal custodian in Canada.

Without the Host Family

Should your student choose to travel independently during his program in SD #22, he is required to inform his host family and the HSC and demonstrate he has the permission of his natural family to make the journey. You are encouraged to communicate directly with the student's natural family to ensure the family is well aware of the situation.

Proposed Overnight Travel Unaccompanied by an Adult

All travel overnight must include an adult as well as the permission of the natural parent. Travel without an adult is not permitted.

School Trips

If the student is participating in an international school or group trip of some kind (perhaps a tournament or band trip), we ask that you assist in facilitating the necessary permission letters required as listed above in the "With the Host Family" section.

Field trips and permission forms for such daytrips can be signed by the host family. If you are not comfortable with signing these forms, please contact your HSC to discuss alternatives.

Missing School

In the event that school will be missed for any travel, it is the student's responsibility to inform the school and all teachers. The student must obtain all missed assignments and complete all work as originally scheduled.

Students are encouraged to plan travel to miss as little school time as possible, given that education is the primary reason for their visit to Canada.

X. Study Permits, Visas, and Other Documentation

Study Permit

A Study Permit is a document issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada that allows someone who is not a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada to study in Canada. This is not a travel document; it is the document that dictates how long the student can remain in Canada.

The Study Permit is required for those who are pursuing a program of study that is longer than 180 days, or six months. Those studying for less than 180 days are not required to obtain a Study Permit.

Canadian Visas

A Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) or Visa, as it is commonly known, is a document issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada that allows someone who is not a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada to enter the country. The Visa can expire while the student is in Canada, but must be renewed if the student leaves Canada and plans to return.

Not every country requires a Visa. Some students will have Visas, and some will not. The important thing to note is if a student requires a Visa, he would not be permitted to enter Canada without it. Therefore, if there is a Visa in your student's passport, he is then from a country that requires a Visa. If there is no Visa in his passport, he is from a country that does not require it.

Other Visas

If students choose to travel to another country during their visit to Canada, she may require an additional visa for admission to that country. Please note that Visa regulations vary by country and what applies to Canadian travelers may not be the same for citizens of other countries. Please contact the ISP administration office for more information.

Renewing Visas and Study Permits

Ideally, students will have sufficient paperwork for the entirety of their program of study. However, it is possible that your student will need to renew a Visa or Study Permit while he is in Canada. If this becomes necessary, please feel free to contact the ISP for information and guidance.

XI. Student Departure

As your student's program draws to a close, he will likely look to his departure with mixed emotions: excited to be going home but sad to be leaving his new friends and family.

Last Few Days

Please do what you can to assist your student in collecting all of his items to ensure he leaves nothing behind. Well before the departure, it is important to assess the amount of luggage to be taken home. Airlines have very restrictive luggage limits which can be costly if exceeded. It is likely cheaper to ship some items separately from the flight.

Any textbooks borrowed from the school will need to be returned. There can be additional charges to the student if textbooks are not returned.

Be sure your student gets a good chance to revisit any favourite haunts and take any last-minute pictures to take home to share with family. A last farewell dinner with your family is a nice way to send the student off.

Date of Departure

Generally speaking, the students have paid homestay fees until the end of the final month of their program (e.g. if school ends on June 25, their homestay fees are paid until June 30). If a student departs prior to the end of the month by a few days, the fees are not normally adjusted.

If the student wishes to stay beyond the end of the last month of the program, this should be discussed with the HSC. Please do not make separate monetary arrangements with the student; speak with your HSC or the ISP office instead and they can facilitate this process. It is not permissible for a student to remain in an SD #22 host family if the student is not registered in an on-going program.

Students who wish to remain in homestay for the summer must be registered in the summer program with SD #22 or complete a special summer homestay request form. Homestay families must complete this form with the international student to help ensure additional fees are charged. ISP will pay for approved summer homestay once fees have been received. Any student wishing to remain in the homestay program during the summer months must make this request in advance and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Exceptions are made for those continuing on in the program or who can demonstrate a lack of other options.

Airport Departures

The final airport drop-off is a part of the homestay responsibility. It is a good idea to confirm in advance all flights (most students will have connections that need to be made). Online check-in for flights, where available, can save some time at the airport.

You are encouraged to walk your student into the airport and wait while the student completes his baggage check. Being there to assist with any last-minute problems or questions can greatly reduce the departure stress for the student. Reviewing the transit procedures if the student is connecting through Calgary, Vancouver, Toronto or another large airport is also helpful. Most airport websites have maps to show the general processes.

School District #22

Student Participation Agreement

In order to participate in the International Student Program at School District #22 in British Columbia, Canada, students must read and sign this agreement. By signing this agreement, students acknowledge that they understand the rules and regulations that govern the program.

The following represents the rules and guidelines for participation in the International Student Program at School District #22. Each student is expected to be aware of all the rules and regulations as outlined in the information below, as well as the rules and regulations provided by the school.

- Students will abide by all the laws of Canada, the province of British Columbia, and all municipal bylaws. If a student is found to be in violation of any law, the student will be removed from the program and will be sent home. Please note that depending on the nature of the violation, the student may also have to face the consequences within the Canadian legal system.
- More specifically, the unlawful use of drugs will not be tolerated. The use of alcohol by students under the age of 19 is strictly prohibited. (Students who are 19 or older are strongly discouraged from the use of alcohol for the duration of their program.) SD #22 maintains a strict policy of dismissing students violating the drug and alcohol rules.
- Students will become familiar with the rules and regulations governing the school they are attending. Students will adhere to all rules established by the school. Students who are in violation of any school rules and regulations will be disciplined by the school administration, and, if warranted, by the management of the International Student Program. Repeated and flagrant violation of school rules may result in the student being removed from the program and sent home.
- In conjunction with the homestay family, students will learn the rules of their homestay and will obey and respect the rules for the duration of their stay in that home. Concerns or questions regarding the rules of the homestay family should first be discussed with the family. If this is not sufficient to resolve the issue, the student will bring the issue to the attention of the Homestay Coordinator. The administration of the International Student Program may also become involved should it be warranted.
- Students are expected to attend all classes and educational programs provided. All absences must be explained by a note from the homestay adult and unexplained absences may lead to dismissal from the program. Homework and assignments are to be completed on time.
- English is the primary language of the schools and should be used at all times.
- Travel outside the Okanagan Valley is not permitted unless accompanied and supervised by an adult who is at least 25 years of age. All travel must be authorized by the homestay family and the International Student Program administration.

Permission in writing from the students' parents must be provided before SD#22 consent for travel will be granted.

- Students in the International Student Program are not permitted to drive a car for the duration of the stay in the program. (This includes students who hold valid driver's permits in their home country.)
- The International Student Program administration reserve the right to terminate the student's participation on the program at any time should it be found that the student has severely or flagrantly disregarded the program rules, or if it is determined that the student's mental or physical health is in jeopardy.

Discipline and Consequences

Rule-breaking within the school will be dealt with first by the school administration. Should the involvement of the International Student Program administration be warranted, they will be called to participate.

Where the school or International Student Program administration are involved in discussions regarding rule violations, communications will be sent to the student's agent and family to inform them of the situation. Students will also be encouraged to discuss the matter with their family back home.

If a student breaks any of the rules of the International Student Program, the first step will be a meeting with the Principal of the International Student Program. During this meeting, the student and admin will discuss the situation and behavior. Students will be given the opportunity to present their side of the story and to explain the events and the situation.

As a result of this meeting, there may be ensuing consequences. The types of punishment will vary depending on the exact nature of the infraction and can range from verbal reprimand to suspension from school. Please note in the event of severe and/or repeated rule breaking, more serious consequences may be implemented, which could result in the student's dismissal from the program.

I, _____, understand the above-listed rules and regulations of the International Student Program and agree to follow all the listed rules and adhere to the general spirit of the International Student Program. I understand that my participation in the program can be terminated at any point by the administration of the program.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Reviewed by Staff Member: _____

Copy to Student, to school file, and to ISP file