

INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS

POLICY:

The Board recognizes the value of cultural and academic exchanges. Such experiences provide international exchange students with a balanced understanding of our country and provide U.S. students with a broad world perspective.

Students visiting our state for a short stay (B-2 visa), such as a vacation, visit with friends or family, or part of a recognized international visitation program, may not enroll in school in the district. However, with prior written permission from the school, these students may be allowed to visit classrooms and attend school-sponsored events.

International exchange students who come to the U.S. for a long-term visit with the intention of attending school on a J-1 visa through a recognized international exchange program, may register to attend school in the district. The Lake Stevens School District will not host students on a F-1 student visa.

The District will admit such international exchange students when admission does not adversely impact the instructional program of the district.

The Superintendent is directed to develop procedures including but not limited to the number of international exchange students the District will admit, selection of international exchange organizations, timing of placement process, district expectations of international exchange organizations, and school expectations for international exchange students.

Legal References: Chapter 19.166 RCW International Student Exchange
RCW 28A.300.240 International Student Exchange

WSSDA Management Resources: 2009 - June Issue

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PROCEDURES:

Definitions

For purposes of this procedure, an international exchange student is defined as a student who has been issued a J-1 visa through a recognized international exchange organization in order to enroll in a high school in the district. A recognized international exchange or visit organization is an organization registered with the Secretary of State's Office in Washington State.

Short Stay Visit

International students who are visiting our state on a B-2 visa may not enroll in school. If they are visiting on a recognized international exchange or visitor program, they may visit classrooms and attend school-sponsored events under the following conditions:

- A. Must contact the school district at least three months prior to the requested visit,
- B. Obtain written permission from the school.

Number of International Exchange Students

The District determines the number of international exchange students for placement in each school based on the capacity of the school to integrate the international student in a way that is beneficial for all. The District strives to find an acceptable number that recognizes the needs and capacities of schools and the opportunities provided by exchange programs.

Selection of International Exchange Organizations

- A. The District will only accept students from international exchange organizations registered with the Office of the Secretary of State of Washington State. (A list of such organizations is available on the website of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction at www.k12.wa.us); and
- B. The District reserves the right to work with international exchange organizations that have proven their commitment to high standards and responsiveness to student and district needs.

Timing of Placement Process

- A. An international exchange organization wishing to enroll an international exchange student in a school in the district will submit to the district a request which provides a complete program description, including the name, address, and telephone number of the local representative. The Lake Stevens School District must receive the application by May 1, but no sooner than April 1, for students planning to begin school during first semester the following fall or by October 1 for students planning to begin school for second semester. We may or may not be able to accept students for only second semester.
- B. The district staff, in consultation with the appropriate building principal, will review the application. The District will provide notification of approval or denial in writing to the program representative in a timely manner, but no later than June 1 for the first semester and November 1 for the second semester.
- C. The District may, at its discretion, choose to accommodate a late applicant because federal J-1 Visa regulations permit the placement of exchange students up to August 31 of each year.

District Expectations of International Exchange Organizations

Each international exchange organization must:

- A. For the District:
 - 1. Each year, obtain written school enrollment authorization for student placements before confirming a placement with a host family;
 - 2. Follow district policy on placement timing and requirements;
 - 3. Maintain a qualified and trained local representative with responsibility for each student including ongoing communication with the school and responding to school needs;
 - 4. Provide the name, address, and telephone number of the local program representative who will provide emergency, advisory, and liaison services to the District;
 - 5. Notify the District as soon as student and host family match-ups are confirmed and provide the name, address, and telephone number of the student's host family to the District; and
 - 6. Forward the student's cumulative records to the District prior to the approval for admission. The cumulative record will include transcripts and the student academic records in English.
- B. For the Host Family:
 - 1. Arrange host family placements before exchange students leave their home country;

2. Personally interview and screen all potential host families, matching student and family interests and personalities; and
3. Maintain ongoing contact with the host family and student.

C. For the Student:

1. Screen and place exchange students based on their academic interests and abilities and not knowingly place exchange students based solely on their athletic abilities;
2. Prepare exchange students, including providing an orientation to the U.S., Washington State, the school, and academic expectations;
3. Ensure that the student will receive adequate financial support for the duration of his/her stay in the district;
4. Ensure that exchange students have medical and accident insurance that meets or exceeds U.S. Department of State guidelines;
5. Ensure that exchange students arrive in their host homes and school placements by the first day of classes;
6. Monitor student progress during the school year and respond to issues or problems as they develop;
7. Provide any necessary student tutorial help and support services. In the event that tutoring/ESL or special accommodations are needed, the organization must make arrangements and accept financial responsibility for such services; and
8. Inform the student of student activity costs and/or fees as required by the District.

School Expectations for International Exchange Students

It is the responsibility of the international exchange organization to ensure that the international exchange student is fully aware of the expectations of the school that has accepted placement of that student.

Each international exchange student must:

- A. Be qualified to participate in regular classes and maintain a typical schedule. This means the student must have an acceptable level of proficiency in the English language, a commitment to treat coursework as important, and the social skills to enjoy participation in social and extra-curricular activities;
- B. Understand that eligibility of international exchange students to participate in extracurricular athletics, music, forensics, and other such activities may be limited and is determined by the rules and regulations of the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association;
- C. Attain passing grades by the end of the first semester;
- D. Know and follow all school policies and rules and federal regulations related to the visa;

- E. Pay all normal expenses, including standard course and extra-curricular activity fees;
- F. Present required paperwork, including visa information, medical records, transcripts, and host family information, to the school staff member designated to coordinate the international exchange program; and
- G. Understand that enrollment eligibility for international exchange students in public schools is for one school year only.
- H. International exchange students will not be allowed to earn a Lake Stevens High School diploma. They may, however, be allowed to participate in graduation exercises.

School Responsibilities

- A. Schools are expected to provide international exchange students with all rights and privileges accorded to resident students — except the right to a diploma; and
- B. The school will make every effort to integrate international exchange students into the school's social fabric. In turn, schools will encourage international exchange students to participate enthusiastically in school activities, to make friends, to make a personal contribution to the school, and to help spread the word about their country and themselves, informally and by making presentations in classes and to community groups and talking to media when asked.