

Administrative Procedure 6003 MR1
International Student Program

1. **Definition of international students**

International students are students who have temporarily moved from outside Canada to study in British Columbia for a specific period of time and do not meet residency requirements of Section 82 of the *School Act* and Section 16 of the *School Regulation*. This includes:

- a) students who come to the Comox Valley as part of a reciprocal exchange arranged through an approved student exchange agency;
- b) students who make private or personal arrangements to study in the Comox Valley, usually through family members;
- c) students who arrange for their studies through international agents or language *schools*; and
- a) students who live with one or more parents who are here to support their educational goals.

The school district assumes responsibility for the provision of curriculum and school-related activity and other aspects of a student's care such as homestay and medical insurance.

2. **Program Levels**

International students are accepted for specific periods of time, provided the students meet program requirements and their placement in school does not result in the exclusion or displacement of any resident student.

Adult international students (19 years of age or older) may be considered for enrolment in a program in the district and will be subject to the same or similar conditions governing enrolment of all other international students in the district.

3. **Funding Eligibility**

- a) International students will generally be required to pay fees to cover the cost of tuition and other services. Some exemptions may apply as defined by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), the Ministry of Education and the Comox Valley School District. The Comox Valley Board of Education will review applications of students to determine the purpose for which the student or family has established its residence in the community and will charge International fees to those students who are ineligible for regular funding.
- b) International students may be enrolled in district schools without having to pay international student fees if they fall into one (1) of the following categories:
 - i. The student is attending school on a reciprocal and equal exchange. This exchange must be on a “one in/one out” ratio with the same district for the same length of time, with the exchange completed within two (2) years.
 - ii. The student is a refugee claimant with an acknowledgement letter from the Immigration and Refugee Board and whose parent(s) are ordinarily resident in British Columbia.
 - iii. The student is a child of a parent(s) who has been admitted to Canada for permanent residence and can substantiate this with documentation from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), and whose parent(s) is ordinarily resident in British Columbia.
 - iv. The student is a child of a parent(s) who has been admitted for temporary residence in Canada, who holds a study permit valid for a term of one (1) year or more, who is attending an accredited public or post-secondary institution in a degree or diploma program, and who is resident in British Columbia. Eligibility for funding also exists for full time attendance in a degree program at an accredited private post-secondary institution.
 - v. The student is a child of a parent(s) who has been admitted for temporary residence in Canada, who holds a study permit valid for a term of two (2) years or more, who is first attending an EQA (Education Quality Assurance)

designated institution to complete an English as a Second Language (ESL) Program of no more than one (1) year in duration and then has proof of acceptance into a degree or diploma program (as defined in *d*) above).

- vi. The student is a child of a parent(s) who has been admitted for temporary residence in Canada, who holds a Work Permit valid for a term of one (1) year or more, and who is resident in British Columbia. The Work Permit must specify an employer and the request for enrollment of the child must be accompanied by the Letter of Employment, a copy of the Labour Market Opinion document that was submitted to Citizenship and Immigration Canada to obtain the Work Permit, and a pay receipt issued by the employer. In addition, the authorized work identified on the Work Permit must be a salaried/paid position of at least minimum wage as defined in British Columbia. The Work Permit holder must meet residency requirements as outlined by the Ministry of Education for funding purposes which means the parent must provide evidence of residency in BC and must maintain an ongoing presence (ordinarily resident status) in BC. No open Work Permits will be accepted in support of enrollment of a student as a non-fee paying student in the Comox Valley School District.”
 - vii. The student is a child of a parent(s) who has been admitted as a temporary resident in Canada under a teacher exchange program.
 - viii. The student is a child of a parent(s) who is carrying out official duties as diplomatic or consular official and is able to substantiate this with a Foreign Representative Acceptance Counterfoil in the parent(s) passport.
 - ix. The student is a child who has a legal guardian as defined by the Ministry of Education through the *Divorce Act*, the *Family Relations Act*, the *Infants Act*, and the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* who is ordinarily resident in BC.
- c) Students who have been admitted as fee paying international students and whose parents receive their Permanent Resident status, Study Permit, or Work Permit prior to the funding snapshot date of September 30, will receive a full refund of the tuition fee.
 - d) Students who have been admitted as fee paying international students and whose parents receive their Permanent Resident status, Study Permit, or Work Permit AFTER September 30, will receive no refund. All tuition fees for the year are to be paid in full.

- e) In some circumstances, additional exemptions may be considered by the Superintendent or designate.

4. **Citizenship and Immigration Canada Permits – Study, Work or Visit**

The applicant must meet Citizenship and Immigration Canada's requirements and will need to obtain the required permits from the Canadian embassy or consulate, high commission, or Canadian education centre in their country of origin, prior to travelling to Canada.

5. **Application Process**

The school district will register international students (including exchange students) after the student has met application requirements and has paid all assessed fees. The natural parents/guardians will sign an agreement with the school district.

All protocols are detailed in the Host Family Orientation Package.

6. **Language Proficiency and Preparation**

Students are admitted to the program for either the cultural or immersion experience or for studies leading to secondary school graduation.

a) English Language Skills

An assessment of each student's English language proficiency will take place prior to commencing classes. This assessment may include formal aural, oral and written tests, student report cards and an on-site assessment of listening, speaking, reading, writing and fluency.

b) Preparing for Study in the Comox Valley

Prospective international students, especially those intending to graduate here, will be encouraged to enrol in the S.D. 71 summer short course for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners prior to their period of study in the Comox Valley.

These students will be charged a program fee and meet all conditions that apply to enrolment of international students.

7. School, Grade or Program Placement

The school district reserves the right to place international students at the appropriate school and grade level, after considering factors such as program suitability, previous academic performance, English proficiency, provincial requirements, and space in the course or program.

International students will take English as a Second Language (ESL) courses based on their need, with the balance of their program being based on provincial requirements and student interests.

The district and school will complete all necessary programming and documentation, in consultation with the student and their natural parents.

Annual enrolment projections, school capacity and staffing decisions shall support the growth and sustainability of the International Student Program.

8. Medical and Hospital Insurance

All international students are required to carry health insurance – private or public. All permanent and temporary residents of British Columbia, including international students, who reside here for longer than one (1) year are required to have medical insurance entitling them to medical and hospital benefits through the Medical Services Plan of BC (MSP).

The International Program staff will ensure students either obtain private health insurance or obtain coverage through MSP. Because there is a three (3) month waiting period before they can apply for MSP, the ISP will arrange private medical coverage for this interim period.

9. Homestay Program

The International Student Program selects host parents through a rigorous screening process to ensure they meet the program's standards. The program staff constantly monitor host families and provide multi-cultural support for each of the international program students. Host parents are expected to have the student become a fully integrated member of the family; provide a safe, secure, caring and inclusive home; and treat the international student as a family member. Host parents will sign an agreement with the school district.

All protocols are detailed in the Host Family Orientation Package.

10. Custodian

The school district is the custodian of each international student. As custodian of the student, we are responsible for their safety. Our expectations, guidelines and final decisions show consistency between the school and the homestay.

All protocols are detailed in the Host Family Orientation Package.

11. Fees

The International Program will review and set tuition fees annually in consultation with the school district. There are fees for administration – application, homestay placement, medical, activity – tuition and monthly homestay. The fee structure will be competitive within the context of BC provincial trends.

12. Refunds

- (a) Students will receive a full refund (less application fees) if Canadian Immigration does not approve a student authorization. All requests must include the formal letter of refusal from Canadian Immigration and the original letter of acceptance issued by the International Student Program.
- (b) Students who withdraw after the June 30 payment deadline and prior to school startup will receive a 45% refund of the tuition fee and 100% refund of any prepaid host family monthly fees.
- (c) The above (a and b) also applies to students who apply for the year already in progress, have a different start date than September 1, and who withdraw in the two (2) months prior to their specific start date.
- (d) Students leaving the program for whatever reason after their school start date will forfeit the entire program fee.
- (e) Students who are asked to withdraw due to a violation of school or program rules will forfeit the entire program fee.
- (f) Students who satisfy residency status before September 30, will receive a full refund of tuition fees.

13. Fees for students in an approved exchange program

An appropriate administrative fee will be assessed to each outgoing and incoming student to cover any or all of the expenses of the required inter-jurisdictional correspondence, application process, homestay placement process and student activity program.

14. Student Conduct

Management expects that all students will abide by school district policies and the school's code of conduct, as well as by the terms and conditions of permits issued to them by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. A student participation agreement will form part of the conditions of the program and will be signed by the student.

A breach of this agreement may result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the program.

All protocols are detailed in the Host Family Orientation Package.