



Homestay Guidebook

Rules, Regulations & Suggestions

Information for
Students and Host Families



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Introduction

Wild Rose School Division (WRSD) is committed to providing international students with a well-structured and established host family program in each of the communities it serves. Students visiting us from abroad will receive:

- a loving, caring and nurturing living environment,
- a supportive environment which promotes emotional, academic, cultural and social development,
- an integrated environment, promoting becoming a valued member of the community, and
- a true Canadian living experience.

Our host families will have an opportunity to enjoy both cultural integration and diversity, and will fulfil our international students' need for family living and values.

Message to Host Families

Your participation and function is integral to the success of WRSD's International Student Services program. You have been selected by WRSD to provide our international students with a positive Canadian living experience. We thank you for your caring and love for children from all parts of the world.

Your work is important to us and we value your contribution in educating our international friends.

Message to International Students

You will be living with families within our community that have been carefully selected by WRSD. We want you to take this opportunity to enjoy a Canadian living experience. Having the support of all partners in your education, be it your parents, your teachers or school staff, your host family or the extended community, will make this journey successful and enjoyable.

Become part of your host family unit and have a great experience in WRSD!



Rules & Regulations

Academic Program, Performance Evaluation and Support

Your program has been designed to meet your personal academic goals. Your ability and your previous results have been taken into consideration in preparing your individual plan of education. We will help you be successful. We are willing to adjust your program according to your growth and ability to grasp the concepts. To discuss your program make an appointment to see your school counselor.

If you need additional help in a course, ask your teacher, host family, or WRSD International Student Services staff to arrange a tutor for you. You will be responsible for paying for the tutoring service.

Attendance at School

All excusable absences should be verified and supported by the Host Family. Any time a student is ill, has a medical or legal appointment, or is unable to get to school due to bad weather, it is the Host Family's responsibility to contact the school.

Changing Host Families

It is possible that the student and the Host Family are unable to make their relationship work. We will be there to assist both Host Families and Students in resolving their differences. If resolution is not feasible, a change in the Host Family will be made within two weeks. In the event of open conflict, an immediate change will be recommended. A demand for change for unreasonable reasons will not be entertained.

Contact Information

With regard to academic needs, contact the counselor at your school. For questions regarding fees, homestay program, visa extension, transportation, or help with emotional adjustments, contact:

Bev Hammond, Deputy Superintendent
Ph: (403) 845-3376 Email: bhammond@wrsd.ca



Curfews

Students must return home by the times established by the Host Family. Students must keep the Host Family informed about their whereabouts and follow the courtesy rule of phoning if delayed. Students should make every effort to return within 15 minutes of the said time. Students are expected to keep and be punctual for all their appointments. Canadian culture expects and supports actual time. For example, a 12:00 p.m. doctor's appointment is *not* 12:20 p.m.!

Guidelines for Curfews:

- 10:00 p.m. on weekdays. Families may extend this to 10:30 p.m. for students over the age of 16. For students under the age of 16, the Host Family will establish the time according to their family schedule. It is recommended all students under the age of 16 should be home no later than 9:00 p.m.
- 1:00 a.m. on weekends is reasonable. The student and the Host Family must come to an agreement on this issue. Sleepovers are discouraged and not supported by WRSD. The Host Family is responsible for ensuring the safe return of the student to their residence. Failure by the student to inform the Host Family of his/her whereabouts could result in the student's removal from the program.

Drug and Alcohol Use/ Smoking

The use of **forbidden substances** is prohibited in WRSD host family program. WRSD follows a "zero tolerance" policy on the use of drugs.

Smoking is not permitted within the Host Family residence. Students under the age of 18 are prohibited from purchasing cigarettes.

Underage use of **alcohol** in the host family program or International Student Services program is strictly prohibited. Students under the age of 18 are prohibited from purchasing alcohol. Students will face consequences from both Canadian legal authorities and WRSD. Students may face removal from the program.



Students who are 18 years of age or older are considered adults under Canadian law in the Province of Alberta. The Canadian legal system follows certain rules with respect to the consumption of alcohol and behavior related to the effects of consuming alcohol. "Being under the influence" is not a defense for any criminal activity. Drinking within the WRSD host family residence is prohibited. Intoxication and irresponsible behavior resulting from intoxication will result in removal from the program. Adult students consuming alcohol away from the host family residence must obey Canadian laws, follow proper conduct, must not accept rides from those who have been consuming alcohol, must adhere to rules established by the Host Family, and must maintain social and cultural dignity. The student is fully responsible for their safety and consequences related to consumption of alcohol. WRSD does not support consumption of alcohol by students over the age of 18 while in the WRSD program.

English as a Second Language Support

Schools will be providing the student with ESL Support when required. It is not an indication of the student's ability to learn. The student is in a new country and, for the first time, experiencing living with the English language everyday. In school, the student should make every effort to speak English. When students visit friends from their native country, they can enjoy conversing in their native language. Students should listen to English music, watch English television (sparingly) and engage in conversations in English within the community. This will help the student develop their English skills and will reduce hesitation about speaking the language.

Extending Study Permit and Visitor Visa

Students visiting Canada for 180 days or less do not need a study permit. Students wishing to extend their stay past 180 days must travel to Canada with a study permit.

Extending a study permit and visitor visa is the student's responsibility. The process of how to extend the student's stay in Canada is explained in the kit. The kit should be ordered two months prior to the expiration date and the process should be started 30 days prior to the expiration date of the student's study permit. To order the kit, contact the nearest Canadian Embassy, high commission or consulate or consult the Citizenship &



Immigration Canada Website at: www.cic.gc.ca; or from Inside of Canada, call: 1-888-242-2100.

Inviting Parents of Students to visit WRSD

Students have the freedom to invite their parents to visit WRSD in Alberta, Canada. WRSD will issue a letter of invitation on the student's request. WRSD invites all parents to attend the graduation ceremony for their children.

Joining Sports Teams, Clubs and Intramural Activities

International students are encouraged to join sports teams, fitness clubs and intramural sports. Participation in sports is an excellent way to be part of the school spirit, learn and live the English language, and to build friendships.

Living within the Laws of Canada

The Canadian legal system is fair and a partner in your education. Respect for the Canadian legal system will make your stay in Canada pleasant. Breaking Canadian laws will result in the student's removal from the program and a return to the student's native country will be imminent.

If you have questions about Canadian legal rules, start by asking your Host Family or your teachers. The best way to stay out of trouble is to take the time to understand your actions and the consequences of your actions. We are here to help you.

Medical Insurance / Medical Emergencies

All international students must have medical insurance. The student may purchase medical coverage through WRSD covering prescriptions, emergency dental, family transportation, trips to USA, air ambulance, emergency medical evacuation and repatriation. If insurance is not purchased through WRSD, the student must provide details of their insurance coverage, including the name and address of the insurance company, the policy number, and the coverage dates.



Host Families will assist the student in arranging doctor's visits and will be responsible for assisting the student in getting medical assistance. In the case of a medical emergency requiring surgery or hospitalization, the Host Family must contact the WRSD administrator, Bev Hammond, to follow protocol rules of informing the parents and giving approval for medical treatments.

Respecting the Rights of Others

The key to success of any program is that all members respect the rights of others in a responsible way. WRSD's International Student Services department is here to help and support you in your journey.

Seeking Help

It is okay to make mistakes in your language.

It is okay to ask for help with your academics.

It is okay to say no to others if they want you to do something you are not comfortable with.

It is okay to experience trouble understanding all that you are being taught.

It is okay to feel sad and miss your family, your country, and your native foods.

It is okay to feel a need for friends and to have friends.

It is okay to ask for help from your Host Family, school staff, and/or WRSD International Student Services staff.

Transportation to School

Students have three ways to get to their designated school:

- Walk to school if Host Family residence is within 2.4 km.
- Take the school bus if the Host Family residence is further than 2.4 km.
- Take a ride to and from school from your Host Family. The student should arrange this independently with their Host Family.

Winter busing is provided to all students.



Validation of Marks

WRSD will assist students with the transferring of grades, certificates, letters of validation, and the process of authenticating their Canadian grades. Students from Brazil and Mexico need their grades authenticated by their respective consulates. The process and procedure of revalidating the grades will be explained at the completion of the program. Students are responsible for the cost of this service.

Foreign transcripts are revalidated and students receive Alberta credits for the work completed abroad. WRSD will access each transcript on its own merit and follow rules established by Alberta Learning.

Some Suggestions for Success

Student

- Follow rules.
- Respect your Host parents.
- Listen and respond.
- Ask for help.
- Assist in doing household chores.
- Be punctual and keep your word.
- Do your work at school and complete your homework.
- Respect your Host Family's home as you would respect your own.
- Never fight or argue. Explain and discuss. It is always better to hear the reasoning before responding.
- Eat your meals. Do not eat junk food.
- Join sports and other extra-curricular activities.
- Be respectful of your Host Family's privacy.
- Never take anything that does not belong to you.
- Discuss your success and challenges at school with your Host Family.
- Treat your Host Family with respect, love and understanding and we assure that you will have a great stay in Canada!

Host Families

- Provide care to your international student as you would a member of your family.
- Follow a healthy lifestyle - meals should be served or made available



at set times. Prepare nutritious meals, eat as a family whenever possible. Make fresh fruits and vegetables a part of your meal.

Some suggestions for choices:

Breakfast: cereal, toast, tea, yogurt, juice, milk, boiled eggs

Lunch: sandwich, fruit snack, juice box

Dinner: meat & vegetables, vegetarian lasagna, rice, noodles, bread, salad, juice or milk

- Respect religious, cultural and social preferences. Animals are not considered clean in many cultures. Household pets should not eat from the plates used for serving food to your international student. To avoid any misunderstanding, have an open and honest discussion about pets with your student.
- Show empathy to your student. Students will go through a variety of emotions. Do not take things personally. If you see signs of extreme depression, contact WRSD.
- Attend student games or performances whenever possible. Attendance by the Host Parents at parent/teacher interviews is mandatory. Provide assistance to help the student with areas of difficulty. If you need to get direction in this regard, contact WRSD's ISS department. You should at all times refrain from criticism of WRSD, their staff and the placement of a student in a program.
- Involve your student in grocery shopping, household duties, etc. Shopping for food is a good way for them to learn English, get familiar with the food choices and help you in making choices for the student.
- Students should be expected to keep their room tidy and participate in cleaning the bathroom they use. Laundry is the student's responsibility. Please provide time and guidance in doing laundry. Students are not responsible for cleaning windows, vacuuming the whole house, cleaning all the toilets, etc. They must have similar duties as other children in the household. Making a cleaning schedule usually helps to cut down on the tension.
- Help students to keep in regular contact with their parents and/or guardians abroad. Students should be encouraged to discuss their academic and social performance with their parents.
- Make the home a happy and welcoming environment. Rules should be reasonable, consequences fair and love abundant. Never threaten a



student with violence or abusive language.

- Students have the right to exercise religious freedom. Please assist them in maintaining their belief system.
- Contact WRSD ISS department for any assistance. We respect your privacy and individuality. We trust your home will be a wonderful place for our international students. It is recommended that Host Families refrain from entering the student's bedroom unannounced. A method should be developed for waking up the student in the morning. An alarm clock should be provided to each student in your home.
- Have fun! Laugh! Enjoy stories from abroad. Ask and explain about similarities and differences. Build lifelong friendships. Good luck!

