

Guidelines for Foreign Exchange Students

Updated February 2019

Greenville County Schools actively participates in and encourages cultural experiences with foreign exchange agencies and students. The following procedures must be followed in order to consider and place foreign exchange students as quickly as possible. Foreign exchange students are placed by lottery, based on the number of slots available. Currently, each high school in the district is allotted five slots for foreign exchange students. Should more than five students apply at a high school, the lottery system will be applied. No more than three foreign exchange student applications will be accepted from any one agency.

Expectations of the Exchange Agency

1. The exchange agency must be listed on the *Council on Standards for International Education Travel* (CSIET). www.csiet.org. Status with CSIET will be verified by GCSD.
2. The exchange agency must have a local representative (living in or near the community) to coordinate, supervise and monitor the placement and progress of foreign exchange students.
3. The exchange agency must provide the following information. This information must be input into the [Foreign Exchange Application](http://www.shorturl.at/bBNV4) (www.shorturl.at/bBNV4) All documents must be scanned and uploaded to this application. **The application window is April 15th-June 1st each year for first semester and year long placements and between October 15-December 1st for second semester placements.**
 - a. Personal letter from the student detailing why they are interested in the experience and what they ultimately hope to get from the experience
 - b. Demographic information about the student
 - c. Written evidence of English proficiency of the student on a recognized language assessment test (ELTIS), and the score must be at least a 232 score. ELTIS is an English Language Test for international students designed to measure English Language Proficiency. Other national language assessment results, along with analysis of English proficiency may also be accepted.
 - d. Signed verification of student's age.
 - e. Statement indicating the students will be in attendance the full semester/year
 - f. Statement stating the student has not completed requirements for graduation, received a diploma or degree from high school in their country.
 - g. Proof that the student has sufficient language ability to function in an American classroom: Students must be intermediate English speakers with a proven English Placement Score of: Slate 4.0/TOEFL Jr 750, TOEFL iBT 52, IELTS 6.0 or higher
 - h. Original transcript of student's high school grades, with English translation.



- i. Necessary medical history, including proof of immunization as required by the school district, any medical/physical restrictions
 - j. Copy of the J1-Visa (J-1 visa students have residence in a foreign country to which they plan to return). **Students will need to present this upon arrival at school since Visas are not issued until the student is approved for a slot.** An approved Foreign Exchange program handles their visas and SEVIS documentation. The student does NOT pay tuition to GCSD as long as they reside in Greenville County Schools; they pay the foreign exchange program. These students come temporarily to the United States as visitors/participants in a program that has been approved by the U. S. Information Agency. The program is limited to high school students only.
4. Update contact information each year to ensure communication, changes and additions to procedures are communicated with the appropriate person.

Expectations of Foreign Exchange Students

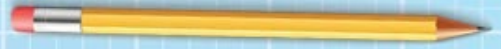
Foreign exchange students should be aware of the following expectations. The foreign exchange agency should communicate these expectations to the student prior to enrollment.

- Foreign exchange students must attend the high school in which their host family is zoned. If a family or Foreign Exchange Agency is unsure of where the student should attend based on the host families address, the "Find Your School" tool can assist you in locating the zoned school <https://public.greenville.k12.sc.us/>
- Foreign Exchange students are not eligible for high school graduation and/or diploma certification. They will not be included in any class ranking list, nor shall a GPA be computed for them.
- Students must be no younger than 15 and no older than 17 when they arrive in the program. Students may turn 18 during the 2nd semester of the school year.
- Students must **not** have graduated from a high school in their home country.
- Students must be motivated and serious about their academics and take the school required courses.
- Exchange students are expected to pay all normal expenses, including standard course and extracurricular activity fees
- Exchange students must be aware that participating in interscholastic athletic teams means they must comply with district and state athletic eligibility regulations, and that many teams require try-outs
- Exchange student's enrollment eligibility will be for **one year only**.
- Exchange students are eligible to participate in athletics as long as they meet the requirements outlined by the SC High School League <http://schsl.org/index.php/foreign-exchange/>
- Exchange students and host families are expected to know and follow all school policies and rules. All students are issued a handbook upon enrollment in a GCSD school

Greenville County Schools
Building a Better
GRADUATE



**Graduation
Plus** Creating Career and
College Ready Students



Foreign Exchange Student Placement

The following process/procedures are applied when placing foreign exchange students:

- Foreign exchange agencies apply between April 15th and June 30th for year long and first semester placements and between October 15-December 15 for second semester placements.
- The Academics Department reviews applications and all supporting documents for compliance and notifies the foreign exchange agency
- In cases where more than five students have applied for admittance into a school, a lottery process may be applied
- All students are enrolled in the 10th grade due to testing requirements in the 11th grade. Exceptions to this rule may be made on a limited basis.