

Educational Program

Series 600

Policy Title: Foreign Students

Code No. 604.8

NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Greene County High School will work toward a goal of 1% of the total student population being comprised of exchange students. Based off this guideline, the high school will strive to have four exchange students per year.

TIMING OF PLACEMENT PROCESS

- The school asks that organizations contact the school each year to indicate an interest in placing exchange students. Exchange organizations should provide schools with advance notice of their intent to place.
- The school is to be notified as soon as Student and Host Family match-ups are confirmed.
- Recognizing the timing of school staffing and resourcing, exchange organizations should submit Student and Host Family applications as early as possible and ideally up to two weeks prior to the school's start date. However, acknowledging the difficulty of securing Host Family commitments, the school will try to accept applications until school starts. (Note: The U.S. State Department federal J-visa regulations permit the placement of exchange students up to August 31 of each year.) It should be noted that time variables are often out of the control of the exchange student and extenuating circumstances do happen.

SELECTING STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

- The school reserves the right to work with exchange organizations that have proven their commitment and responsiveness. This includes the organization having someone within the community (besides the host family) that can be the exchange student's advocate.
- The school will also be open to new organizations that demonstrate a serious commitment to the school and community. This includes the organization having monthly and quarterly personal contact with the student.
- Two exchange students per program maximum.

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Foreign exchange students must meet all of the district entrance requirements including age, place of residence and immunization. Students who are citizens of a foreign country will be considered residents if they meet one of the following requirements:

- a. The student resides with his/her parents(s) or legal guardian;
- b. The student is in the United States with appropriate documentation (Form I-20) from the United States Department of Justice-Immigration and Naturalized Services; or
- c. The student is a participant in a recognized foreign exchange program; and

- d. The student is physically able to attend school and has provided the school district with such proof, including a current TB test.

Each individual student exchange program must:

- Be listed in the most current CSIET Advisory List (for the current list visit www.csiet.org).
- Provide continuing hands-on monitoring and responsiveness - from local representative to national headquarters - including student selection and preparation, selection and screening of host families, ongoing contact with host family and student, and communication with the school and responsiveness to school needs.
- Receive school enrollment authorization for placements each year prior to contacting potential host families - and follow school policy on timing and requirements.
- Screen and prepare exchange students while monitoring their progress during the school year, responding to issues or problems as they develop.
- Arrange host family placements before exchange students leave their home country. Exchange students are expected to be in their host family and school placements by the first day of classes.
- One exchange student per host family. Note: If a student is moved from the original host family to a different host family, latitude of the one exchange student per host family will be considered.
- Personally interview and screen all potential host families, matching student and family interests and personalities.
- Not knowingly place exchange students based on their athletic abilities.
- In the event that tutoring/ESL help is needed, the organization will make arrangements and ensure that the student accepts financial responsibility for it.
- Provide the school with a complete student application which includes the following:
 1. personal letter from the student
 2. detailed information on student and natural family
 3. proof that the student has sufficient language ability to function in an American classroom
 4. original transcript of student's high school grades, with English translation (and this must meet school requirements)
 5. necessary medical history, including proof of immunization as required by the school district (and state of Iowa), any medical/physical restrictions and a recent physical exam with proof of required immunizations. Do to the nature of some countries not having the immunizations required by the state of Iowa, this could cause some exchange students to receive immunizations here in Iowa. The cost of these immunizations does not fall upon the school district.

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS ON J-1 VISA SPONSORSHIPS

- Each exchange student must be qualified to participate in regular classes and maintain a typical schedule - this means 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 extracurricular activities.

- The school appreciates the difficulty of a student's plunge into a different language/culture/institution, but exchange students are expected to attain passing grades by the end of each trimester.
- Exchange students; enrollment eligibility will be for one-year only - exchange students and host families are expected to know and must follow all school policies and rules.
- Exchange students must have medical and accident insurance that meets or exceeds U.S. Department of State guidelines.
- Reportation Insurance is provided by the sponsoring company, it is not the responsibility of the school district.
- International 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 tryouts. *Iowa Code section 256.46 was amended, effective July 1, 2006, to now state that foreign exchange students shall have immediate eligibility to participate "unless undue influence was exerted to place the child for primarily athletic purposes."*
- Exchange students should have zero attendance/behavioral problems while in school.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Students on U.S. State Department-sponsored programs (J-1 visas) generally pay no tuition, but they are expected to pay all normal expenses, including standard course and extra-curricular activity fees. The school has no obligation to provide any special services, tutoring, supplies or equipment.
- International exchange students have all rights and privileges accorded to community students - EXCEPT the right to a diploma.
- The school will make every effort to integrate international exchange students into the school's social fabric. In turn, schools shall 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.

School Programs/Events

- Since there is wide variation of graduation policies in the United States, exchange students will understand that they will not be granted a Greene County High School diploma. Only under extreme circumstances may a student be awarded a high school diploma. Example: Student is from war-torn country and their 1-year stay turns into 2-years because they can not go back to their home country due to the violence/danger there. The exchange student would need to meet the district credit requirements for the basic or regular high school diploma.
- Students will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony (if they desire) and walk with their classmates.

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS OF HOST FAMILIES

The principal must give final approval before any such student can be enrolled. Thus, reserving the right of final approval on all student placements. The following could be reasons for denial by the high school principal, but are not limited to the following:

- The school district *does not* discriminate in regards to marital status. However, if a host couple seeks a divorce and/or separation during a exchange students' predicted stay, this environmental stress *is not* conducive to having an exchange student in the home.
- Major health issues (i.e. host family member diagnosed with cancer, host member has mental health placement, etc...) can be a variable *for not* having an exchange student in the home.
- Prior and/or current removal of exchange student from household by any exchange student sponsoring company.
- Complaints lodged by exchange student/s after they leave. Consideration could be given if there was just a less than ideal placement (i.e. rural family hosting an exchange student from a big city and exchange student could not overcome cultural shock).
- Police Reports that indicate issues and/or criminal activity with the sponsoring host family members.
- Host family members are to refrain from posting negative comments/drama (on any type of social media) regarding the exchange program, exchange student and/or school.

The school needs to be given appropriate notice of any school attendance letters that need to be written for the student upon the close of the school year. These type of letters frequently need to be Notarized. Appropriate notice is a minimum of 24 hours. Inappropriate notice is a host family member arriving to school and demanding a letter being written then and there.

Exchange Program Signature as acknowledgment of this policy and its expectations. This must be signed before any exchange student is accepted by the high school principal.

Signature

Date

Date of Adoption:
January 8, 2014

Legal References (Code of Iowa): § 279.8
(1995).

Date Amended:
February 20, 2019

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February 14, 2024