



## Foreign Exchange Student Enrollment & Eligibility Guidelines

The Birdville Independent School District's foreign exchange program provides students from other countries the opportunity to learn about the history of the United States, the working of our government, and to become more fluent in both the written and spoken English language. Students are encouraged to take an active part in the academic process and to experience the social culture of youth in the BISD.

The following guidelines are provided to assist nationally recognized foreign exchange organizations, foreign exchange students, and host families regarding the requirements and expectations for application, acceptance, and participation as a foreign exchange student in Birdville ISD.

### *I. Foreign Exchange Organizations*

- a. Foreign exchange organizations shall meet the requirements of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) approved list of foreign exchange organizations for the school year in which placement is requested. The CSIET approved list may be found at [www.csiet.org](http://www.csiet.org).
- b. Foreign exchange organizations must be able to bring the student via a J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa, since State law prohibits BISD from issuing an I-20 form for a student to obtain an F-1 Visa. See application requirements.
- c. BISD has obtained a waiver from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to limit the number of foreign exchange students to a maximum of four (4) foreign exchange students per high school per year. Foreign exchange students shall not be permitted to enroll in Shannon High School.
- d. Must arrange host family placements before exchange students leave their home country.
- e. Foreign exchange students who have completed their secondary education in their home school/country **are not eligible** for participation.
- f. Placements will be made on a first come, first served basis.
- g. Application forms and all required documentation must be received by the Director of Counseling Services no earlier than February 1st of each year at 8:00 am central standard time and received no later than August 1st of each year at 4:30 pm central standard time. This includes an official transcript of the student that has been translated into English. Applications received prior to 8:00 am central standard time on February 1st will not be accepted.
- h. Waiting lists will not be maintained to hold a company's or student's request for enrollment. Only completed documentation will be accepted and only if the waiver limit has not been met.
- i. Foreign exchange students will only be accepted for **one calendar year**, and they must be enrolled before the first day of school in the fall semester. Foreign exchange students will not be approved for a single semester.
- j. Foreign exchange organizations need to keep in mind that **a student who has completed the equivalent of his/her home country's high school education, received a diploma or a certification of graduation, or is considered eligible for college or university placement, is not eligible for the foreign exchange program in Birdville ISD.** Falsification of a student record in the regard will result in immediate withdrawal of the student.
- k. If a foreign exchange student is returned to his/her home country or is moved to another district during the school year, no new foreign exchange student will replace the withdrawn student.
- l. Organizations sponsoring foreign exchange students must reapply annually with the district for students to be approved for placement.
- m. Birdville ISD reserves the right to work with any foreign exchange organization based on past experiences to determine whether or not to accept a student from that organization.
- n. Once the student has received a J-1 Visa to attend a BISD school, a copy must be sent to the Director of Counseling Services.

## **II. Host Families**

- a. Host families must be residents of the accepting high school's attendance zone. A foreign exchange student will be withdrawn immediately if the host family falsifies information regarding their home address in an effort to place a student in a high school outside their attendance zone.
- b. Host families must provide proof of residency in the form of a current (within last 30 days) electric bill, gas bill, water bill, or lease agreement.
- c. The host family is responsible for enrolling the student at the high school at which the foreign exchange student has been approved for enrollment and must provide all the required documents for enrollment. A representative from a foreign exchange organization may not enroll the student.

## **III. Foreign Exchange Students**

- a. The foreign exchange student must be between 16 and 18 years of age by September 1 of the school year in which he/she plans to attend a BISD high school.
- b. The foreign exchange student must have been enrolled in high school in his or her home country the semester preceding the exchange.
- c. Foreign exchange students are **not eligible** for high school graduation or a diploma. They will, however, receive a certificate of attendance.
- d. Foreign exchange students will be classified at a level no higher than the 11th grade.
- e. **Foreign exchange students will not be placed in the class ranking.**
- f. A foreign exchange student is required to take a STAAR end of course (EOC) assessment for a course in which he or she is enrolled, and the assessment must be scored. A field is provided to bubble if a student is a foreign exchange student.
- g. Foreign exchange students will take a full course load typical of any other BISD student. Their schedule will include English 3, United States History, GOV/ECO, one science course, one math course, and electives as deemed appropriate.
- h. Foreign exchange students shall not participate in work-based programs.
- i. Coaches and sponsors of extracurricular activities will be responsible for obtaining and evaluating proper credentials to determine a foreign exchange student's eligibility for participation in a UIL activity for which the student expresses interest.
- j. Foreign exchange students are subject to BISD attendance, discipline regulations, Code of Conduct policy and are expected to participate fully in their classes. Students must be in attendance at least 90 percent of days each course is offered to receive credit.
- k. Any cost for student records required by the foreign exchange organization or home country is the responsibility of the foreign exchange student.
- l. The foreign exchange student's transcript prior to registering with Birdville ISD will be evaluated to determine student grade level and courses. The transcript will not be transcribed from the home country into BISD's system.
- m. Foreign exchange students are not eligible to receive free or reduced meals as part of the foreign exchange program.

For further information, please contact:

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