

School District No. 40 International Education Living Arrangement Policy

When considering where their child may reside while attending school in Canada parents are asked to choose between (1) a homestay arranged through the International Education Program or (2) a privately arranged residence.

1. Homestay arranged through the International Education Program

- The student will be placed with an approved Host Family.
- The Host Family contacts our Homestay Manager regarding student behaviour, health and wellness, and attendance at school.
- The head of the Host Family will be the custodial parent for the student at no additional cost to the student.
- The Host Family will have met the conditions to be a host family for the school district including an interview, home inspection and police background check.
- The Host Family parent(s) will be a minimum age of 25 and will be either a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. They may or may not have children of their own in school or in the home.
- The District's International Homestay Program welcomes families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Host Families will speak English with the student and make every effort to use English when the student is present.
- The student room will meet city by-law regulations for safety. (i.e. window, safety lock, smoke detector).
- The student room will be adequately furnished.

Please consider the following **basic** homestay guidelines:

- Students are expected to follow the Host Family's curfews, home rules and guidelines. These may be quite different from what students have experienced elsewhere.
- Students are expected to speak English in the home and with the Host Family members. In some cases, Host Families who speak the student's first language can be arranged. These families will still use English in their homes.
- Students are encouraged to try different foods and be open to sharing family traditions and customs. The meals served in the home may be different from what students are accustomed to.

- Students cannot move from their assigned homestay family without School District Permission.
- Students requesting a homestay change must follow the procedures, including discussing concerns with the Homestay Manager, allowing the program to mediate and communicate with the host family, waiting for a suitable placement to become available, and providing at least one week's notice before the move date. Homestay moves typically occur on the first day of the following month, except in emergency situations.
- The monthly homestay fee covers each month. If a student chooses to travel during a school holiday, the full homestay fee must still be paid.
- Students cannot be absent either partially or completely from their host family's home overnight without permission and approval.
- Students should report any damage and maintenance concerns to their host family or international office immediately and agree to pay for any losses and/or damages because of the student's actions.

**2. Privately Arranged Accommodation
Custodial Parent also referred to as Guardian or Custodian**

- A custodian might charge a fee to be responsible for the student.
- A custodial parent must be appointed by the parents in the home country and the corresponding Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) documents completed and notarized. Two forms are required: one completed by the Custodian and one by the natural parents. Both forms are submitted to CIC and to our office. These are legal documents.
- The legal custodian(s) cannot stop their duties without notifying CIC, the natural parents and our office. The legal custodian remains responsible for the student until new forms are submitted to the appropriate authorities.
- New Westminster School District requires an additional custodial form to be completed. This form is an agreement outlining the responsibilities of being a custodial parent for a minor person (under the age of 19 in BC).
- If the custodian on record changes, the new custodial parent must present themselves to the International Education Program staff to review the responsibilities listed in the additional form mentioned in the line above.
- It is preferred that the custodial parent be the homestay parent. If this is not possible, the appointed custodial parent must live within a reasonable distance to the student for whom they are responsible.
- The custodial parent will be the contact person for school staff to speak with regarding academic progress, attendance, and day-to-day monitoring of the health and well-being of the student for whom they have responsibility.

- The custodial parent **must always be present in Canada**. If the custodial parent leaves Canada for an extended absence, another custodial parent must be appointed according to the regulations listed above.

3. **Unacceptable Living Arrangements**

We expect all our students to have every opportunity for success and to be well guided in their journey to independence and maturity. The teen years can be a tumultuous time for some and, whether they agree or not, adult supervision is essential to their healthy growth and development. Students living without proper adult attention tend to perform poorly at school, are frequently late or absent, and have unattended health issues. This is not what any parents want. We therefore require all our students to be under adult supervision in a parent-like relationship.

Students are not permitted to live in any of the situations described below. Living in one of the following (or similar) living arrangements can and will likely result in dismissal from the International Education Program in New Westminster.

1. Living by themselves (or together with other minor students) In an apartment, basement apartment or home.
2. Living in a separate room in a so-called "Family Hotel". In these situations, the "custodial parent" is simply a name on paper and has no vested interest in the student outside of collecting a fee and occasionally preparing some meals.
3. Living in a "roommate" relationship with an appointed "custodial parent" where the sole purpose of the minor student residing in the residence is monetary.
4. Living so far from school that if expected to use public transportation the student is often late or absent from school.
5. Living with a Host located by the student through internet, newspaper or public bulletin boards where the adults have not presented themselves to the international education office for screening.

These homes and individuals mentioned above have often not completed a police background check and are usually seeking only monetary reimbursement and will not fulfill the responsibilities of a custodial parent of a minor child in their home.

6. Living with a natural parent who leaves the home, even for a few days, and leaves the student(s) living by themselves or under the care of a neighbour. Should a parent need to leave the home for an extended period, alternate living arrangements must be made to ensure the well-being of the child. This is a legal requirement In British Columbia.

4. **Recommendations**

If parents choose privately arranged accommodation for their child, we recommend the following:

1. A family or custodial parent who the student's natural parents are either related to or have an on-going relation with and is known to the student.
2. A family consisting of one or two custodial parents who are a minimum of 20 years older than the minor student.
3. A family that can communicate freely with the natural parents and school regarding student academic progress, student health and wellness and overall behavior.

Alternatively, a student can live with a natural parent who is **with the student** for the **full duration** of their stay during school and vacation time.

From our experience, students who are in a continual stable living arrangement with responsible adult custodians are successful at school and able to make good decisions related to their academic futures and daily personal lives.

We hope that through these guidelines students can have a safe productive experience in School District 40 New Westminster and will successfully recognize their post-secondary goals.

After signing please detach this form and remit it to the International Education Form along with other registration documents.

I have read and understand the Living Arrangements Policy of School District 40 New Westminster International Education.

Parent Name: _____
(Please Print)

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Name: _____
(Please Print)

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____