

HomestayNews

Summer 2022 • Preparing for New Arrivals



We hope everyone has been having an enjoyable summer. We are preparing to welcome over 300 new students this September. This Newsletter will provide some details regarding their arrival and what the first month will look like activity wise. Please reach out if you have questions regarding your incoming student or returning student. We will be hosting pre-arrival Zoom meetings for all new homestay parents but we strongly encourage all homestay parents to join.

***Registration is currently planned to be in person at the School Board Office**

Pre Arrival Communication

Forming the bond with your student before they touch down in Canada is a key to early success in international study programs.

If you have not already done so, please reach out and start forming a relationship with your student. It can also help with your planning and organizing.

We can help connect homestay parents and students. If you have been experiencing difficulties getting a hold of your student, please let us know and we can help.

Homestay Family Orientation Sessions:

Sunday, August 21st @ 10:00AM &

Thursday, August 25th @ 6:00PM

Link - <https://ca01web.zoom.us/j/3688017545>

Meeting ID: 368 801 7545 / Passcode: Homestay

Airport Pick up

If you do not have your student's arrival information, please let us know so we can assist in getting it.

Airport pick up times will vary based on the student, their study period, and their travel route:

Students staying for the full school year will need to get their Study Permit.

Students who landed in another Canadian airport as their first port of entry and are staying for the full school year should have received their Study Permit at that location. They will be arriving in the domestic terminal at Vancouver International Airport (YVR).

Students here for a short study term will likely not require a study permit and be able to process through immigration with other travellers.

It is hard to say what the wait times will be like for the various situations. Last year it was upwards of 3 hours for Study Permits. In the spring we all read about, and some experienced, the slow downs at YVR with customs and immigration being understaffed.

The cell phone waiting area and the outlet mall are great alternatives to parking in the parkade all afternoon. When your student sends you a WhatsApp message that they received their Study Permit or have cleared customs if they do not need a Study Permit, that would be the time to go and park in the parkade.

Communicating through Wifi capable apps such as WhatsApp are essential for staying in touch with your student during their travels. Meeting them inside the airport is important. It starts the experience off on the right foot for the students.

We Love Delta

The Delta Chamber of Commerce is a great resource for things to do with your student in Delta. They kindly provided us with a large number of 2022 Community Guide Books. Feel free to reach out if you would like a copy. Click on the logo below to visit their website.



Registration

For the first time in 3 years, registration for new students will take place in person at the School Board Office in Ladner.



4585 Harvest Drive, Delta BC.

Students need to bring their paperwork for us to scan and put on file. Passport, Study Permits (if they received one) and any other essential documents they came with.

For homestay parents and students, we will have time to chat together about important things going forward into September.

September 2nd New Student Orientation

Secondary School students new to our program, as well as those entering grade 8, are invited on an orientation tour on Friday, September 2nd. We will be going to False Creek, Granville Island, and Stanley Park. It is free of charge for the students.

Delta ISP September Activity - Camp Jubilee

Also for the first time in 3 years, we will be returning to [Camp Jubilee](#) for our September Activity. It is a full day of outdoor experiences for our students.



There are two dates for the September activity. Burnsvie Secondary School, Delta Secondary School, Delview Secondary School, and North Delta Secondary School will be going on Sunday, September 18th.

Sands Secondary School, Seaquam Secondary, and South Delta Secondary School will be going on Sunday, September 25th.

More information will come regarding specific timing. There will be a homestay permission / acknowledgement slip for you to sign and for your student to submit about a week or two prior to the trips.

Walk-in Medical Clinics and Medicine

In each part of Delta, we have medical clinics that we refer our students to. Here is a [link](#) to the form on our website providing details for each of the four clinics.

Please let your Homestay Coordinator know if your student is under the weather and visiting a clinic.

In their application, students and their parents, are requested to disclose any medication they are taking. Sometimes we do not receive all of the information we request.

When your student arrives and settles into your home, please let us know if they have brought any special medications with them. It is best to get in front of any possible confusion or concerns regarding prescription medications in your home.

Using Guard.me

Guard Me Insurance is the medical insurance our short term students use and the top up insurance our longer term students use (long term students will also have MSP after 90 days).

Students need to use any other insurance they have from their home country first in making claims as Guard Me will not process claims before that is done.

Here is a [link](#) to a walkthrough form for students. It guides them on how to make a claim on Guard Me's website. They will need to pay upfront (themselves) for the medical visit and any prescriptions.

Neutrality

After the honeymoon period of culture shock and adjustment, you may notice more negative tones or comments coming from your student. This is a natural adjustment process to how things are different here compared to their home country. The same is true for at school and in the home. It should be another phase in the culture shock process and not meant to be permanent.

Try to maintain a neutral stance on things if students are showing negativity. Especially regarding school based issues. The information surrounding the situation may not be clear or widely known. Please reach out to our staff here and we will happily do our best to provide more context on the situation. We cannot share student grades or scores, but can happily explain the differences in procedures that may be causing them this confusion and subsequent annoyance.

Airport Pictures

Agent partners, natural parents, and our office staff love to receive the arrival pictures when you meet your student in the airport. Send them along and we will share them with the agencies overseas for you!

Travel

Contact [Brent](#) so we can get the documentation and permission in place before your trip!

Please let us know early about travel plans. There are travel visa considerations when travelling abroad (including the US where students may require an ESTA. We will also prepare a travel letter to the US, even for day trips) with your international student.

If you are planning a day trip, please let us know. The same documentation is not required but because Karen Symonds, the Program Director, is the custodian for the majority of our students, we do need to know where they are travelling to outside of the Lower Mainland. It allows us to stay in the loop and be ready to assist if the need arises.

Damages - Preventative Measures

It seems a bit unrealistic to imply one can prevent all damages from happening to the room of a long term guest. This is more about preventative measures in the stress and discomfort surrounding student damages.

Unfortunately, this past July there were damages that homestay parents noticed after the student had already departed home for the summer. It creates a more difficult situation in getting clear answers and resolutions when that happens.

To assist with that, we have created a [Damage Check List](#) form for homestay families. It is available on our website.

When your new student arrives, you can go over the room together and check off the sections on the form. There is a room for notes and the form will soon be fillable if you wish to type the notes in. Taking pictures of any existing damage with your student is a great idea too.

Ahead of your student's departure, you can revisit the Damage Check List and go over the room together.

If this happens enough times, it normalizes the process for everyone which is good. We always encourage students to inform their homestay parents immediately if they have damaged something in the home. Normal wear and tear is understandable and not something they would be responsible for, but other forms of damage need to be resolved.

As homestay parents, please let us know right away if any damage occurs in your home. We will communicate with agents and natural parents in order to get a quick resolution.

Be mindful, and remind students to be mindful, of hair dye and tanning lotion. We found that to be the cause of more than one damage claim last spring.

DELTA SCHOOL DISTRICT INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS	
Damage Check List	
To assist homestay families and students avoid difficult conversations about damages, we want to normalize the procedure of checking for damage. The condition of the bedroom, towels, bathroom (if your student has their own) can be noted when the student arrives, with pictures taken, ahead of their departure. Student and homestay can go over the same check points together. We still always encourage students to inform their homestay parents of any damage that occurs. We encourage homestay parents to contact us if the student has returned at any damage to the home. The earlier we can work on resolving it, the better.	
Check the condition of the following items / locations together	
Home	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bedroom walls	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Bedroom carpet / floor	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> The bed - mattress, sheets, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dresser and/or desk	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Closet	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Towels for student use	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Windows and locks	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom condition	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Budgeting with Homestay

Preparing a student's room ahead of their arrival does not have to be an expensive experience. Below are some great ideas from our Homestay Coordinator Tania. She hosted students last school year and received very positive feedback from these small, inexpensive additions to the student's room. None of the following suggestions would cost any more that \$5 to \$10.

Before the student arrives:

- Print and frame / post their pictures supplied in their application. Pictures of your family is nice too. Inexpensive Ikea frames do the trick.
- The Dollar Stores have simple sign boards with magnetic letters. You can make your own welcome sign for their room. It can be changed later to express wishes to them or remind them of their chores!



- A very unique idea, that each family can have their own twist on, is getting a simple wooden letter (the first letter in the student's name for example) and painting it the student's favorite colour. Can put nice notes to them on it before they return home.

Danger Zones and Curfew

Last year we shared a list of known trouble spots we received from the Delta Police. It is available in our Newsletter Archive on our [Homestay website](#).

The new student who has arrived to your home is possibly very new to Canada and Canadian culture. Sooner rather than later would be a good time to go over the expectations of your home, curfew, house rules, and places they should avoid.

We have guidelines for curfew based on grade level. Each student is different and each homestay family is also different in how they run their house. Students are informed of this and how their curfew may be different than their friends'. They are not permitted to go to concerts or sporting events downtown at night without an adult 25 years old +.

Homestay Referral Gift Card

We are still actively recruiting more homestay families. If you refer a family who completes the application process and is able to host a student, you will receive a \$100 referral incentive gift card.

Calling Home

What is the appropriate level of calling home and speaking to friends and family from home for an international student? A difficult question that we will try to assist in answering:

Calling home to speak to natural parents is important but should not be done at times that impact forming bonds with the host family (i.e. dinner time, family game time, etc.)

Chatting and talking constantly with friends back home inhibits a student's ability to develop new relationships here with their peers and homestay family. It is not to mean they should ignore or forget their friends at home. Limiting the communication with them in favour of what they are experiencing and who they are meeting in person is important, especially at the beginning.

Homestay Handbook

We are updating our Homestay Handbook as the current version contains some outdated information and language.

We will have it back online as soon as the updates are completed. If you have any questions that you would usually refer to the handbook for, please reach out to your Homestay Coordinator.

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Our dedicated team of Homestay Coordinators are here to support you. Feel free to reach out to them.

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