

HomestayNews

April 2023 • Cherry Blossom Season



Spring time in Delta and the Lower Mainland is a fantastic time to get out and enjoy all the blooming flowers. It is getting warmer each week and we hope you encourage your students to get outside and enjoy the fresh spring air and picture-worthy flowers!

Nominated Again!



You may have noticed the additional Nomination for a Star Award for Excellence in International Programs crest on our email signatures.

Delta School District International Programs has again been one of five School Districts in Canada nominated for the award.

We are very proud of the nomination as it reflects all the dedication and hard work of everyone in supporting our international students.

Homestay families take a very large role in that, and we thank you for providing such a wonderful experience for so many students that choose Delta as their study abroad destination.

Conversation Starter Topic:

If you could be a top athlete in any sport, which sport would it be?

Graduation Events and International Students

There was some confusion at the beginning of the month with different Graduation Event information being provided to students at different schools. That was done in error.

All international students, regardless of the school they go to, have the same rules surrounding graduation events and activities.

The [February Homestay Newsletter](#) had details on the front page. Here they are again in point form:

- Only students graduating and receiving their Dogwood Diploma can participate in valedictory
- Only students graduating and receiving their Dogwood Diploma can participate in "Dry Grad"
- International students in Grade 12 can participate in the formal dances, the red carpet, and the grad dinner dance

I hope that provides you with details if your international student asks you about which graduation activities they can participate in.

Spring Fever

As the weather improves, the spring fever of wanting to be out late and taking part in certain activities will increase.

A reminder that bonfires are illegal in Delta, including on the beach.

Now is a good time to review curfew times and our program zero tolerance policy on drugs and alcohol with your student.

If you have the sense that they are going to risky party places, please reach out to your Homestay Coordinator.

Looking Ahead - Student Departures

Students will need to fly home on or before June 30th. They are not able to stay in our Homestay Program beyond that. Liability and insurance reasons prevent them from being able to, “hang out” for a week or two into July. Please confirm their departure ticket date and time with them. If there are any significant changes to the flight, please let us know.

Natural Parents Coming to Canada

If you learn of a plan for your student’s natural parents to come meet them in Canada at the end of their study term in June, please let your Homestay Coordinator know right away.

Students need to return to the care of their parents by June 30th at the latest. Natural parents may also have travel questions for when they are here. We are happy to provide suggestions for that too!

Summer Programs

July will see both Academic Summer School programming as well as our [3-week Summer ELL programs](#).

The first 3-week program runs from July 4th to 21st (with students arriving on the 2nd or 3rd and departing on the 22nd or 23rd). Academic Summer School runs from July 4th to August 3rd.

In August, we are running another 3-week Summer ELL program from August 7th to 25th (with students arriving on the 5th or 6th and departing on the 26th if they are not staying to continue on into the school year).

Please send [Brent Gibson](#) an email if you are interested in hosting for some or all of these summer programs.

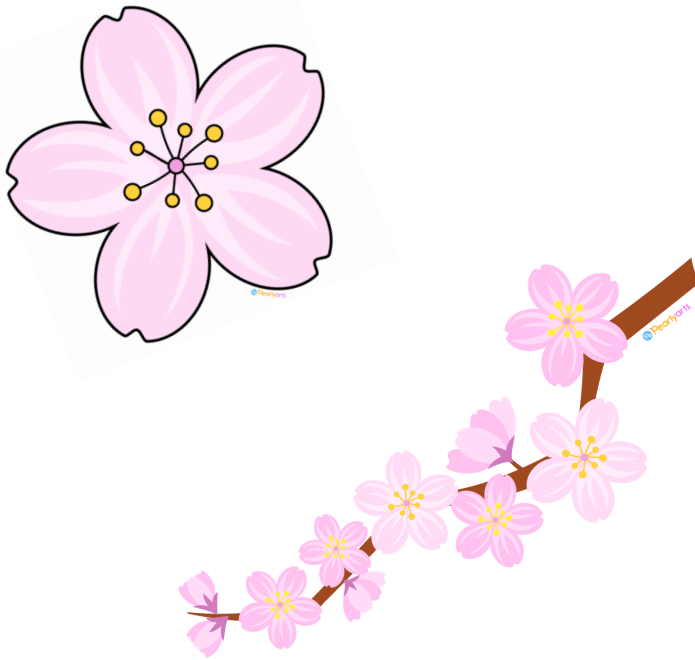
If you have already emailed him with your interest in hosting, he has your name on the list and will be reaching out. No harm in a friendly reminder though!

Damages and Wear-and-Tear

Be sure to go over any damages that may have occurred during your student’s stay earlier rather than later. It is always easier to sort out damages while they are still here in Canada. The vast majority of the time, damages are a result of a mistake. Students may not always be forthcoming out of shame or embarrassment. Loop in [Brent Gibson](#) with any damages and we can work together to get things resolved. Wear-and-tear is a result of a person using the room whereas damages are from acts (deliberate or accidental) that creates a replacement or repair cost to you. Damage claims will not be able to be processed after July 1st.

Places to See Cherry Blossoms

Click on the cherry blossom images to be directed to a few websites with wonderful information about the best places to view cherry blossoms in the Lower Mainland. [The Sakura Festival](#) is great for kids of all ages!



May ISP Activity - WildPlay

On May 6th, we will be going to WildPlay Adventure Park in Maple Ridge. It was a big hit with students last spring and we hope students enjoy it as much this year. Sign up dates and details will be posted on students' Google Classrooms and sent via mass emails later this month.

Please continue to remind your student to check their email and Google Classroom. This is the last activity with International Programs this school year and we hope those who want to go are able to sign up in time.

Spring Clean

Now is a good time to suggest students do a Spring Clean. Once May and June arrive, they may be distracted with end of term and social engagements. It is good for them to ensure they have the space needed in their suitcases, or enough suitcases, for the things they have purchased while here in Delta.

Budgeting with Homestay - Trip Planning and Costs

It is always greatly appreciated when homestay parents include their students in trips and special activities. It is not something that comes without additional costs, however. Discussing trip plans with your student and having their parents confirm the willingness to pay for any additional costs is important. Money discussions can be uncomfortable, but they are important to have and have agreement from adults. If you are not in contact with your students' natural parents, or if there is a language barrier, please reach out to your Homestay Coordinator.

Travel

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

Please let us know early about travel plans. Driving to the US requires an [ESTA](#) and [I-94 form](#). Not all nationalities can visit the US freely. We will 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 when 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.

Homestay Family Recruitment

We are honoured that so many students want to choose Delta School District for their international experience. For us to help make their choice become a reality, we need more homestay families for September.

If you have friends or neighbours that you feel can provide a positive experience for our students, please recommend our program to them.

Remuneration is going up to \$1,100 a month in September and we still have referral bonuses for current homestay parents recommending new families to our program.

Homestay Referral Gift Card

We are 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.

What's On in The Lower Mainland

Here are a few events / festivals that may be of interest to your student or your family.

[Best Vancouver Festivals, Celebrations, and Markets in the Spring and Summer](#)

[Festivals and Events in Vancouver - Linked to the April 2023 page](#)

[English Bluff BBQ Barn Bash](#)

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.

Karen Symonds – Delta School District International Programs Director

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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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