

HomestayNews

Summer 2023 • Preparing for New Arrivals



We hope everyone has been having an enjoyable summer. We are preparing to welcome over 400 new students this September. This Newsletter will provide some details regarding their arrival and what the first month will look like activity wise. **We will be hosting pre-arrival Zoom meetings for all new homestay parents but we strongly encourage all homestay parents to join.** Reach out if you have questions regarding your incoming or returning student. If you do not have your student's arrival information, contact your Homestay Coordinator immediately.

Pre Arrival Communication

Forming the bond with your student before their arrival in Delta is an important 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. A video call with them and their family can help everyone feel a connection and iron out any details.

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 20th at 10:00AM

<https://ca01web.zoom.us/j/61660085406>

Meeting ID: 616 6008 5406 / Passcode: Arrivals

Thursday, August 24th at 6:00PM

<https://ca01web.zoom.us/j/66115145968>

Meeting ID: 661 1514 5968 / Passcode: Arrivals

Airport Pick up

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

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

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.

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 are nearly through Customs and Immigration if they do not need a Study Permit, or about 10 people from the front of the line for their 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 trip to BC. Greeting them inside the airport is ESSENTIAL. It starts the experience off on the right foot for the students.

Getting off on the Right Foot

Connecting with your student early goes a long way in terms of building a successful relationship together. Pre-arrival connections are important. So are initial in person connections. A good tip is to not do a big grocery shop ahead of their arrival. Have the essentials on hand but a day or two after they arrive, a trip to the grocery store together would be a great way to see what snacks and foods they really enjoy. It would also be a great time to get their local cell phone number set up. Having it before coming to registration would be wonderful!

Registration

Registration for new students will take place in person at the School Board Office in Ladner, located at **4585 Harvest Drive, Delta BC. Come anytime during business hours between August 28th and 31st.**



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, including our new insurance provider.

Using StudyInsured

We have officially switched our international student medical coverage over to StudyInsured. The goal is to provide students (and their host parents) with easier and faster access to medical care. Visit the [StudyInsured website](#) dedicated to Delta School District International Programs. You can familiarize yourself with the different forms and the number to call to seek medical assistance.

studyinsured™

They will provide short-term student insurance and top-up insurance for students with us for the full school year and longer.

There is also a new ISP fridge magnet that will display the information for you.

A StudyInsured representative will be joining us and leading a brief information session for host parents during our two Zoom sessions in August (see page one of this newsletter for Zoom times and links).

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!

Beating Jet Lag

Each time new students arrive in Delta, or returning ones come back, we hear of students struggling with jet lag. It is a reality for everyone, but there are proven methods to help reduce its effect on us.

Do

- ✓ change your sleep schedule to the new time zone as quickly as possible
- ✓ set an alarm to avoid oversleeping in the morning
- ✓ go outside during the day – natural light will help your body clock adjust

Don't

- ✗ do not sleep during the day – only sleep at night time

Exercise and getting outside to explore the neighbourhood are great for getting over jet lag. It also doubles as a good opportunity to walk to school together and show your student how to get to the bus stop, corner store, etc.

Picture courtesy of: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/jet-lag/>

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 if staying in Canada, 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.

September 1st New Student Orientation

Secondary School students new to our program are invited on an orientation tour on Friday, September 1st. We will be going to False Creek, Granville Island, and Stanley Park. It is free of charge for the students. Information about drop off / pick up locations and times has been shared in previous emails.

Delta ISP September Activity - Camp Jubilee

There are two dates for our [Camp Jubilee](#) trip this September. Burnsvew Secondary School, Delta Secondary School, Delview Secondary School, and North Delta Secondary School will be going on Sunday, September 17th. Sands Secondary School, Seaquam Secondary, and South Delta Secondary School will be going on Sunday, September 24th. Those dates may change due to student sign-up numbers. We are only permitted so many students per day and need to ensure there is a balance.



More information will come regarding specific timing after sign-up is complete. Registration information has been sent to new students, via their agencies or natural parents. 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. **The Camp Jubilee Waiver will have to be signed by their natural parents.**

Danger Zones and Curfew

The Delta Police Service have provided us with a list of known “trouble” areas. 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. This may have to be repeated as they are facing an overload of information in the first few weeks.

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 approved adult 25 years of age or older.

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

We posed this same question in last summer’s newsletter:

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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