

NONIMMIGRANT CULTURAL EXCHANGE STUDENT PROGRAM

I. Overview

The nonimmigrant cultural exchange student program is designed to provide nonimmigrant students holding J-1 visas with no more than one school year of educational experience for the express and only purpose of cultural enrichment.

II. Program Approval

The district will accept students only from programs approved by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).

All approved programs shall make provision for the payment and support of those costs associated with the nonimmigrant cultural exchange student's participation in all phases of student activities.

III. District Cooperation

- A. It is essential that all approved programs be accorded the same degree of district support and cooperation.
- B. The district, Mount Vernon High School, and its employees shall not devote time, effort, or resources on behalf of approved nonimmigrant travel-study programs to the extent that such is thought to be in conflict with or at the expense of the regular school program. It is not the district's responsibility to provide tutorial help.

IV. Student Placement Procedures

A. Definitions

- 1. A J-1 student is a nonimmigrant student who visits this country through a United States Department of State recognized program for a specified period of time only and enrolls in school as a nonimmigrant cultural exchange student. The student must be sponsored by a travel-study exchange organization approved by the CSIET.

B. Requirements for Registration

- 1. All requests for placement of nonimmigrant cultural exchange students may begin after the start of the second semester of the year preceding the requested fall assignment.
- 2. All requests for placement of nonimmigrant cultural exchange students must come to the building principal. Each request will be reviewed and approved/denied by the building principal or designee.

3. A host family must be identified before the nonimmigrant cultural exchange student applies for admission to the school district. The school and school district shall not be called upon to provide resources to find those families for initial placement or if a need to change a host family arises.
4. The sponsoring organization must provide certification that the student will receive adequate financial support and medical insurance for the duration of his/her stay in the school district.
5. The sponsoring organization must provide evidence to demonstrate that the student demonstrates maturity, good character, and ability to derive maximum benefit from the program experience.
6. The sponsoring organization must provide the student's certified high school transcript with an English translation and documentation of adequate immunization or exemption as required by Washington State law prior to approval for admission.
7. The sponsoring organization must provide evidence of English language proficiency through a satisfactory test measured by the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Secondary Level English Proficiency (SLEP), Structure Test English Language (STEL), or a comparable test of examination of English language. The test results shall be provided to the building principal prior to a student's acceptance. The school district reserves the right to waive the designated testing if an alternative proof of language proficiency can be provided.

V. Exchange Program Guidelines

- A. The number of nonimmigrant cultural exchange students, J-1, placed at an individual school within the school district will be based on a space available basis.
- B. Mount Vernon Public Schools accepts nonimmigrant cultural exchange students with J-1 visas for the purpose of cultural enrichment, not for the purpose of working toward a high school diploma.
- C. Nonimmigrant cultural exchange students must not have reached their 19th birthday prior to enrollment and must not have completed a secondary education program in their own country.

Nonimmigrant cultural exchange students shall be enrolled in a regular program of studies as determined by the school based upon class availability and student competence. Students will have the opportunity to earn grades and credits commensurate with their ability and their use of the English language. Students shall be expected to comply with all school regulations and policies.

Sponsoring individuals or agencies will provide necessary student tutorial and personal/social counseling help as needed.

Nonimmigrant cultural exchange student participation in organized school athletic programs must meet current Washington Interscholastic Activities Association criteria.

Sponsors and/or exchange students shall pay for the students' activity costs and/or other school fees.

VI. Conduct Standards

Exchange students will be subject to the same policies, rules of conduct, and attendance requirements as regular students except as modified by these procedures, the student's enrollment agreement, or the law.