

February 8, 2022

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
EF High School Exchange Year and Hopkins County School District

Main contact partners:

EF High School Exchange Year: Meghan Brown, Regional Placement Manager
School District name: Alaina Lancaster, Director of Secondary Instruction

On behalf of EF High School Exchange Year, I would like to thank you and your school for working with our program. In so entering this relationship with your school, we are eager to share with you the high standards and guidelines we will commit to upholding as a program, and detail the service level your school can rely on receiving.

History and organizational set-up

EF High School Exchange Year is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and we are comprised of an international network of staff members, local coordinators, volunteer host families, and schools. During their year abroad, EF exchange students live with a volunteer American host family, attend an accredited American high school, and are supervised by their International Exchange Coordinator (IEC), who works with and supports the EF program on a local level. Each IEC is part of a team supervised by an experienced Regional Coordinator (RC).

EF is designated by the United States Department of State as an issuer of DS-2019 Forms for J-1 visas. As an Exchange Program Sponsor, we extend these visa eligibility certificates to approved students who desire to spend an academic year or semester in the US. Further information about this designation can be found at the following link: <http://j1visa.state.gov/>

EF also has full listing with the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel. CSIET is a private, not-for-profit organization which monitors, disseminates information about, and establishes standards for reputable international youth education and exchange programs. On the basis of materials submitted and reviewed, CSIET has granted listing to EF High School Exchange Year in its Advisory List for the 2016/17 school year. Further information about this listing can be found at the following link: <http://www.csiet.org>

Standards on participant quality and support

Both our standing with CSIET and our designation with the Department of State are contingent upon our strict compliance with an extensive set of rules and regulations about how we recruit students, families, schools and coordinators. While the rules and regulations are exhaustive, and we are more than happy to provide them on request, the regulations do qualify the following.

- *Student recruitment and acceptance:* Students attend this program for an academic, cultural experience and cannot be guaranteed high school graduation, certain academic courses (e.g. an AP level of certain subjects), participation on an athletic team or in any other extracurricular activity. The program is advertised as such and any student wishing to participate in the program for reasons relating to athletic ambitions are not accepted.
 - *While on the program:* Students are required to uphold standards relating to their behavior and academic performance while on the program. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program. A complete list of these requirements has been included. (Attachment: Rules and Regulations – United States)
- *Host family recruitment and acceptance:* Families are recruited to participate in this program as a strictly volunteer, cultural exchange program in which they provide the student with a supportive, nurturing environment, appropriate housing (room) and board. A family may not participate in the program if their ambition or motivations are not consistent with these ambitions- for example if they are seeking childcare, companionship or wish to host an athletically talented/ gifted student.
 - *While on the program:* Host families are required to uphold standards and regulations while hosting with our program. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program. A complete list of these requirements has been included. (Attachment: HF Guidelines – United States)
- *International Exchange Coordinator recruitment and acceptance:* International Exchange Coordinators (herein after referred to as “IECs”) are the key to a successful exchange and will be a school’s main ally during the program experience. IECs live in the local area (within 120 miles) and find safe, suitable and supportive host families to work with our students. They are responsible for mentoring the student, family and school throughout the exchange. IECs are carefully recruited and selected to work with our program. We ensure our IECs are compassionate, service-minded individuals with a strong desire to help connect people and cultures, and support participants throughout the ups and downs of an exchange. They are well versed in the program’s rules and regulations, and are trained in cross-cultural mediation. An IEC is the school’s main point of contact if there are any concerns with a student’s well-being in the academic setting.
- *Host school recruitment:* The school a student attends is based on the local district the family selected for the program is part of. Policy regarding which school which students attend varies by state, and within most states, by county, district and town. No school is selected for a student based on the student or host family’s ambition for the student’s participation in athletics or other extracurricular activities.

Our vetting and screening process for students, families and coordinators is incredibly comprehensive. Through a series of references/ recommendations, personal applications and interviews, our program ensures potential participants possess the necessary skills and expectations to be successful on our program.

Students, host families, IECs and schools are fully supported by our 24-hour global support network. Our local exchange coordinators are supported by regional staff, full-time office personnel in our headquarters in Cambridge, and affiliates in 50 offices located throughout the world. Our coordinators are trained annually on appropriate host family screening, support, counseling and mediation in order to best serve your district. All EF exchange students carry full

health, liability, and property insurance at the minimum for the coverage required by the US Department of State.

What your schools can expect from EF

- EF is the leader in high school exchange with fifty years of expertise in the industry. Our J-1 Visa program is overseen by the U.S. State Department. All of our students are fully screened and insured.
- Our organization's motto is "EF all the way." We are proud that it is EF staff working with our high school exchange year students from application through return to their home countries. In practice this means:
 - o An EF team abroad recruits students and our international team screens students, obtains all necessary paperwork and serves as a liaison between our US team, student and the natural parents.
 - o At our main US headquarters in Boston, our Placement team works with local coordinators throughout the country to match students and host families; the Compliance team assures that all Department of State guidelines are met during the placement process; our Travel Team coordinates travel arrangements; and our Program Support Team works with students, families, and local coordinators once students are in country.
 - o Our Regional Coordinators (RC) and International Exchange Coordinators (IEC) work with local schools and families to support and supervise throughout the exchange year.

Expectations EF has of your schools

- Enrolling a qualified, approved student in a full course of study appropriate to their academic background and age level.
- Helping the student select courses and navigate available and appropriate extracurricular opportunities.
- Offering standard support relative to academic and social adjustment.
- Keep EF abreast of any questions or concerns about the student's performance and attitude.
- Working collaboratively with EF to coach the student and address any concerns.

Shared commitments and priorities

- Recruitment of quality host families.
- Placement of fully screened students.
- On-going communication and annual review of program.

We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with your district in exchange.