

# POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND PROCEDURES

**GOVERNING**

## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS

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**QUICK LINKS:**

[*US Department of State Exchange Visitor Program Regulations*](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study/exchange.html)

[*Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET)*](https://www.csiet.org/)

[*Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA)*](https://www.niaa.com/landing/index)

1. All sponsoring organizations must be annually approved by and registered with WCSD.

In order to be recognized as an approved sponsoring organization in the Washoe County School District, the organization must:

1. Provide the name, address and phone number of the regional and/or national office of the sponsoring organization;
2. Provide verification of approval through the United States Department of State formerly known as United States Information Agency (USIA);
3. Provide a current copy of the Certificate of Acceptance issued by the Council for Standards for International Education Travel (CSIET) for the appropriate school year;
4. Follow and provide written policies and procedures that are in compliance with the current regulations governing all aspects of the Exchange Visitor Program through the United States Department of State formerly known as United States Information Agency (USIA) J exchange regulations, 22CFR 514;
5. Provide clearly defined and written policies and procedures for the screening process in selecting host families and students, for addressing issues related to host families, for emergency situations, and for placement issues, including terminating the student’s placement. All host families must work through their area representative up to the point of school enrollment at which time the host family contacts the high school registrar. Host families that try to circumvent the process will not be welcome to host and the organization could face suspension.
6. Provide verification that criminal background checks on local representatives and all adult members of the host families have been completed yearly;
7. Provide written verification of health and accident insurance coverage with a minimum limit of $75,000 coverage;
8. Provide verification that the student will have documents authorizing medical treatment in the event of an emergency or injury;
9. Provide clearly defined and written policies and procedures for providing adequate support services at the school and district level to assist with program-related needs and problems;
10. Have clearly defined written policies and procedures for ensuring that the international exchange student’s English proficiency is such that the student will be able to function successfully in a WCSD high school;
11. Have written procedures in place for providing English language assistance for the student at no cost to WCSD should this be necessary;
12. Have a local representative living within Washoe County who will be acting as liaison between WCSD, the International Exchange Organization, and host families;
13. Provide the name and phone numbers of the local representative to be on file with WCSD;
14. Provide the dates, times and place that local representatives (who will be selecting host families and counseling students) received official program training. This training will include in part how to check on the student’s well-being in the host family on a monthly basis (This contact **must** include a private interview where the student may speak freely without interference from members of the host family). Organizations that do not follow this process will be suspended indefinitely; This training is to be a formal, recognized program conducted by professionally qualified trainers.
15. Provide the dates, times and place that local representatives provided official program training with each host family. This training is to be a formal program where the written procedures mentioned in sections (e) and (i) as well as a thorough review of WCSD Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students.
16. Provide written verification that the student and/or his/her natural parents have given authorization for the sponsoring organization’s representative and/or designee to access academic and other information regarding the student from the host school and/or WCSD;
17. Review the WCSD Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students;
18. Sign and file with Student Accounting the Local Representative’s Annual Policy Acknowledgement.
19. Sponsoring Organization and Local Representative Responsibilities

**Sponsoring organization and local representative/coordinator shall:**

1. Follow 22CFR Sec. 514.25 Secondary School students regulations;
2. Follow the rules, regulations, and standards of CSIET;
3. Follow the WCSD Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students;
4. Provide Student Accounting the organization’s complete international exchange student’s application.
5. The local representative is liaison between WCSD, the International Exchange Organization, host school, and host families.
6. Place students with host families in the zone where the school is able to accommodate a student. For example, if a school is not taking any students, the representative would not place any students with a host family in that zone.
7. Provide verification that each adult living within the home of the Host family completed a criminal background check.
8. The local representative/coordinator and host families must not contact the school or any member of the school about accepting the International Exchange student or any International Exchange Student. Local representatives and host families that try to circumvent the process by contacting the school to try to have the student accepted will be suspended from hosting indefinitely and the organization could face suspension.
9. Variances are not provided.
10. The local representative/coordinator must check on the student’s well-being on a monthly basis (This contact **must** include a private interview where the student may speak freely without interference from members of the host family). The local representative/coordinator must also check in with the host family. Organizations that do not follow this process will be suspended indefinitely;
11. The local representative/coordinator must assist the school, as needed, in resolving any issues or concerns related to the international exchange student;
12. Declare any student with intent to graduate from the WCSD to the Student Accounting Department by the end of the first nine weeks of the fall semester in which the student enrolls; and
13. The local representative/coordinator must notify the Student Accounting Department and the school of any change in the host family within 48 hours of the change.
14. Make arrangements for tutoring/ELL help in the event that it is needed at no cost to WCSD. International exchange students will be responsible for all school fees and expenses. WCSD **will not** provide financial assistance or benefits to international exchange students.
15. Any organization who has a withdrawn exchange student must remove the student from the Washoe County area within 48 hours. Violation of this will be considered a non-compliance of the WCSD International Exchange Policy and will result in a suspension of the organization. This does not apply to students who successfully finish the school year.
16. The sponsoring organization and local representative/coordinator shall not directly circumvent or try to find a work around for any of the WCSD Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students. Organizations that go directly to schools to seek approval for students will be suspended.
17. Ensure the International Exchange student arrives two weeks prior to the first day of school no matter the circumstances. The student must attend the full school day on the first day of school. Organizations that do not prepare to have each student attend school for the whole day on the first day of school at the school where the student is attending will be suspended.

**Please note:** If after the WCSD grants final approval and information is received that the student will not be arriving and attending school on the first day the approval will be rescinded, and the student will not be enrolled. International exchange students enrolled in a charter or private school by the local representatives will not be accepted for enrollment into a WCSD school at any time during the school year, including but not limited to the first day of school.

1. Documentation (student application) required prior to the student leaving their home country.
2. Demographic data for the student (i.e., name, address, phone number, date of birth; home country; name, address, and phone number of natural parents).
3. A brief student biography.
4. Provide three letters of recommendation (in English) that attest to the student’s maturity, good character, and scholastic aptitude.
5. Demographic data of host family (i.e., name, address, phone number), as well as verification of reference checks, background checks, date, time, and place of the host parent(s) official training, and the date of the host parent(s) interview. List of host family’s children who are currently enrolled in the school, if applicable.
6. The student’s health and immunization record. Students **may not enroll** in WCSD schools without current vaccinations for Polio, MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella), Diphtheria/Tetanus, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, MCV4 and Varicella (If the student has had Chicken Pox a physician statement is needed for proof of disease). If the student is not current on their immunizations after arriving in Washoe County, the student must go to the Washoe County Health Department, clinic, or a local doctor to receive the immunizations **prior to enrollment**. Local Representatives and Exchange Organizations must ensure that students arrive in time to receive these vaccinations in such a manner that each student attends school for the full day on the first day of school. Local Representatives and Exchange Organizations must ensure that students arrive in time to quarantine, if necessary, in such a manner that each student attends school for the full day on the first day of school.
7. One of the following must be provided for proof of English proficiency;
   * Results of the Secondary Level English Proficiency Test (SLEP), or
   * Letter from the Cultural Affairs Office of the United States Embassy, or
   * Certification from an English-speaking school, or
   * Verification of proficiency by an English instructor.
8. Included with the student’s sponsoring organization application, original transcripts of the student's high school grades from all academic institutions between 9th grade equivalency to the most recent school year indicating courses studied, grades received, and an explanation of the grading system. English translation must be provided by the educational institution or sponsoring organization.
9. Certify in writing that the student has not previously participated in a secondary student exchange program in the United States.

4. International Exchange Student Requirements

1. Student must be represented by an international exchange program which is approved by WCSD.
2. Have a J-1 Visa;
3. Student must be a *bona fide* student who is a secondary student in their home country, must not have competed more than 11 ½ years of primary and secondary study, exclusive of kindergarten, and must be no younger than fifteen (15) and under age eighteen and six months (18 1/2) at the time of initial enrollment in a WCSD high school;
4. The international exchange student has not previously participated in an academic year or semester in a secondary school student exchange program in the United States or attended school in the United States in either F-1 or J-1 visa status.
5. The student must arrive in Washoe County two weeks prior to the start of the school year.
6. International exchange students must be enrolled a week **prior** to the first day of school and in attendance **on** the first day of school.
7. The international exchange student must attend a full school year.
8. Students wishing to earn a WCSD diploma must declare their intent by the end of the 9th week of the school year in the fall to determine if it is possible for the student to meet the State of Nevada graduation requirements. Students who do not graduate are not permitted to walk in the graduation ceremony under any circumstances.

5. International Students with Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status

The United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) requires educational institutions to be approved members of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) in order to issue an I-20 form accepting students on F-1 visas. WCSD has not sought approval through the DHS SEVIS program and **cannot** accept any international students applying for F-1 visas.

6. Rights, Privileges, and Responsibilities of International Exchange

Students

1. All international exchange students enrolled in WCSD are subject to the same State and Federal laws; District policies and regulations; procedures; rules of conduct; attendance; District and State mandated assessment; and academic performance requirements as non-international exchange students.
2. International exchange students enrolled in WCSD will be accorded all the rights and privileges of non-international exchange students, except as noted in this document, during their period of enrollment beginning with the student’s first day of attendance.
3. International exchange students enrolled in WCSD will be responsible for all school fees and expenses. WCSD **will not** provide financial assistance or benefits to international exchange students.
4. International exchange students enrolled in WCSD are expected to attain passing grades of a C or better in each course by the end of each semester and will be granted credit for successful completion of course work. Regular grade checks are performed by the Student Accounting Department. If the international exchange student neglects assignments or coursework and falls below a C in any of the student’s classes the student will be withdrawn from the WCSD for violation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students.
5. Students wishing to earn a WCSD diploma must declare their intent by the end of the 9th week of the school year in the fall. Students who do not graduate are not permitted to walk in the graduation ceremony under any circumstances.
6. Regular daily attendance is a critical component of the education process. International exchange students are expected to adhere to less than 10% of absences measured by period by semester for high school students. Students who do not meet the above criteria will be found in violation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students and will be withdrawn from the WCSD.
7. International exchange students, international exchange organizations, representatives, and host parents, must realize that school is compulsory. If the international exchange student neglects assignments, coursework, and to adhere to less than 10% of absences for each course for each period during a semester or the student will be withdrawn from the WCSD for violation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students.
8. An international exchange student in violation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students will be sent home.
9. International exchange students who are withdrawn by WCSD must be removed from the Washoe County area within 48 hours. Violation of this will be considered a non-compliance of the Washoe County School District International Exchange Policy and will result in a suspension of the organization. This does not apply to students who successfully finish the school year.
10. An international exchange student may participate in interscholastic athletic competition provided;
    1. The student meets all other rules and regulations regarding eligibility,
    2. The student fills out and requests the principal to file the **Request for Eligibility (NIAA regulation 2070)** with the Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA),
    3. The student receives from the NIAA written permission to compete.

7. Responsibilities of the Student Accounting Department

1. Determine how many students each high school is accepting. Student Accounting will contact the schools.
2. Let local representatives/coordinator know which schools are accepting students and which schools are not. All inquiries must come through the Student Accounting Department.
3. Determine if the sponsoring organization is approved and in good standing to enroll students in the WCSD.
4. Determine if the local representative/coordinator has completed the annual criminal background check.
5. Determine if the student meets the minimum eligibility requirements for enrollment as an international exchange student in WCSD.
6. Monitor and review international exchange student’s attendance and grades throughout the school year.
7. Determine if an appropriate host family has been identified.

By Definition:

1. Resides within the Washoe County School District in the zone where students are being accepted.
2. Has met the sponsoring organization’s qualification requirements as well as the requirements for host families outlined in the current regulations governing all aspects of the Exchange Visitor Program through the United States Department of State formerly known as United States Information Agency (USIA) J exchange regulations, 22 CFR 514.
3. Confirms that the host parent is not also the organization’s representative responsible for supervising the student.
4. The host parent is approved and not suspended in WCSD.
5. Identify the high school for which the student is zoned based on the host family’s residence.
6. Determine if the sponsoring organization has already placed five students in the school for which the student is zoned; if so, the principal of that school must grant written permission indicating that the principal will take additional students from that sponsoring organization.
7. Maintain a file on each organization and host parent including all the documentation provided by the organization’s representative for approval and renewal.
8. Provide the sponsoring organization’s representative with the following:
9. An electronic copy of the WCSD Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students. The electronic copy is for the Sponsoring Organization who provides an electronic copy to the international exchange student and the student’s host family which must be reviewed with the Student Accounting Department.
10. The Local Representative’s Annual Policy Acknowledgement to be signed by the local representative living in Washoe County.
11. Washoe County School District Acknowledgement of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students to be signed by the host parents and the student, and an Administrator or designee from Student Accounting.
12. Washoe County School District Authorization to Place an International Exchange Student: This document is completed by an Administrator or designee in Student Accounting prior to the organization’s representative meeting with the principal, and it affirms that the organization follows WCSD Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students. This document must be included in the paperwork presented to the principal. A copy of this document remains on file at Student Accounting and in the school registrar will scan into the Permissions and Refusals file in OnBase.
13. Washoe County School District Principal Approval to Enroll an International Exchange Student: This document must be included in the paperwork presented to the principal by the local representative. After the principal reviews the student’s application, the principal will complete this document either approving or denying enrollment. The signed copy is returned to Student Accounting.
14. Washoe County School District calendar for the year in which the student will be enrolling.

8. Principal Approval

The principal determines how many international exchange students 0-5 will be admitted to the school. The total number of students each school is accepting will be provided to the local representative by Student Accounting. The representative and the host family are not to contact the principal at this step and if they do will be suspended from the international exchange program.

The principal grants or denies enrollment of international exchange students using the form Principal Approval/Denial to Enroll. Principal may grant preliminary approval, but this approval is not final until the student and the organization are approved by Student Accounting.

A sponsoring organization may not place more than five students in one school unless the principal of the school has requested in writing the placement of more than five students from that specific organization and that has been approved by Student Accounting.

Upon notification of the initial host family placement, the school principal has the option to recommend the selection of a different host family for the student’s welfare.

Principal must meet with the sponsoring organization representative. The representative must provide the following to the principal:

* 1. Student’s application file, including a transcript, translated in English, of grades from the sending school.
  2. Completed and signed document, Authorization to Place an International Exchange Student. This document affirms that an administrator or designee within the department of Student Accounting determined that the organization is in compliance with WCSD Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students.
  3. Principal Approval/Denial to Enroll

1. After the meeting has concluded, the principal reviews the student’s application file in private, the principal will complete this document either approving or denying enrollment and send the approval or denial to Student Accounting. All decisions of the principal are final. Student Accounting will inform the local representative of the approval or denial. If the student is approved, the host family and student will meet with Student Accounting. If the student is denied, the process goes no further. Representatives and/or host families may not contact the school to seek a reason for the denial or risk suspension from the program for at least the year the student is seeking to be approved.

9. Final Approval Prior to Enrollment into a WCSD High School

The host parent and student must meet with Student Accounting for orientation and must provide documentation as listed in subsection 4 of this policy as well as the following additional information:

1. Updated immunization record if the student’s previous immunization record indicated missing immunizations required by Nevada State Law.
2. Student must provide his/her passport for proof of identification.
3. A J-1 Visa, which should be located on the passport.
4. Provide verification that the student has documents authorizing medical treatment in the event of an emergency or injury.
5. Host parent(s) must provide proof of residency, (e.g., utility bill).
6. Washoe County School District Acknowledgement of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students signed by the host parents, student and Student Accounting.
7. Once the final approval process has been completed at Student Accounting, the host parent will be given copies of all the paperwork provided. The host parent must contact the registrar at the host school to enroll the student, and bring the paperwork provided by Student Accounting.

10. Course Assignment

International exchange students will be enrolled only as full-time students and are subject to the Washoe County School District curriculum requirements.

1. International exchange students must be enrolled in English and in U.S. History and/or American Government.
2. International exchange students are expected to attain passing grades of a C or better by the end of their first semester and will be granted credit for successful completion of course work. If the international exchange student neglects assignments, coursework, and falls below a C in any of the student’s classes the student will be withdrawn from the WCSD for violation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students.
3. Regular daily attendance is a critical component of the education process. International exchange students are expected to not be absent 10% or more of school days (NRS 392.122, which is measured by period for high school students.
4. International exchange students, international exchange organizations, representatives, and host parents, must realize that school is compulsory. If the international exchange student neglects assignments, coursework, and has 10% or more absences for any reason in attendance the student will be withdrawn from the WCSD for violation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Governing International Exchange Students.
5. Sponsoring organizations are required to make arrangements for tutoring/ELL help in the event that it is needed and ensure that the organization accepts financial responsibility for it.
6. If requested by the end of the ninth week of the fall semester in which the student enrolls, the Washoe County School District will award a high school diploma to any international exchange student who meets all of the State of Nevada requirements for a WCSD diploma, including taking the College and Career Readiness exam. This deadline has been established so that a student who wishes to graduate may be scheduled into the appropriate coursework. It is not always possible for International Exchange students to meet the State of Nevada requirements and graduate.
   1. Any international exchange student seeking a standard WCSD diploma must fulfill a minimum 23 credits for 2022 and beyond, including all graduation requirements.
   2. An international exchange student may fulfill the required four (4) units of English by one of the following:
7. Earning 3 units of ELL English or its equivalent in his/her home country and passing English 7-8 or its equivalent at his/her host school or through WCSD Supplemental Credit Office; or
8. Earning 2 units of ELL English or its equivalent in his/her home country and passing English 5-6 or its equivalent and English 7-8 or its equivalent at his/her host school or through the WCSD Extended Studies Department. The English 5-6 requirement may also be satisfied by completing a correspondence course offered by an institution recognized by WCSD.
9. No more than three (3) of the four (4) units of English required for graduation may be earned as ELL English.

11. Washoe County School District Host School Responsibilities:

**Host school shall:**

1. The registrar must list in Infinite Campus both the host parent and the representative of the sponsoring organization as having the right to access student information and records.
2. Notify Student Accounting when there are issues regarding the appropriateness of specific host family and/or representative selections.
3. Notify Student Accounting of the student’s intent to graduate from WCSD by the end of the 9th week of the fall semester in which the student enrolls.
4. Contact the host family and/or local representative of the sponsoring organization if school-related problems arise.
5. In cases involving violation of state and/or federal laws or where there are concerns regarding the host family, the local representative of the sponsoring organization must be contacted.
6. Contact Student Accounting and the sponsoring organization should issues/concerns arise regarding the actions of the local representative.
7. Designate a staff member who will serve as the primary school contact for representatives of sponsoring organizations and/or host families and who will provide overall supervision and coordination of the international exchange students and activities involving these students at the host high school.

12. Revocation or Suspension of Sponsoring Organizations

Should the guarantee or documentation provided by the sponsoring organization prove to be invalid, further acceptance of international exchange students from that sponsoring organization will be dependent upon proof of compliance with WCSD policies, regulations, manuals, and procedures. The burden of proof rests with the sponsoring organization. The Washoe County School District reserves the right to verify that all information provided to the district or the school is correct.

Should the local representative of the sponsoring organization or the sponsoring organization or the host family fail to meet the responsibilities outlined in these procedures, the organization will be placed on immediate suspension for a minimum of one year. After the completion of the one-year suspension, the organization must reapply for Washoe County School District approval and will be subject to a first-year placement maximum of three students in the district.

Depending on the infraction, the suspension may be permanent. No students from that suspended organization will be accepted.

13. Timelines/Deadlines no exceptions will be granted for failure to follow the

designated timelines/deadlines.

1. **Approval of a New Sponsoring Organization -** All documentation must be complete and submitted no later than May 15 to enroll a student for the next school year.
2. **Annual Renewal of Approved Sponsoring Organization -** Documentation for renewal for the next school year is due no later than May 15.
3. **An Approved Sponsoring Organization Applies for Permission to Enroll Student in WCSD:**  The last Wednesday in June.
4. **Deadline for All International Exchange Student Placement Documentation to be Submitted to** Student Accounting**:** The last Wednesday in June.
5. **Date of Arrival for a Student Attending in Washoe County –** Must arrive two weeks prior to the beginning of the school year. The student must attend the full school day on the first day of school.
6. **Deadline for Enrollment at the Host School –** Student must be enrolled a week prior to the first day of the school year.
7. **Deadline for Declaring Whether Student Is Seeking a Diploma –** The end of the ninth week of the fall semester in which the student enrolls.