



# INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT 42 - MAPLE RIDGE & PITT MEADOWS

NEWSLETTER • AUGUST • 2024



International Education program staff celebrating at the Pitt Meadows Canada Day event, July 2024.

## BACK TO SCHOOL 2024

We would like to extend our warmest welcome to our new and returning students and homestay families. Thank you for joining us for the 2024-2025 school year!

## ORIENTATION DAYS

Please pay close attention to which group your student is in for orientation as they must attend the correct locations on September 3 & 4. We will be emailing the detailed schedule including pick-up and drop-off times to both homestays and students in the coming weeks. Orientation is for new students only; returning students from last year and hosts do not attend. Students who attended the Pre-Academic program but are new to the District must attend. Traffic will be busy on these days so please plan accordingly and follow signs. The drop-off zone at the front of Riverside Centre is one-way traffic; there is only 1 entrance and 1 exit (arrows are painted on the cement for direction).

## COMING UP ON THE CALENDAR

**Aug. 10-31** - Pre-Academic Program

**Aug. 29 - Sept. 2** - Student Arrivals

**Sept. 3** - Orientation Day 1:

Group 1 (GSS, MRSS, THSS)

Program Orientation at Riverside & Welcome Tour

Group 2 (PMSS, SRT, WSS)

Orientation at Respective Schools  
- First Day of School for Elementary

**Sept. 4** - Orientation Day 2:

Group 1 (GSS, MRSS, THSS)

Orientation at Respective Schools

Group 2 (PMSS, SRT, WSS)

Program Orientation at Riverside & Welcome Tour

**Sept. 30** - Truth & Reconciliation Day

(No Classes)

- North Shore Water & Mountains  
Tour (Optional Field Trip)

**Oct. 1** - Non-Instructional Day (No Classes)

**Oct. 14** - Thanksgiving Day (No Classes)

**Oct. 25** - Non-Instructional Day (No Classes)

- Victoria 1-Day Sightseeing Tour  
(Optional Field Trip)



Quentin from France camping with his host family

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!





MRSS international student good bye party June 2024.

## HOMESTAY COORDINATORS

Yuki Fread has embarked on an exciting new adventure with her family, and we are pleased to welcome Joy Jin to our team of Homestay Coordinators!

Please take a moment to review the homestay catchment assignments and contact information changes below.

### JOY JIN

SUN-THURS 604-353-8823  
joy\_jin@sd42.ca  
GSS, PMSS

### SACHIKO TAKAHASHI

TUES-SAT 604-880-6338  
sachiko\_takahashi@sd42.ca  
WSS

### MEGUMI FORBES-KING

TUES-SAT 604-516-9531  
megumi\_forbes-king@sd42.ca  
SRT, THSS

### CECILIA JEONG

SUN-THURS 604-349-9951  
cecilia\_jeong@sd42.ca  
MRSS

### YURI KIMURA

CASUAL 778-846-6231  
yuri\_kimura@sd42.ca



## HOMESTAY UPDATES

- 1.) Good news! Our homestay program has successfully been approved to request hosts' Criminal Record Checks online free of cost! You will receive and instructions and a link from your Homestay Coordinator when it is time for you to renew. Record Checks will now only need to be updated every 4 years rather than every 3 years.
- 2.) We are happy to announce monthly host fees have increased from \$1050 per month to \$1150 per month, per student, effective from July 1, 2024.
- 3.) The BC Ministry of Education's K-12 Homestay Guidelines have been updated. Please take a moment to review them on our website [here](#).
- 4.) Please advise your Homestay Coordinator of any changes to your family or home including pets, family members moving in/out, dietary restrictions or accommodations, large renovations, family photos, and contact information. We appreciate you disclosing any frequent visitors to the home, such as close family members or partners who do not live in the home permanently, so there are no surprises to students and/or parents.

## HOST FAMILY REFERRALS

Our homestay family referral program is still in effect! If you have friends, relatives, neighbours, or coworkers living within our district who would make a good host family, please refer them to us through your homestay coordinator or [online here](#). Once we onboard the referred family successfully and place a student, you will receive a \$100 PC gift certificate as a thank you!



## COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Our International Department is committed to providing support to the homestay parents and students in our program. We believe in clear, open, and consistent communication. In most cases, minor conflict between a student and host family member can be worked out with a solution that is of mutual benefit. If the issue persists despite your efforts, please do not hesitate to contact your homestay coordinator for support in a timely manner. They can act as a mediator and help build or improve the relationship. We appreciate your efforts to approach conflict in a calm manner, as teens can test boundaries from time to time.

## ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Students are expected to attend all classes. It is important to inform the school if a student will be absent or late. Students must speak with their liaison and teachers to complete all work missed while they were away.

### If students are unavoidably late or absent, the following procedures apply:

- Students who arrive to school late are required to sign in at the office.
- Students who leave the school during the school day must sign out at the office. Confirmation (note or phone call) from a host parent granting permission is required.
- If illness causes a student to miss school, the host parent should notify the school (email/portal/phone call) before 8:30am. Our office can not log absences, only the school which the student attends.
- Students who participate in extra-curricular events should notify the school before the event of their absence.

Excessive unexcused absences and/or late arrivals will result in school-based intervention. If absences persist, students may be placed on an International Education Performance Contract.

## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

School fees, including locks and textbooks, are covered for international students. Supplies for elementary students are taken care of by their agencies. Secondary students should be prepared to start school with basic supplies:

- 1 or 2 binders
- lined paper and/or notebooks
- pencils, pens, eraser, highlighter, ruler
- graphic calculator (for math & sciences)
- P.E. clothing & shoes



Elena (Italy) & Meyra (Germany) in Tofino with their homestay family

## PARENT PORTAL

Host parents are connected to the parent portal automatically to stay informed about upcoming school events. For school field trips (*different than the optional trips offered to international students*) you will need to confirm your student would like to attend via the portal. This will trigger a notification to our department to authorize the trip as the legal custodian. Your email in the portal must match what we have on file. If your email address has changed, please contact your homestay coordinator with an update. To access your parent portal account, click [here](#).

## **TIPS FOR WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS INTO YOUR HOME**

*Welcoming an international student into your home can be challenging for host families. As exciting as the first days are, there is a period of adjustment as everyone learns how to connect and communicate effectively. Here are a few tips and guidelines to help ease the transition:*

### **GIVE YOUR STUDENT A TOUR OF YOUR HOUSE**

Make sure your student feels at home by giving them a tour of your entire home. Show them how to operate appliances and showers. Show them things they will need to know such as where the toilet paper and clean towels are, or which rooms they can bring food into.

### **EXPLAIN HOUSE RULES & EXPECTATIONS**

Setting clear expectations can help to prevent conflict in the future. It is helpful to explain your expectations at the beginning, though you may need to gently remind your student of these once they settle in.

### **BE FLEXIBLE WITH MEALS**

Be patient with your student as they adjust to the types of food and how your family regularly eats. Avoid turning food into another cause of stress as they may already be dealing with culture shock in so many other ways. Students are typically more willing to try new foods once things settle down. Adjusting to a new diet takes time both mentally and physically.

### **LET THEM REST**

Though you may be excited to take your students sightseeing and introduce them to others, try to take it easy when they first arrive. Students may be jet lagged and overwhelmed by their new surroundings and may just want to sleep or stay home. Give them time to rest and adjust in the beginning.

### **PATIENCE & COMMUNICATION**

No matter how great a student or host family is, there WILL be challenges! Being patient and continuing to work at the relationship will help you all get through it. Homestay Coordinators are here to help; remember to reach out to them when you need help working through things and stay in regular communication with them if you have any concerns about your student's well being.

### **GET THEM INVOLVED**

Your student may not know where or how to get involved with an extra-curricular activity or interest. Help them to get connected either at school or in the community by showing them where things are such as the Leisure Centre or gym. Schools have many after-school clubs and sport teams your student can join. Encourage your student to get involved by showing them the options on their school's website or by connecting them with school staff who can help.



Marlene (Germany) & Seongrim (S. Korea) at WildPlay with their host mom who won the May raffle for passes!

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

*Engagement with your student is a vital part of the homestay family role. Small positive interactions go a long way when it comes to building a relationship and making them feel welcome and included in your home. Students want to experience day-to-day life with their host family. Here are a few simple ways you can initiate interactions:*

- Ask about their day. Discuss their plans for the day or which class they look forward to. Avoid "yes or no" questions to get them talking. For example: "What did you do with your friends?" or "What did you learn in Science class today?"
- Do the dishes or pack leftovers for lunch together after a meal.
- Teach them how to make your recipes, or let them teach you!
- Watch a weekly TV show together.
- Take them with you to run errands such as groceries, hardware store etc.
- Invite them to your children's sport practices/games, or have them try the sport outside together.
- Go for a walk around the neighbourhood or local park after dinner.
- Ask them about their life, friends, or family back home. Allowing them to share this with you often brings students comfort and joy.

## MEDICAL INSURANCE

International students are insured through StudyInsured, which allows us to provide better service and additional support to students and host families when dealing with medical issues. More information and helpful print-outs for Study Insured can be found online [here](#).

StudyInsured's online Virtual Health service connects students with doctors who can support them online with services available in multiple languages. 24 hour multilingual support is available through their INTREPID24/7 service. **For any medical needs that may arise, such as clinic or hospital visits, your first call should always be to their toll-free 24/7 medical help line: 1-866-883-9787.**

Students can also access free professional counselling and mental health assistance by phone at **1-833-646-1524**. Calls are completely private and will not be shared with our program, schools, parents, or the insurance company.

Full year students are registered for MSP after they have been in Canada for 3 months. An MSP number and BC Services Card will be provided to the student. It is very important that the student and/or host family do **NOT** change the mailing address for MSP. This could happen when taking the student to the hospital or doctor and they ask to confirm the student's address. Changing the address will cause invoices to be delivered to your home. Our office address should remain on file: 20575 Thorne Avenue, V2X 9A6.

If you have questions regarding insurance coverage, please reach out to your homestay coordinator or contact our office for assistance.



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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

