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ADMISSION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS-REGULATIONS

Policy Statement

Regional School Unit 54/Maine School Administrative District 54 recognizes the diversity and cultural awareness that foreign exchange students bring to the academic and social life of our schools and communities. Therefore, we support and encourage the placement of these students by responsible organizations and/or individuals. Foreign exchange students will be welcome in Skowhegan Area High School under the following guidelines.

Regulations Pertaining to J-1 Students

J-1 exchange students are those who have obtained their non-immigrant J-1 visa and admission to the US based on a certificate of eligibility (Form IAP-66), which may only be issued by a responsible officer from a USIA designated program. This officer is obligated to ensure compliance with USIA regulations by both the sponsoring organization and its program participants. Consequently, the exchange visitor is the responsibility of the program sponsor-not the host family, school or other party where the student is placed.

A. School Regulations

1. RSU 54/MSAD 54 will accept students from those programs which are USIA designated and approved for listing by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). Programs must apply in writing for participation in the RSU 54/MSAD 54 school district and their local representative must meet with the principal and/or a designated representative. The principal or designated representative will evaluate those programs applying for acceptance.
2. Skowhegan Area High School (SAHS) will accept up to six (6) students during any one semester. Placement will be approved for an equal number of students from each approved exchange program per semester. If openings for placement are still available by March 1st, the remaining openings will be filled on a first come first served basis.
3. Organizations must first place a student with a host family in RSU 54/MSAD 54 prior to requesting approval of acceptance in writing from

the principal or his/her designee. This written approval must be obtained by August 1st for those students entering the fall semester or December 1st for those entering the spring semester.

4. RSU 54/MSAD 54 will accept students between the ages of 14 and 18 and ½ years old.
5. SAHS will grant academic credit for work completed based on the same criteria used for US students.
6. SAHS will waive tuition fees for those exchange students living within the District.
7. Exchange students must comply with all RSU 54/MSAD 54 and SAHS policies.
8. Exchange students will be enrolled in classes on a space available basis after local Skowhegan Area High School students have been enrolled.

B. Program Sponsor Responsibilities

1. Programs must screen students for the following qualifications:
 - a. English Language Proficiency. Programs must provide proof of adequate English language proficiency to study in a US high school. The criteria for such proficiency will be satisfactory scores on a standard ESL test (i.e. SLEP). If a student is found to be deficient in English, the program must provide a tutor until adequate proficiency is attained.
 - b. Personal Qualifications. Programs must evaluate students through a personal interview and submit a recommendation from the student's principal or designee.
 - c. Previous Academic Record. Programs must submit proof of satisfactory completion of the course of study followed in the student's home school.
2. Programs must screen prospective host families on the basis of a personal interview in their home. Every effort should be made to match families and students on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.
3. Programs must provide a pre-departure orientation for their students in the home country and language. In addition, the local representative must hold an orientation meeting with the student and his/her family

within one (1) week of the student's arrival. Local representatives must provide orientation for the host family prior to the arrival of the student.

4. For each enrolled student, the program must provide the following information;
 - a. Insurance verification in English
 - b. Health and Immunization records; current physical, including clearance to participate in athletics, if applicable.
 - c. English translation of transcript
 - d. Name, address and telephone of agency contact person
 - e. Host family information including name, address, telephone