



Foreign Exchange Student Enrollment & Eligibility Guidelines

The Mansfield Independent School District's (MISD) foreign exchange program provides students from other countries the opportunity to learn about the history of the United States, the working of our government, and to become more fluent in both the written and spoken English language. Students are encouraged to take an active part in the academic process and to experience the social culture of youth in the MISD.

The following guidelines are provided to assist foreign exchange organizations, foreign exchange students, and host families in understanding the District's foreign exchange program:

I. Foreign Exchange Organizations

- a. Foreign exchange organizations shall meet the requirements, and be listed ("Listing Status: Full") on the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) approved list of foreign exchange organizations for the school year in which placement is requested. The CSIET approved list may be found at www.csiet.org.
- b. Foreign exchange organizations must be able to bring the student via a J-1 Exchange Visitor Visa, since Board policy and State law prohibit the MISD from issuing an I-20 form for a student to obtain an F-1 Visa.
- c. The MISD has obtained a waiver from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to limit the number of foreign exchange students to a maximum of five (5) foreign exchange students per high school per year. Foreign exchange students shall not be permitted to enroll in Frontier High School @ Ben Barber Career Tech Academy (BBCTA).
- d. Placements will be made on a first come, first serve basis. The foreign exchange organization representative will contact the MISD Director of Guidance & Counseling after March 1 and prior to August 1 to inquire whether any openings are available at a particular high school, and if so, to begin the placement process (see MISD Foreign Exchange Student Placement Process).
- e. Waiting lists will not be maintained to hold a company's or student's request for enrollment. Only completed documentation will be accepted and only if the waiver limit has not been met.
- f. Foreign exchange students will only be accepted for one calendar year, and they must be enrolled before the first day of school in the fall semester. Foreign exchange students will not be approved for a single semester.
- g. If a foreign exchange student is returned to his/her home country or is moved to another district during the school year, no new foreign exchange student will replace the withdrawn student.

II. Host Families

- a. Host families must be residents of the accepting high school's attendance zone. Host families must provide proof of residency in the form of a current (within last 30 days) electric bill, gas bill, water bill, or lease agreement. In addition, it is strongly recommended that the host family have a student attending the same high school that the foreign exchange student will attend.

III. Foreign Exchange Students

- a. The foreign exchange student must be between 16 and 18 years of age by September 1 of the school year in which he/she plans to attend a MISD high school.
- b. The foreign exchange student must have been enrolled in high school in his or her home country the semester preceding the exchange.
- c. No exchange student who has completed the equivalent of the 12th grade in his or her home country, has received a diploma or a certificate of graduation, or is considered eligible for college or university placement will be eligible to attend a MISD high school.
- d. Foreign exchange students who meet graduation requirements in Texas and wish to complete their studies in MISD schools must declare their intent to graduate upon enrollment. Once their intent to graduate has been declared, a full transcript evaluation will be conducted by their high school counselor. The student will be classified and given a schedule with the appropriate courses, thus, becoming like any other MISD student seeking graduation.
- e. Foreign exchange students who do not wish to pursue graduation shall sign a waiver of graduation upon enrollment.
- f. Foreign exchange students who sign the waiver of graduation will not receive a high school diploma from the MISD. They will, however, receive a certificate of attendance. Foreign exchange students will be awarded their certificate of attendance at their campus' graduation ceremony; however, they will not wear caps and gowns.
- g. Foreign exchange students will be classified at a level no higher than the 11th grade. Foreign exchange students may, however, be permitted to participate in senior level (12th grade) events/activities at the discretion of the campus principal or designee.
- h. Foreign exchange students will not be placed in the class ranking.
- i. Foreign exchange students, by signing the waiver of graduation, become exempt from state mandated testing (TAKS and/or End of Course exams). In addition, foreign exchange students will not be afforded the opportunity to take the ACT Plan, PSAT, or ASVAB on the MISD College/Career Day of Testing in October.
- j. Foreign exchange students will take a full course load typical of any other MISD student. Their schedule will include English 3 (American literature), United States history, one science course, one math course, and electives as deemed appropriate.
- k. Foreign exchange students shall not participate in work-based programs.
- l. Foreign exchange students wishing to participate in athletics, fine arts, and other activities/competitions governed by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) must submit to the UIL rules and regulations governing participation. Participation is not conveyed with high school placement. Coaches and sponsors of extracurricular activities will be responsible for checking and obtaining proper credentials for participation in each activity.
- m. Foreign exchange students are subject to MISD attendance and discipline regulations and policy and are expected to participate fully in their classes. Students must be in attendance at least 90 percent of days each course is offered to receive credit.

For further information, please contact:

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