



International Orientation

School District No. 48

SEA to SKY

Squamish

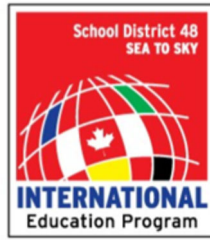
Whistler

Pemberton



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WELCOME FROM THE INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPAL

Welcome to all our International students to the beautiful district of Sea to Sky, encompassing three extraordinary communities: Squamish, home of the Chief; Whistler, where you can ski, hike and ride Whistler-Blackcomb; and spectacular Pemberton, gateway to Joffre Lakes Provincial Park and some of the best mountain biking trails you will find.

The International Student Program is a very special program for our District. It brings together students from all over the world to connect in friendship and in appreciation of different cultures and languages. We care about our international students and want to ensure that every student has a rewarding, enriching experience while making many fond memories.

In SeatoSky, you will discover the “real” Canadian experience. Take advantage of your time here, not only be successful in your studies, but also to participate in our community. Sharing your culture and values with the local community members is just as important as learning about Canadian culture and values.

Congratulations on taking the step to pursue your studies here in our District. Yours sincerely,

Faizel Rawji
District Principal
International Education
School District 48, Sea to Sky

KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

The office is located in the Sea to Sky School Board building: 37866 2nd Avenue, Squamish

Mailing address: PO Box 250, Squamish, BC V8B 0A2

Phone: 604-892-5228 Fax: 604-892-1038

International Program after hours/weekend **Emergency Phone # 604-892-4691**

ADMISSIONS/ENROLMENT INFORMATION

District Principal

International Education

Mr. Faizel Rawji

Tel: 604 892 5228 x 134

Cell: 778-266-0756

frawji@sd48.bc.ca

Clerical Assistant/Admissions and Enrolment

Ms. Janet Smillie

Tel: 604 892 5228 x 134

jsmillie@sd48.bc.ca

HOMESTAY COORDINATORS

District Homestay Coordinator

Mrs. Anne MacDougall

Cell: 604 849 0820

amacdougall@sd48.bc.ca

Homestay Coordinator, Squamish

Ms. Karen Tapp

Cell:

ktapp@sd48.bc.ca

Homestay Coordinator, Whistler/Pemberton

Mr. Steven McCullough

Cell: 604 966 8797

smccullough@sd48.bc.ca

WEBSITES

International Program Website:

www.high-school-canada.com

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Facebook

School District 48: Sea to Sky

International Education Program

Don Ross Middle School

www.sd48donross.org

Howe Sound Secondary

www.sd48howesound.org

Whistler Secondary

www.sd48whistlersecondary.org

Pemberton Secondary

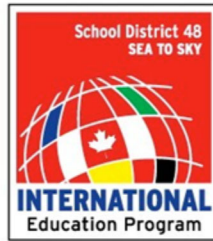
www.sd48pemberton.org

Learning Connections

www.seatoskylearningconnections.com

School District 48

www.sd48seatosky.org



YOUR HOST FAMILY AND LIVING IN CANADA

The Sea to Sky International Student Homestay program tries to ensure students and families are well matched. Your new family is excited you are becoming part of their family and they want to ensure you enjoy your stay in Canada. Living in Canada with a Canadian family will be different at times from your own family and culture. To make the most of your Canadian living experience, have an open mind.

Be prepared to participate fully in family life and share in the responsibilities of being a family member.

Try everything at least once! Participate with your family in our many outdoor activities. You may simply spend time together watching movies or television, helping to prepare a meal or playing a game with the children in the family. It is important not to spend too much time in your room.

Your family will ask you to join them in family social events and recreational outings. Some special activities might have extra costs associated with them and you are expected to assist in bearing the costs. If you choose not to participate in the activity, then you and the homestay parents should make alternate arrangements that are acceptable to everyone.

If there are young children in the family, treat the children respectfully and kindly. At the same time, don't be afraid to tell younger children to leave your room saying, "I have to study now" or "I need some rest."

As an international student, you are expected to contribute to the routine operation of the household. If there's a problem, you should talk with your homestay parents first and try to resolve the problem as you would at home with your own parents. If you feel you are not being understood, you should contact the Homestay Coordinator. Most issues can be resolved with open and honest communication.

Always **ask** your homestay parents' permission before making plans. Be sure to tell them:

- Where you would like to go
- How you will get there
- Who you will be with
- When you will be home

It is important to return on time or advise your homestay family by telephone if you will be late or if you are changing plans. Your homestay family may refuse your request for permission to participate in certain activities. Reasons for their refusal could include concern for your safety or a conflict with their plans.

The first few weeks living in a new family might, at times, be challenging. You may feel homesick and frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings!

CHORES

Most Canadian children participate in the running of the household, which means they will have assigned chores. You might also be required to help out with these daily chores. Families appreciate it when you volunteer to keep your room clean and do general chores, such as setting the table, loading the dishwasher, or helping to prepare dinner. Depending on the family you are living with you might be asked to do your own laundry. Your homestay family will help you with this and show you how the washer and dryer works.

MEALS

Depending on how busy your family is, they might want you to prepare your own breakfast and lunch. If you plan to be away at a meal time then food will be made available for you to prepare or to heat in the microwave. If your homestay mom or dad is away at meal time, ask them what you should prepare for dinner.

Most students take their lunch to school. Often this is a sandwich, or perhaps some leftovers in a container, fruit, raw vegetables, or cookies. Most schools have a microwave, which is accessible for students to use to warm meals. Always fill and take your water bottle!

The evening meal in Canada is the most important meal of the day. Families like to have dinner together and connect with each other and discuss their day. It is important that you eat with your family at least 4 nights (or more) per week to connect with them and build your English skills. You might offer to share your culture by preparing a special dish from your home country for your Canadian family.

ALLERGIES AND MEDICATIONS

Make a list of any allergies you have to give to your homestay family on arrival. It also helps to give them a list of any medicine including any supplements or homeopathic medicines you take regularly.

CELL PHONES

You should have a cellular phone with a Canadian # and minutes and/or data on it so that your host family may reach you at all times and vice versa. You are encouraged to have your own laptop, too, in order to be able to communicate. This is all to maintain communication with your homestay family, natural family and the International Program. Please limit your time with technology to allow time for study and opportunities to interact with your homestay family.

DRIVING, BUSES AND WALKING

Canadian families teach their children to be independent at an early age. Please do not rely on your host family to drive you everywhere. School District buses will take students to and from school if they live beyond the "walk limit". Your homestay family will show you the bus schedule and explain where to get on and off the bus. Your homestay parent should be available to drive you to activities at the school or in the community if you make polite and reasonable requests in advance. Discuss your plans and your upcoming activities and work with your homestay family to share rides with other students to and from activities. You should not ever walk alone in the dark. Always wear bright clothing and stay off the road at night.

CANADIAN BATHROOMS

You may be sharing a bathroom with a busy family. Find out what your family's expectations are concerning the use of the bathroom. Here are some general guidelines:

- Your family will provide necessary bathroom items such as toilet paper, soap, and towels.
- Bathroom floors in Canada don't have drains; so keep water in the basin and the bathtub. Place the shower curtain inside the bathtub when showering.
- Generally, a shower should last no more than 8 minutes and showers should not be taken late at night when everyone is asleep.
- Leave the bathroom clean and dry after you use it—remove debris from the drains.
- Feminine hygiene products should always be wrapped in tissue and placed in the wastebasket, but never flushed down the toilet.

ETIQUETTE IN PUBLIC

- It is considered polite to say hello to people on the street when you make eye contact with them
- If you bump into somebody, say “Sorry” or “Excuse me.”
- Hold swinging or heavy doors for people who are following you in and out of rooms.
- You may have to adjust your voice level to ensure it’s not too loud. Take your cue from the tones of other people.
- Keep to the right when walking or going up escalators.
- If you’re the first person on an elevator it’s common to hold the door for others, either physically or by pressing the appropriate button on the control panel.
- In most places you wait in line for your turn to be served or take a number if ones available.
- It is impolite to spit in public.

MANNERS AT THE TABLE

- Table manners are Continental in style but are fairly informal.
- It is polite to wait until everyone is seated before starting.
- Elbows should not be on the table. It is acceptable to refuse certain foods you do not like or refuse a second helping without insult.
- Food is generally passed around the table. Don’t reach over somebody to get to dishes. Ask someone to pass it to you.
- In some cultures people show appreciation for food by making a lot of noises. In Canada, however, making loud noises while eating is considered impolite

IMPORTANT PROGRAM RULES:

- You must not use alcohol or illegal drugs.
- You are not permitted to drive or rent cars or motorized vehicles.
- You are not allowed to stay overnight anywhere without preapproved adult supervision.
- You are not permitted to get tattoos or piercings during your stay in our program.
- If you commit an offence under Canadian law, you will be dealt with by the RCMP and/or Immigration Canada, as necessary.
- If you found to be involved in sexual activity, your parents and agent will be notified immediately.
- Immigration Canada does not permit high school students holding a visitor’s visa or study permit to hold paying jobs in Canada.

DISMISSAL POLICIES

An international student may be dismissed from the program at any time, for a number of reasons. These include but are not limited to:

- A failure to abide by program rules, including following SD 48 International and School District Codes of Conduct
- A failure to obey a Canadian law
- Exhibiting behaviour that puts at risk the personal safety of the student or of others

MEDICAL INSURANCE AND ILLNESS

All international students will have adequate medical insurance coverage for the full period of their stay in Canada. The program arranges this insurance as part of the application process.

You will receive your insurance card with a brochure explaining your coverage. Medical coverage for all students begins the day you arrive in Canada.

HOW TO MAKE A CLAIM

Some private doctors or health care services outside the community might require you to pay for these services up front. Always contact the emergency Assistance number on the card and let them know you are seeking medical care. You will need to submit the receipt for the services along with a claim form available on the *Guard Me* website. **Original receipts must be included.** Claims must be submitted within 90 days of the service received. Monies reimbursed will be in Canadian dollars only. See the brochure for more details on how to claim or contact the Administrative Assistant in the International Department.

Your host family can help you make a claim.

TRAVELING OUTSIDE OF CANADA

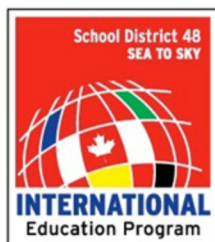
If you travel outside of Canada (except to your home country) while enrolled in the Sea to Sky International program you will have coverage for all eligible medical expenses. If you are travelling to the US you will have coverage for up to 30 days only. The total out of country coverage including the 30 days to the US must not exceed more than 50% of the length of the policy.

For more information on Insurance please visit the *Guard Me* website www.guard.me/index.php

PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton are safe communities to live in. Violent crime is not common and not very likely to occur to a resident or student. However, thefts, pick-pocketing, and small crimes sometimes do happen. The most common type of crime is theft. **DO NOT:** leave your purse, backpack, or other property unattended in public places, including school (library, classroom, multi-purpose room, etc.) Do not bring expensive electronics to school. **Never leave expensive bicycles or sports equipment in public places for any length of time, even locked.**

Police, Fire and Ambulance emergency phone 911



STUDYING IN CANADA

TIPS FOR STUDYING IN CANADA

- Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand. Teachers expect to be questioned.
- Make sure you understand assignments that are given. If you're quiet, that will be taken as a sign of understanding.
- Teachers are usually available before and after school for questions and extra help.
- Be on time for class. If you can't attend or be on time, your host family must contact the school to let them know.. If you miss classes, see the teacher the next day to find out what was missed.
- You will probably find the classes more informal in Canada. You will also have to organize your own time since you won't be given a schedule to cover non-class time.
- Plan your time carefully, balancing schoolwork, English practice, exercise and fun.
- Hand in all assignments on the day they are due. If you are not able to finish your assignment on time, talk to your teacher before it is due. If you miss any assignments or exams, see the teacher and ask if there is any way to make up.
- Organize your notes in a binder.

MAKE FRIENDS AND IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH

Canadian students socialize at school. The best way to make friends and to improve your English is to get involved. Join school clubs such as choir, drama, band and sports teams. Join school trips and get involved in community activities outside of school at the local community centers.

Consider getting involved in activities through a variety of ways. Join the community sports teams, take part in volunteer activities and take extracurricular courses in art and music.

**Make the most of
your time in Canada!**