

Student Handbook



**MAPLE RIDGE
PITT MEADOWS**
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

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**MAPLE RIDGE
PITT MEADOWS**
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM





Message from the Principal

Tricia McCuaig

Welcome to the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows School District and International Program! Our schools have been welcoming students from around the world for more than 20 years. Whether you want to improve your English, immerse yourself in Canadian culture or remain with us to graduate, we offer a high-quality education and homestay experience. Our program and school staff will help you to achieve your goals in a supportive and dynamic environment. You will have the opportunity to focus on languages, sciences, mathematics, social studies, art, theatre, music, athletics (including soccer, basketball and hockey academies and dance), digital arts and so much more. There are many extra-curricular clubs, activities, and special events in which you can participate and make new friends. International education increases global education, awareness, connections, and understanding. Our schools value equity, diversity, and inclusion. We hope that your journey with us will provide you with the opportunity to learn, grow and experience all that our school district and beautiful community has to offer!

Introduction

Located in the Metro Vancouver Area the International Program of the *Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows School District No. 42* has been welcoming international students from elementary to high school age for more than 20 years.

The dedicated staff at the International Education office truly appreciates the opportunity to work with our international students to help them achieve their goals. We are committed to providing high quality educational programming and homestay support to ensure our students have an authentic Canadian experience.



Important People Overview



International Education Office

The International Education office is located at Riverside Centre (20575 Thorne Ave.) The staff in the office can assist you with questions about international student trips, health insurance, and many other questions you might have. The Homestay Coordinators are also in this office. International students are always welcome to come to our office.



International Liaison Teacher

The International Liaison teacher at your school is responsible to support international students with any academic questions or concerns.

Host Family

Your host family is an important part of your study abroad experience. They are there to support you and provide you with a caring and safe place to live. They can help you to understand life in Canada.

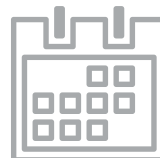
Homestay Coordinator

Your homestay coordinator is the staff member in the International Education office who placed you with your host family. They are responsible for helping you with any concerns you have regarding homestay. If you are having difficulty communicating or have questions about living in Canada they are able to help you. Your homestay coordinator will be at your school 1 day a week and will contact you to check in and see how you are doing.



Cell Phones

If you want to get a cell phone when you are here in Canada there are many choices. The main cell phone providers are **Rogers, Telus, Bell** and **Fido**. You should sign up for a *prepaid plan* and not a monthly plan. Homestay parents cannot sign your contracts. There are some companies that work with international students such as **PhoneBox**, that might be able to provide more options.



Banking

Depending on your age and length of stay in Canada you might be able to open an international student bank account. The major banks in the Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows area:

Bank of Montreal (BMO)

Toronto Dominion (TD)

Royal Bank (RBC)

Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC)

Each bank has different requirements to open an account it usually will require your passport and study permit. Your host family can help you to contact the banks and find out what the requirements are. Homestay parents cannot sign any documents on your behalf.





Code of Conduct Secondary Program

Abide by the laws of British Columbia, Canada and your home country

Abide by host school code of conduct (accessible via school websites)

Treat fellow students and school staff with respect at all times

Attend all classes and required activities (do not incur unexcused absences)

Be punctual

Practice academic honesty and demonstrate sincere effort on assigned work

Complete assignments on time and seek help when needed

Respect homestay rules – When away from home on free time, let host family know where you will be and provide contact details

Do not buy, sell or use alcohol or possess intoxicants (including marijuana)

Do not get any body piercings and/or tattoos

Academic Expectations

During your new student orientation you will be required to agree to the *International Education department's Code of Conduct*.

School Attendance

An important part of being successful in school is to not miss class. You are expected to attend school every day. If you are feeling sick please tell your host family and they will contact the school to excuse you.

Expectations

- I will respectfully and responsibly represent the International Education Program and my school.
- I will inform the school of any absences. I will not miss an extended number of classes or leave before the end of the official school year/term.
- I will strive to pass all of my classes, and progress to the best of my ability.
- I will not travel without completing and submitting the necessary documents, and understand that I must obtain official permission and be supervised by a responsible adult over the age of 25.
- I will not drive or operate a vehicle in Canada as long as I am a student in the SD42 International Education Program.



Curfew

It is important to speak with your host family about what time you need to be home. Your curfew will probably be different from your friend's who is at a different host family. If you have questions about curfews you can speak with your host family or homestay coordinator.

Expectations

In your homestay you will have your own room with a bed, desk, closet and a window. Your host family will also make sure you have breakfast, lunch and dinner. In Canada, it is common for breakfast to be self-serve and cold, such as cereal, fruits and yogurt. For lunch, students usually make their own like sandwiches or take some left overs from the previous dinner. Dinner is usually the biggest meal of the day, and a time you will sit down with your host family and have a meal together.

Communication

Communicating with your host family is an important part of a successful homestay experience. There are many ways you can keep in touch like sending a text message or calling them. Face to face is always the best. You should always ask your host family's permission if you would like to go out with friends or invite people to your homestay.



Metro Vancouver



Weather



The Vancouver area has 4 seasons, Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. Fall temperatures are usually around 19 degrees to 5 degrees and is from September to mid December. September is warmer and sunnier and then the weather gets darker and it begins to rain. Winter is from mid December to mid March usually around 10 to 0 degrees with only a few days below 0 and usually 2 or 3 days of snow. It rains in the winter so it is a good idea to have appropriate clothing. Spring is from mid March to mid June and is usually between 10 to 20 degrees. In the beginning it is still rainy but gradually gets sunnier closer to June.

Clothing

You should ensure you have warm clothing and some waterproof outerwear. In the late fall and winter you will need some warm tops and outerwear and in the late spring some t-shirts. Anything you are missing you can purchase at the local shopping malls or on a weekend shopping trip to downtown Vancouver!

Transportation

There is easy access to public transit in the Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows area. Most students will take the public bus to school and on the weekends you have easy access to other areas in Metro Vancouver where you can find many shopping malls, restaurants, tourist attractions and much more. Check out our video "Things to do in Maple Ridge and Vancouver!" On our YouTube channel to find out more about getting around in the Metro Vancouver area!



Student Life

Medical Forms

All international students studying in our school district are covered by medical insurance arranged by our department. The type of medical insurance you have will depend on how long you are studying with us. Students studying with us for 5 months or less will be placed on comprehensive private insurance called StudyInsured. Students studying 6 months or longer will be placed on BC government MSP insurance with top up coverage from StudyInsured. If you would like more information about the private insurance please visit our website:

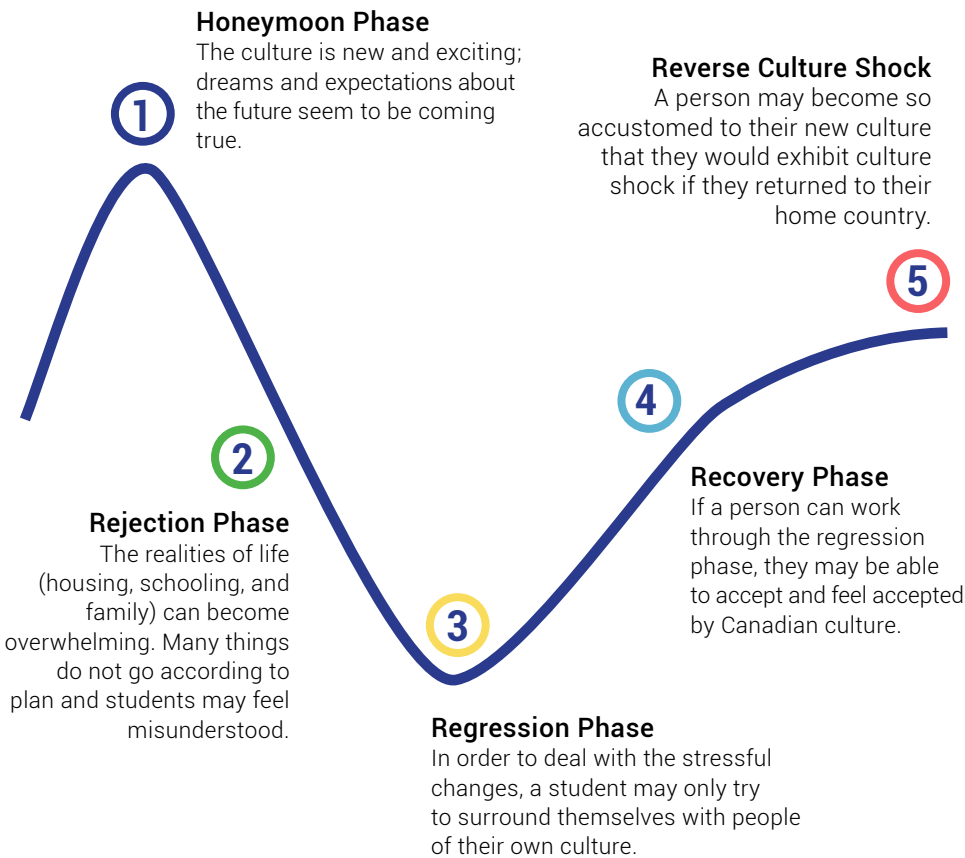
<https://inted.sd42.ca/student-life/medical-insurance/>



Trips and Excursions

Do you want to try skiing? Want to see the Rocky Mountains? There are various monthly trips and excursions you can participate in. The list of trips, dates, times and cost can be found on our website. When registration is open, our office will send you an email.





Culture Shock and Homesickness

Coming to and living in a new country is an exciting time. You will see and do many things you may have never done before. It is important to know that sometimes you will miss home and feel homesick and that there will be ups and downs. Anytime you are feeling sad or missing home please remember you can speak with your host family, homestay coordinator or the teachers and staff at the school.



Community Access

There are many different activities available in the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows area. You can go to the local recreation centre to swim, workout or participate in other activities. Our area has many different parks and hiking trails that students can go to along with many other outdoor activities. There are various small shopping centres, restaurants and cafes you can hang out with your friends when you are not in school.





Personal Safety

General Safety Tips

B.C. is generally a very safe place to live. It is still important to be aware of your surroundings and follow some general safety tips:

- Never open your door to strangers
- Make sure that doors and windows are securely locked at night or when you leave
- Tell your host family where you are going and what time you will be home
- Travel with a friend whenever you can
- Plan ahead and get directions to where you are going before you leave home
- Make sure to keep all valuables such as passport, credit cards and wallet in a safe and secure place
- Program emergency telephone numbers and contact information for your homestay family and school into your phone

Stay Visible

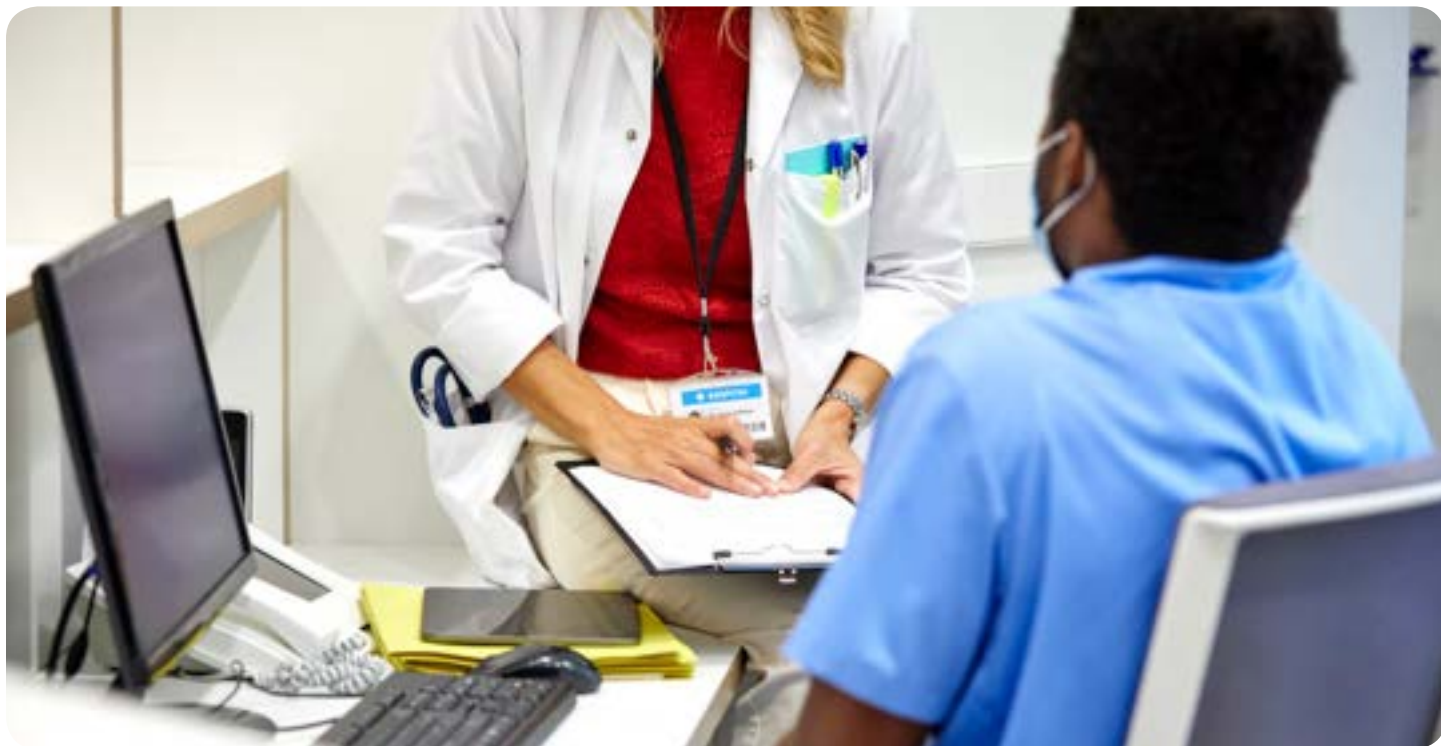
- When walking on the streets, cross the street at crosswalks and follow pedestrian signs and traffic signals (never cross if signal is yellow or red), never assume a car driver can see you, make yourself visible, especially when dark outside
- If you are bicycling, you must wear a helmet by law, stay where drivers can see you, wear reflective clothing and use lights when dark out

Online Safety

- Keep your personal information private - do not share on social media



In Case of **Emergency**



EMERGENCY
POLICE CALL
FIRE 911
MEDICAL

Fire, Police or Ambulance

Today, it's as simple as dialing 911. With those three numbers, you can reach the fire department, the police, or an ambulance.

When you call 911, an emergency operator- called a dispatcher- immediately connects you to the person you need.

International Education After Hours

Answering Service
(Emergency Line)

604-345-9802

Travel *without* Host Family

Day & Overnight Trips

Students traveling outside the Metro Vancouver area overnight must have an adult 25 years of age or older accompanying them at all times.

Final decision about a travel request rests with the Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows International Program Office. The explanation, “My parents says it's ok” will not be accepted.

If travel will result in missed classes, students must talk to their teachers and International Liaison directly as well as receive approval from the International Program Office.

A Travel Application is needed for both overnight and single day travel outside of the Metro Vancouver area.

If students are traveling overnight outside of the Metro Vancouver area, natural parents must sign the parental acknowledgment. Please note the final decision about a travel request is with the International Program Office.

Students may travel with their parents, but the International Program Office must be notified.



Travel Regulations

International students are required to remain in the Metro Vancouver area and are not permitted to travel to any other city without approval from the International Program Office. Students who wish to travel outside Metro Vancouver must apply to the International Program Office for permission and must do the following:

- Complete ALL information on the Travel Application Form, they can be obtained from your homestay coordinator or downloaded on our website
- The form must be returned to your homestay coordinator via email or in person and must be received at least 5 days prior to the desired travel date. If the complete information has not been given travel may not be approved.
- The responsible homestay coordinator will contact the host family to inform them if travel has or has not been approved.

Travel with Host Family

- If a student is traveling with their host family outside of the Metro Vancouver area and within British Columbia no travel application is required.
- Host families must inform their homestay coordinator prior to travel and provide all information.

Travel to the USA with or without Host Family:

- A Travel Application must be completed and by signed by the student's natural parents.
- For travel to the USA, students must ensure they have the correct VISA and carry their StudyInsured Medical Information at all times.

Travel Form



STUDENT TRAVEL APPLICATION

Students must complete the Travel Application form for any travel without their host family outside of the Metro Vancouver area. This applies for both day trips and overnight trips. For more information please review the travel regulations on the website at www.inted.sd42.ca/travel-forms/

Travel Applications must be submitted to your homestay coordinator **at least 5 days prior to the trip.**

Date of Application: _____ School Name: _____

Student's Legal Name: _____

Destination (City/Country): _____

Dates of Travel (Fill Below)

Departure date: _____ Return date: _____

Departure time: _____ Return time: _____

Method of Travel: _____

Purpose: (Explain the reason for this trip. Be specific.)

FOR OVERNIGHT TRIPS

ACCOMMODATION – where you are staying while away:

Family Name _____ Phone/cell () _____

Address _____ City _____

Parental Acknowledgment.

Students requesting to travel overnight outside of Metro Vancouver (other than travelling to their home country) will also need to have their natural parents complete the portion below:

I _____ the natural parent of _____
 hereby I confirm that I am aware of the travel my child intends to do according to the above information. I fully understand that this trip is not part of Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School Districts International Program and supervision during this trip is only as indicated above. As such, I fully understand and acknowledge that there are inherent risks by allowing my child to travel. I hereby release and hold harmless The Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District, its officers, employees and the host family of any liability or responsibility for my child during the duration of this trip. I have been advised to purchase additional Medical Coverage.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Date Received: _____ Approved: YES NO Notified on: _____

By E-mail _____ Phone _____ Initials _____

My Notes
