



# PALLISER SCHOOL DIVISION International Student Program HOMESTAY FAMILY HANDBOOK



# Welcome!

We would like to extend a warm welcome and thank you for your participation in Palliser School Division International Homestay Program. Our home stay families are an integral and crucial part to the success and reputation of our program. For international students, staying with a local family is one of the most important aspects of their Canadian experience, as you become their “family away from home”. You are not merely offering just room and board to these students. Your role is to offer a safe, caring and nurturing environment for them to live in, just as you would for your own children. Your involvement is a wonderful way to make a profound difference in an international student’s life by opening your home to them while at the same time, allowing your family members to gain a knowledge and appreciation of other cultures and their traditions. By becoming a host family, you will gain wonderful memories and lifetime friendships and connections. It also provides an excellent opportunity for international students to develop conversational English skills and to experience life as part of a typical Canadian family.

Host families offer students support as they adjust to living away from home in a different culture and environment. You are there to provide the student with a safe and caring environment and to help to ensure that their experience, both academic and otherwise, are meaningful and positive. We try to match students and families as best as we can in order to ensure a great experience for all.

We truly hope this experience will benefit you, your family and your international student.

**Further information about Palliser’s International Program can be located here.**

<https://www.palliserinternationaleducation.com/>

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## **1. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION**

We encourage you to reach out to our International Student Team with questions at [palliser\\_international@pallisersd.ab.ca](mailto:palliser_international@pallisersd.ab.ca)

## **2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOMESTAY PROVIDERS**

Host families are an integral part of the lives of the students who stay with them. Deciding to become a homestay family is a serious commitment. It involves sharing of family time, attention, home space and personal energy. Homestay providers essentially become the “parents” of the student(s) and act on behalf of their family in their home country. The ultimate goal is for the students to experience academic, personal and social success during their stay.

Part of this responsibility includes using good judgement when issues surface and making decisions that are in the student’s best interests. We suggest that when making decisions regarding the students that the homestay family uses the values and expectations they have for their own children. At the same time, however, a successful homestay will also be sensitive to the student’s cultural background.

We commend homestay families who make the effort to share Canadian culture, acquaint the students with local sites of interest and arrange activities that the student may wish to participate in. Overseeing homework, talking and encouraging students through discouraging times are also very important to the student’s overall success. When students feel safe and cared for, their transition to Canadian life will be much smoother.

Initially, your student may be overwhelmed and may not be able to absorb everything on the first day. Your student may not be able to understand everything you say so you may find you will need to explain things more than once. Though we sometimes enjoy the humor and novelty of cultural differences, we also need to be sensitive to discomforts and difficulties. People of different cultures present themselves in various ways. What you may take as indifference, coolness, slowness, thoughtlessness or rudeness in the student may only be a mutual misunderstanding of signals. We ask that you please be patient and things will fall into place.

Host families should expect shyness. Some Asian students for example can be perceived as shy and the outward affection we often show to each other (such as hugging) is generally embarrassing to them. You should also expect homesickness, some difficulty in communicating and the occasional bout of tears. The academic workload may also be very demanding in the beginning due to the lack of understanding of the English language. Be supportive of your student and comfort them.

The homestay compensation provided by Palliser is intended to cover room, board and parental guidance. Homestay payments are issued on a monthly basis.

If you and your family take your student to a restaurant or attraction (for example), it would be a reasonable expectation that you pick up the cost of the meal/admission. If your student takes part in a school trip (e.g. a ski trip), unless otherwise pre-arranged, the student should pay for the outing, but the host family would be required to provide a bag lunch or lunch money for the day.

You are encouraged to give your evaluation of the International Student Program, its successes, problems, and your suggestions for other host families. If your experience has been positive, we hope you will tell other interested families about the program.

## **2.1 How are international students matched with families?**

The International Student Coordinator will review applications from both potential homestay families and incoming students. They will note hobbies and interests, food preferences, health concerns and allergies, special talents, social preferences and so on. From this information, a match will be made and both the family and student will be informed of the match.

Although great care is taken to match students with appropriate families, this is not a science and sometimes the match is not quite right, and the student may need to be moved. This is not to be viewed as a criticism of the homestay family or the student. That said, a homestay move is a last-resort solution, so all efforts are taken to get the right fit the first time, to prevent unnecessary disruption and upset in the lives of the students and homestay families.

## **2.2 Can you host more than one student?**

We have found that for many students and homestay families, hosting two international students works well, provided they have different first languages. We prefer not to place students together if they have the same first language, as there is a tendency for students to fall back on it for communication, rather than having to rely on English as the only common language. The decision however, to host more than one student in your home is based on input from all stakeholders in the placement.

You may also find that interacting with other host families will be of great assistance both in giving you new ideas and in reassuring you about the pace of the development of your relationship with your International student.

We trust that homestay parents will make decisions based on the student's best interest. You are encouraged to contact the International Coordinator for resources and support in managing issues related to your international student's stay.

## **2.3 Getting ready to be a Host Family - Preparing for your Student:**

The Homestay Coordinator will provide you with information on your student (which will include photos, country of origin and general information about their character and preferences. Most students and their parents like to correspond via email/skype/messenger before arriving to Canada. You are encouraged to communicate with your student and his/her parents in order to increase their comfort level when they arrive. Describe your family, pets, lifestyle and your neighborhood. Relate funny or typical family incidents. Include pictures of you and your family, home, neighborhood and city.

## **2.4 Research**

The homestay family should be generally familiar with the student's country – its population, climate, lifestyle, food, major cities and so on. Your knowledge of this information will not only make your student feel more at home, it will also encourage acceptance of your way of life. You could try to learn a few simple phrases in your student's language, or even learn to cook a traditional meal! It may also be helpful to talk to other families who have hosted students from this country to learn about particular differences in culture and customs.

## **2.5 House Keys/Door Codes**

Prepare a house key for your student and be prepared to share security codes or electronic access codes, if necessary.

## **2.6 Damage to Property**

If a student causes damage to your property, please notify the Homestay Coordinator of the incident immediately. Take pictures and it may also be necessary to inform your insurance company. Students are not responsible for normal wear and tear. Ensure adequate home insurance is in place.

If you are not sure what is appropriate, discuss this with your Homestay Coordinator or contact your insurance agent to be sure that you have adequate coverage both for your own and the student's property.

## **2.7 Transportation**

Please ensure your student has proper directions to and from school and to any local attractions or meeting places if they are going out with friends or on a school outing. If the student will ride a school bus, make sure they are able to recognize the driver and/or bus number, and know where to get on and off the bus on both ends of their trip.

Talk about what transportation you are able to provide and what you will not (e.g., rides to volleyball practice but not to close neighbours). Assist the student by arranging rides for activities and outings, vacations and recreational activities if you will not be driving him/her yourself. Contact the International Program Coordinator if necessary

In some cases, homestay families may be asked to meet the student at the airport on their arrival and to return them at final departure. Families will be reimbursed for gas. Large groups of students arriving at the same time will be transported by bus or shuttle, arranged by Palliser Schools.

## **3 CUSTODIANSHIP RESPONSIBILITY**

All students in Palliser Schools International Program in homestays are under the custodianship of the Associate Superintendent. Host families act on behalf of the Custodian but all major or serious incidents must be reported; either the Executive Assistant or the Associate Superintendent).

The custodian is the person who make the decisions concerning the student's welfare while the student is a minor. The student is expected to be guided by the directions given by the custodian. In addition, host parents play an important role in supervising and directing student behavior on a daily basis, but they are not legally responsible for the student's behavior. Homestay parents are expected to act on behalf of the Program with the best interest of the child in mind.

## **4 STUDENT INSURANCE**

All International students studying at Palliser Schools are covered with medical insurance through Ingle International for illness and accidents. Each student will be issued a medical coverage card electronically. Detailed insurance coverage information and an insurance card issued to the student will be also provided to host families. Any costs not covered by the student's insurance are ultimately the responsibility of the student's natural parents.

Should a student need to visit a doctor he/she can go to a local clinic through an appointment made with your own family physician or if necessary, go to the hospital. If the student requires prescription drugs, they may need to be paid for (either by the student or host family) at the time of purchase as some pharmacies and clinics do not direct bill to the insurance company. Ensure that all of the original receipts are submitted as soon as possible to the International Program Coordinator. Palliser will reimburse you for your expenses and follow-through with the claim to the insurance company for reimbursement back to Palliser.

## **5 ARRIVAL DAY OF YOUR STUDENT**

When your student arrives, she/he has probably had a long trip and may have crossed several time zones. Avoid scheduling too many activities. The ill effects of jet lag will be much less if your student sets his/her watch immediately to local time. Also, suggest they drink plenty of water, get lots of fresh air and avoid sleeping during the day, if possible.

One of the first things your student should do is to contact their family either by telephone or e-mail to confirm his/her safe arrival.

Show your student his/her room, help them unpack and give them a chance to become acquainted

with their new surroundings. Also, make sure there is a safe place to store passport, travel tickets, insurance documents and money.

## **6 THINGS YOU CAN DO IN THE FIRST FEW DAYS**

- Keep your student busy, but also allow some time alone. Remember, he/she will be jet-lagged the first couple days and could also be suffering from culture shock and home-sickness
- Make sure the student is familiar with your neighborhood. Students may want to go for a walk and could get lost because they are unfamiliar with the pattern of our streets.
- Take the time to learn the correct pronunciation of your student's name.
- Introduce your student to family, friends and neighbors. Write down names to help him/her remember.
- Make sure your student has an ID card with your name, address and telephone number on it, and tell him/her to carry it at all times.
- Take your student to the post office and teach him/her to buy the correct stamps. Buy a postcard and encourage your student to send one to his/her parents immediately.
- Show girls where to buy personal hygiene supplies.
- Show your student the route to and from school, or where to get on/off the bus.
- Visit some local points of interest.
- Establish a pattern of daily conversation. Have your student help make a list of conversation topics to get through the first few weeks.
- Relax and make the student feel comfortable
- Ensure that your student is made aware of your household curfew rules
- For longer-term students, it is recommended that once your student has arrived, that you assist them with opening up a bank account in their name. Advise them not to carry large amounts of cash. Show your student how to use their ATM card and stress the importance of keeping the PIN number secret.

## **7. HOMESTAY GUIDELINES**

To help ensure that you and your student have an enjoyable experience, we have some basic guidelines in place to help you. Your student will have also been given the same guidelines that cover most of the same points, but from their perspective.

Cultural differences can often make the most basic areas of daily life a problem for an international student. Sensitivity and awareness on your part will help ease the student's adjustment to life in your home. Shortly after your student's arrival, it will be helpful to both you and your student if you have a discussion with them about your family rules and schedules. Patience will be required in all of your explanations to the student. If he/she seems to have difficulty understanding you, it is often valuable to write things down. The students often have a greater comprehension of written English than they do of spoken English.

When you guide the student through your home, it is a good idea to explain how to use some of the facilities. Do not assume your student knows how to operate everyday items; anything from light switches to shower taps and appliances can be unfamiliar.

Something as simple as removing their shoes in the home can be entirely new to them. Encourage them to ask questions and try to use simple language in your explanations. We hope that the exchange of cultures that occur as you and your student interact on a daily basis will be an exciting part of the homestay experience.

### **7.1 Household Duties/Family Schedules**

Your student is not just a guest but someone will become a part of your family for the time he/she is with you. Inviting him/her to join in a few household responsibilities will help them become involved. Shyness comes from not knowing what to do. Setting the table, helping with lunches and so on, when defined clearly by you at the onset, can become activities to further your communication. Clearly inform students of meal schedules in order to avoid confusion and suggest that he/she lets you know

if he/she is going to be late.

Mealtime is a very personal arrangement in the family, and some of the best times spent with your student will likely be over dinner. If your student is helping with meal preparations, give careful guidance. Electric stoves and other kitchen appliances may be completely new to your student

## **7.2 The Bathroom (Shower/Tub Rules)**

The bathroom is probably the most puzzling room in your home for overseas students. Show your student where the extra towels, face cloths and soap are, how the shower is turned on and how to draw the shower curtain. Students from Asia for example, have very different bathroom routines. Bathrooms are very open, are fully tiled and equipped with a drain in the floor; they are not used to keeping the water contained in a tub or shower stall.

For some cultures, students not used to flushing toilet paper down the toilet – they are taught to throw it in the garbage. Please teach your student that it is appropriate and expected to flush toilet paper in the toilet. Ensure that they are aware that nothing else is to be flushed down the toilet.

Any generic brand of soap, shampoo and toothpaste is acceptable and should be provided by the homestay family. If the student is requesting exotic soaps, shampoos, hair essentials, cosmetics, perfumes, etc., this will be at the expense and responsibility of the student.

## **7.3 Sleeping Arrangements**

Your guidance is essential to help your student feel at home. Make sure that the student's room is ready upon their arrival. Define clearly where the student can put his/her clothing and belongings and make sure that they understand how covers on the bed work. The Japanese, for example, often simply use a futon and a quilt and are not used to getting under the many layers of covers and blankets that we use. Show your student how to make the bed and let him/her know what times your family will be retiring and when they are expected to be up for breakfast. Other niceties would be putting up a welcome banner, providing a plant, magazines/pamphlets and perhaps a small gift or treat on the bed (appropriate for the age of the student). Allow the student to make the room their own.

Also, if your student is in the lower level/basement of your home it is important to note that for us, basements are normal in our Canadian homes but for many cultures, they see the basement as a cell or dungeon so this could seem strange and unfamiliar to your student. Please ensure that it is perfectly safe for them to be in a basement bedroom if this is the case in your home.

## **7.4 Manners**

Manners vary greatly from culture to culture, so your student may require some guidance from you in order to avoid embarrassment. If for example your family does or does not wear shoes inside the house, let your student know what is acceptable in your home. The Japanese, in particular, always remove their shoes at the door and may feel uncomfortable wearing them in your home, even if you indicate that it is ok to do so.

Many Asian cultures feel that making noises while one eats is a complement to the cook. If this offends you, you may want to explain that Canadians usually eat quietly. Teach your student a few of the "Please pass the..." phrases in order to help him/her feel comfortable at the table.

If your student is going to a restaurant without you, inform him/her that at many restaurants you must wait to be seated and of the appropriate tip that should be left. In some countries, there is no tipping of people working in the service industry so the concept of tipping may be foreign to your student.

This is a homestay and you are not their servant. In some cultures, it is common for students to have maids/servants/drivers in their homes. It needs to be explained to your student that in Canadian culture, it is expected that family members cleanup behind themselves – this includes your international student. Explain to students that they must clean up after themselves (e.g. bathroom, kitchen) or that

whenever they use something, that they put it back where they found it.

### **7.5 Drugs, Alcohol and Driving**

Even though a student may be of legal drinking age in their home country, a condition of their acceptance to study in Palliser Schools requires that the student conform to school rules and policies that do not permit the consumption of alcohol, smoking and the use of illegal drugs.

International students are made aware of (prior to their arrival) the rules in which the international program prohibits them from smoking cigarettes, consuming alcohol and using/consuming illegal drugs. Noncompliance of this rule may result in the student being dismissed from the program and sent home at their expense. If you notice your student engaging in illegal activity, contact the International Student Coordinator as soon as possible.

International students are not permitted to drive any type of motor vehicle, unless they are part of an approved driver-training program offered by the school they are attending

### **7.6 Laundry**

Some of the older students prefer to do their own laundry. Please have this discussion with them and inform them about laundry arrangement in your home. They will need instructions as to where to put their laundry and the timetable for cleaning as well as their specific responsibilities if they are doing their own laundry. Arrange a schedule and process that suits everyone.

### **7.7 Language**

The primary reason for the student's visit to Canada is to study English. They learn much at school but they have a chance to use it in your home. Therefore, it is good to try to engage your student in conversation. Speak in short, basic sentences at first to help reduce confusion if your student arrive here with rather limited English skills. Many times students will indicate that they understand when in reality, they do not. This is because they do not want to bother you. You need to paraphrase often and check that they understand clearly. This is especially important when giving instructions, so that they students clearly understand and don't feel that they have let you down if they make a mistake or misunderstood you.

### **7.8 Use of Electronic Devices/Internet/Phones**

Increasingly, the majority of international students are arriving with various electronic devices with which they will be using to communicate back to their families at home. Understand that the student may in the first few days or weeks, use these devices frequently. Once the student starts to feel more comfortable, generally they will use them less frequently.

You will need to outline your expectations and ground rules about use of electronic devices, particularly if there are other children in the home who abide by the those rules. It may be necessary to explain that excessive use of devices can be considered by some to be antisocial behavior. You should also be aware that excessive use of phones and devices may be a sign your student is experiencing homesickness and/or having a difficult time adjusting to their new circumstances. If it continues to be an issue, please contact the International Program Coordinator.

Internet access must be available in the home. Your student should be monitored as they use the internet so they do not spend excessive time on the computer or exceed household data limits. The use of the internet should be monitored carefully.

### **7.9 Visitors**

Your home is your student's home. It may be that he/she wishes to invite a friend home to be sociable or to work on homework. Please have this discussion in advance with your student and agree on notice, times and any other aspect such as helping themselves to snacks. Having guests over if parents are

not home is strongly discouraged.

### **7.10 Religion**

Please respect your student's religious/non-religious beliefs. Invite him/her to join you and your family if you go to church, but also be very understanding if he/she chooses not to. Absolutely no attempt should be made to change your student's religious beliefs.

## **8. SCHOOL**

### **8.1 Your involvement with the school**

Encourage the timely completion of homework and check on progress. Attend meetings and parent/teacher conferences when needed. Showing an interest in your student's progress contributes positively to his/her Canadian educational experience. The school may take students on occasional field trips. Information will be sent to all students' host families regarding these trips. The host family is asked to be aware of school guidelines on attendance, homework, etc. Please call the school if you have any questions or concerns.

### **8.2 School Attendance**

Students are expected to attend all classes daily. Homestay parents of middle and secondary students are expected to contact the school if their student will be absent due to illness. In the event that you receive contact from the school to state that your student has missed classes, contact the International Student Coordinator.

## **9. STUDENT ALLOWANCE/PERSONAL EXPENSE RESPONSIBILITY**

International Students are advised to arrange for an allowance of between \$200 and \$300 per month to cover their personal expenses. You may want to inquire every once in a while how their funds are holding out and remind them to ask their parents to send more funds when necessary to avoid running out. It is recommended that you do not lend your student money.

Unless otherwise arranged, international students are personally responsible for the following:

- Clothing (especially winter clothes)
- School supplies
- Personal toiletries
- Many students have their own computer/laptop. All costs associated with their computer are the responsibility of the student. It is recommended that you do not allow your international student use your own computer.
- Most students will come with their own cell phones and cell phone plans that have been arranged prior to their arrival. Alternatively, students can use calling cards to make long distance calls. Do not allow a student to run up a bill on your account.
- Long distance phone calls (if using your personal phones)
- Medicines of all kinds (for pre-existing conditions)
- Dental work (not covered through insurance)
- Haircuts and other personal services
- Personal entertainment and expenses
- Costs associated with participation in school sponsored activities (e.g. graduation ceremonies, school dances, extra-curricular sports, school trips, etc.)
- Stamps, stationery, books, magazines, CDs, posters, etc.

## **10. TRAVEL**

International students may travel with their host parents or with the school. If you plan a trip to explore our country or take a vacation, you are required to notify the International Student Coordinator with your destination, duration of the trip, and address where you can be reached. If your family is planning

such a trip, you may want to decide with your student how expenses will be apportioned. Discussing such matters may sometimes be awkward, but it can avoid awkward situations or misunderstandings later on.

International Students are, as a rule, not permitted to travel on their own, even to visit relatives or close friends, unless arrangements have been made between the host family and the student's natural parents. International students are required to return directly to their home country upon the completion of the program. If special travel arrangements have been made, you will be informed in advance. Even if a student is over the age of 18, they must receive permission from the Palliser Schools International Student Program to travel outside of the area on their own.

## **11. SUMMER**

In most cases, Palliser does not operate a summer homestay program.

## **12. CHALLENGES**

### **12.1 Your Children**

Children in host families may initially find it difficult with another youth in the home and may need opportunities for sympathetic listening while they express their feelings (such as jealousy towards the student because he/she is receiving additional attention). Take the time, once in a while, to check the perceptions of both your own children and the student you are hosting. Try to include your children in the orientation activities.

### **12.2 A New Family Member**

Since experiencing family life is one of the best ways to learn about a culture, you should try as much as possible to let your student take on a family member's role. This role may be quite different from what the student is accustomed to, but it should be one that is natural for you and your family. You will find that treating your international student as a family member will create genuine ties of friendship and foster better understanding of your way of life.

Living as a family member does not mean having special privileges. It may be easier for your student to learn your way of life if you avoid giving preferential treatment. Give him/her some small household chores, just as you would to a son or a daughter, but don't assign tasks that you would normally hire someone to do, such as child-care. It is important not to leave your student alone for long periods of time. One of the parents, or an older son or daughter, should be home during the day to keep him/her company.

### **12.3 Adapting to a New Culture**

Your new family member will experience many changes during his/her first few weeks. After the initial excitement of being in a new environment wears off, your international student may suffer from culture shock and become homesick. As the "honeymoon period" fades, both parties may feel dissatisfaction. Try to work through this to a common ground.

Your student may feel disorientated and may suffer physical side effects. S/he may become withdrawn, uncommunicative, or moody, and express the desire to return home. This is normal under the circumstances and should only last for a short time. As your student grows accustomed to the new environment, s/he will relax and gradually feel better.

Activity is a good cure for homesickness. If the student continues to be withdrawn and shows symptoms such as excessive sleeping, marked weight loss or gain, acute depression, or other irregular behavior you should notify the Homestay Coordinator.

### **12.4 Food**

To a student from overseas, Canadian cooking may seem very exotic. Just as you may find squid a

little unusual, your best barbequed bacon cheeseburger may puzzle your student. Also, inform the student that tap water is safe to drink. The whole idea of the homestay is to experience Canadian life so do not make drastic changes to your family's meals. Most students enjoy trying new food. However, you should be aware of your student's preferences. If you and your student are so inclined, it might be fun to go to the grocery store together to purchase groceries that would allow the student to cook one of their country's or family's traditional meals for your family. Students are normally very happy to be able to share their culture with you in a way that would be mutually beneficial.

Many students from other countries have never prepared their own meals so they may not know how to prepare a breakfast or lunch. They may need to be shown how to do this. Students must also be shown where all the various foods in the house are kept. Please be sure to have a discussion about the process for breakfast and lunch during school days. It is the responsibility of the Homestay to provide three good meals each day.

Children of all cultures love their snacks. Please discuss this topic with your student explaining what snacks and drinks are available, how to prepare them and when it is appropriate to have a snack. You will probably also want to include the topic of "clean-up" in this discussion as well.

Teach your student about recycling practices in your home.

### **12.5 Communication/Language Barriers**

There will be awkward moments, confusing situations, and times of disillusionment. Strong communication skills are the key components to every healthy relationship.

Sometimes communication will be difficult and compromises will need to be put in place. Difficult situations are usually worked out if they are dealt with calmly and respectfully. Disorientation and physical discomfort are a normal expectation but your compassion and consideration will help overcome culture shock and homesickness.

In cases where a mutually satisfactory outcome cannot be reached, mediation/alternative arrangements will be worked out by either the Associate Superintendent of International Program Coordinator.

## **13. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WELL-BEING**

### **13.1 Meeting People**

You should make an effort to introduce your international student to other young people of the same age group. You might consider planning a reception with friends and neighbors for this purpose. Although friendships are encouraged for the students, romantic attachments are discouraged.

### **13.2 Emotional Well-Being**

Providing opportunities for your new family member to interact with other people will reduce boredom and improve emotional well-being. Include your student in your family activities, but as with any teenager give him/her adequate time to spend with friends. Include your student in family discussions and decisions. Ask their advice. It might be interesting to learn how another culture might handle certain situations.

### **13.3 Physical Well-Being**

Encourage your student to exercise, get proper sleep and eat a balanced diet. Most students like to be involved in physical activity, so encourage your student to participate. Physical fitness will help them feel well and happy.

### **13.4 Academic Well-Being**

As you would for your own child, you may need to provide academic support for your student. Provide

opportunities for students to study.

### **13.5 Emphasize Importance of Diet, Clothing, and Changing Weather**

As Albertans, we know how the weather can change quickly and drastically. Many foreign students are not aware of this. They need to be taught that when they go out for the day, they need to be prepared for any change in weather.

### **13.6 Assisting With English**

Most of our international students will require assistance with English. Keep your language simple and direct, but do not talk down to the student. Put sticky labels on common items in the house to help the student learn these names. Put common English words on the refrigerator. Keep a language dictionary handy for quick translation to help with the student's assignments; do not do the work for them. Help the student by editing homework, but be careful not to change the content, even if you do not agree with it.

## **14. WHAT IF PROBLEMS ARISE?**

### **14.1 What happens if the student has difficulties at the school?**

Should any concerns arise with the international student, host families are asked to contact the school principal. If necessary, the International Student Coordinator will be contacted by the school. Serious problems such as habitual absences or lack of motivation at school may result in the student being sent home.

### **14.2 What should I do if my student flagrantly disobeys the house rules?**

Contact the International Program Coordinator. The situation will be reviewed and a solution or consequence will be determined.

### **14.3 What do I do if despite everything I've tried, the student doesn't fit well in my household?**

This happens very seldom, but it does happen. The Homestay Coordinator will be in contact with you within the first few weeks of your student's arrival to see how things are going and to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. We encourage you to let the Coordinator know as soon as you can if you are having difficulties. If, after reviewing the situation, it is felt the difficulties cannot be resolved, we will move the student.

## **15. TRANSFER OF HOMESTAY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

Situations may arise where either a student or homestay parent may request a transfer to a new home. If the student initiates the request, every effort will be made to find a way to resolve the situation so that both the student and the homestay parents are happy with the solution and the student will stay with his/her original homestay family. If a mutually agreeable solution cannot be found, then a new homestay family will be found and the student will be allowed to move.

Although great care is taken to match students with appropriate families, this is not a science and sometimes the match is not quite right, and the student may need to be moved. This is not to be viewed as a criticism of the homestay family or the student. That said, a homestay move is a last-resort solution, as all efforts are taken to get the right fit the first time, to prevent unnecessary disruption and upset in the lives of the students and homestay families.

## **16. INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS/CHAPERONES**

- International teachers or chaperones that may be travelling with student groups may also require home stay family accommodations. They are adults and will be treated as such by their homestay family and common rules of courtesy should be followed.
- The International teacher/chaperone may be left alone for longer periods than an international student, but may not feel comfortable being left alone for an entire weekend.
- International teachers/chaperones may choose to travel short distances on their own or with friends and this is perfectly acceptable as long as they inform their homestay family first.

- International teachers/chaperones should communicate with their families regarding daily schedules and follow household guidelines involving bed and meal times, internet and phone use.
- Palliser School Division has a zero tolerance drug policy involving teacher/chaperone participants.
- A host family is expected to provide what they would normally provide for their own family: a private bedroom, three wholesome meals and snacks every day, access to the common living area of the house, bathing and laundry facilities, and participation in family activities.
- If homestay problems arise, our Homestay Coordinator should be contacted and necessary steps will be taken to remedy the situation. This could involve a change of residence.
- International teachers/chaperones will be held responsible for the cost of any damage to property or possessions caused by negligent or disrespectful behavior.

## **17. DEPARTURE**

Before departure, you should check that the student has his/her travel documents (passport, visa, return ticket, etc.). For larger groups, travel arrangements to the airport will be provided by Palliser. For individual students travelling back home, if the host family is unable to transport them to the airport, contact the International Education Coordinator and arrangements will be made.

*THANK YOU!*

*Palliser Schools International Student Program thanks you for your important role as an International Homestay provider by promoting friendly relations among our international students.*

*As a homestay family you are an ambassador for our division, our community and Canada. You are helping to promote cultural diversity and understanding in our world.*