



United States Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Washington, DC 20522

November 1, 2021

Dear School Administrator:

Welcome to the U.S. Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program. Your school and community are about to embark on an exciting journey through the enrollment of a high school student from another country. Not only will your school experience the culture and traditions of another country through the eyes of your exchange student, but the exchange student will gain an American high school education and experience. They will also have the opportunity to learn first-hand about the United States through your school, their host family and the community.

As a school that supports an exchange student, never forget that you are part of a larger mission and vision. These programs have been a part of U.S. public diplomacy efforts since 1949. Approximately 25,000 high school students from around the world participate annually in this incredible experience forging lifelong friendships. This program is not only a great opportunity for exchange students to experience the culture and diversity of the United States, but it allows U.S. students to expand their horizons, as well. Your school and community will have the opportunity to share language, culture and customs with your exchange student. Your school's participation in this exchange program fosters a greater understanding between countries and works towards peaceful relations throughout the world. The goodwill of American high schools in opening their campuses to these young international visitors is vital to this program's success.

It is critical that you notify the student's program sponsor if you have any concerns or if the student's personal health, safety, and/or well-being is threatened in any way. If the sponsor is not responsive to your concerns, please contact the Department of State directly at our 24-hour toll-free number (1-866-283-9090) that has been established for this purpose. In addition, the program sponsor provides each student with an identification card. The identification card lists the student's host family address and telephone numbers, separate telephone numbers for immediate contact with the sponsor organization and the sponsor's local representative, and the Department of State's toll-free phone number and email address (jvisas@state.gov). Your exchange student should keep this card with him/her at all times and contact us if there are any concerns about health, safety, and/or well-being.

The high school program offers you, your staff, your international student, and your local community the opportunity to create a strong lifelong bond. We are pleased that you made the decision to be part of this amazing program. Thank you for hosting an international student.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicole Elkon".

Nicole Elkon
Deputy Assistant Secretary