

Austin Waldorf School International Studies Program

Policy and Procedures for International Exchange and Visiting Students

The Austin Waldorf School was approved, and certified, as a designated High School Foreign Exchange / Visitor school in June of 2006. In the International Studies Program, an overseas student is matched with an Austin Waldorf student, and both students attend each other's school for an agreed upon length of time in each location. There is also the possibility for a non-reciprocal visit for the foreign student.

Overseas Exchange Students

Fees for the Exchange Program

Tuition is considered an even exchange for students and no additional tuition is required if the schools are in agreement, and the exchange is roughly the same length of time in both locales. Exchange students continue to pay tuition to their home school while in attendance at the host school.

Fees for a Visiting Student

Additional fees for exchange students may be required for specific student supplies and will be discussed when the timing of the exchange is settled.

If the visiting student is in attendance during scheduled field / class trips, and is able to go, additional fees will be required.

The field trip fees include: transportation, food and housing during a specified period of time.

How to Apply

Complete the **High School Application – Foreign Exchange** form which is available by sending a request to internationalstudies@austinwaldorf.org

For admission consideration the school needs to receive:

- a. Completed application (required to process I-20 form through SEVIS**)
 - b. Proof of medical insurance (photocopy of insurance card, or student travel insurance policy)
 - c. Copy of photo page of passport
 - d. Photograph of the student
 - e. Copy of a recent report card, transcript or evaluations
 - f. Letters of recommendation from class advisor and English teacher.
 - g. Essay
2. Once the application is received by the Austin Waldorf School and approved by the high school faculty, a form I-20 will be processed for the student entering them into SEVIS (Student Exchange and Visitor Information Service). The I-20 form will be emailed as a pdf document and a hard copy will be mailed. These documents may be used to support the student's receipt of a visa and entrance to the USA at the port of entry.
 3. Obtain a **VISA!** – Documentation you will need:
 - a. Form I-20, which identifies you as a Foreign Exchange Student with F-1 classification. This will be sent to you by the Austin Waldorf School.

Policy mandated by the US Department of Homeland Security, requires all foreign exchange students to pay a fee to receive their F-1 non-immigrant status allowing their admittance to the USA as an exchange student.

The form to complete is the I-901 form and can be found on the internet at www.FMJfee.com. You can complete the form and make a payment online by
Overseas Exchange Students

following the guidelines. **A copy of the paid I-901 form needs to be provided to the Austin Waldorf School.**

Note – the amount of financial support must match the amount that was entered on form I-20.

A visa is required! Please obtain a student visa through the proper channels in your country.

4. Once travel arrangements have been made, please forward the Trip Itinerary to the Designated School Official at the Austin Waldorf School <mailto:enroll@austinwaldorf.org>

If there are any questions about the procedure outlined above, please contact the Designated School Official at: <mailto:enroll@austinwaldorf.org>

SEVIS – Student Exchange and Visitor Information System

SEVIS is a web based information system used by the United States Government for tracking student exchanges and visitors to this country.

The Austin Waldorf School is required to register every exchange student with SEVIS upon their arrival to the country. **Please bring your passport and any entrance documentation to the HS office on your first day of school.** SEVIS requires exchange students to maintain a full-time student status during the course of their studies in the USA.

If you would like more information, please visit <http://www.ice.gov/sevis/students/index.htm>

Student Life

Upon arrival, the student will receive a high school handbook, locker, roster of students, daily schedules, and information about the school activities.

Each student will be assigned a personal advisor upon their arrival to guide them through their exchange experience, answer questions and be an advocate for their needs.

Each grade has one or two class advisors, who will assist the student in understanding the daily schedule and assist with any issues regarding the workload or class dynamics.

As a student in the Austin Waldorf School, we will expect full participation in not only the curriculum offered but also in the festival life and community service programs.

Academic Expectations

All students are expected to work to their capacity while studying at the Austin Waldorf High School. It must be understood that this is not a holiday. All exchange and visiting students to Austin Waldorf must be proficient in English. If English as a Second Language is determined to be necessary, the family must agree to the financial commitment necessary for tutoring support while the student is in attendance at Austin Waldorf.

Please note:

1. Teachers will teach the class to the level of their expectation for that grade.
2. At any time, if a student is having difficulty, s/he should seek assistance from the teacher of the subject or from their personal advisor.
3. The student can expect some help with homework from the Exchange partner and family.
4. School rules as outlined in the Student Handbook must be observed, including:
 - no smoking, alcohol or drugs on school grounds,
 - no skipping classes or leaving school grounds without permission
 - no using foul language
 - no disrespectful behaviour towards other students, faculty members, or AWS property
5. If the student is not completing satisfactory work or is repeatedly late with assignments, the student will be warned that this is unacceptable behaviour. Host parents will be informed if necessary to assist in the process.

6. The student may be sent home upon the recommendation of the high school faculty or after three warnings of unacceptable behaviour, including:
 - incomplete or late homework,
 - unsatisfactory effort being shown,
 - violation of school rules.

Host Family Expectations for the Visiting Student

Visiting students are expected to:

- Observe the rules and customs of the host family, including participating in shared household tasks, curfews, and respecting others' property.
- Keep self and bedroom clean and tidy.
- Clean up after self in common areas.
- Do homework as assigned by teachers, requesting help from family as needed.
- Pay own long distance telephone bills.
- The student agrees and understands that if any problems arise between members of the family and the student that the student will contact the High School Chair and/or Advisors to consult about a process for resolution. If other special circumstances or a medical emergency arise, the student must contact the family, HS Chair, and advisors at once.

Cancellation Policy

If a student returns home voluntarily or is sent home, the Austin Waldorf School is not responsible for any of the costs of their return, or any unused tuition costs.

About the Austin Waldorf School

The Austin Waldorf School is located in the Hill Country area of Texas. The campus is nestled on 19 wooded acres. Downtown Austin is a 20-25 minute drive from the school. Austin is a cultural mecca, with many theatres, concert halls, art galleries, museums, and home to the University of Texas. There is an active school community with festivals, celebrations and special events.

Foreign Exchange Committee

The Foreign Exchange Committee for the 2017-2018 school year is represented by high school faculty members; Giannina Guardia-Hayes, Caitlin Hill, and the Enrollment Director, Kim DeVittorio.

The members of this committee facilitate the International Studies Program in consultation with the class advisors for grades 9-12. The DSO (Designated School Official) is responsible for responding to the directives of this committee. The DSO for the Austin Waldorf School is Kim DeVittorio, Enrollment Director.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Austin Waldorf School!