

Board of Education Policy 4.2320
Administrative Procedure

Guidelines for Foreign Exchange Students

A. Program Approval

All organizations operating exchange programs must receive program approval from the Student Services Division before placing a student in the Catawba County School System. Approval will be based upon criteria established by the Division and will include:

1. Documentation that the program has met standards established by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) and appears in the current Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs.
2. Documentation that the organization has a representative based in North Carolina.
3. Documentation that the program:
 - Has well defined and executed administrative practices;
 - Has stated educational goals compatible with the generally recognized goals of secondary education in the Catawba County School System;
 - Has demonstrated successful placement of exchange students;
 - Is a non-profit organization;
 - Is incorporated; and
 - Makes a complete financial report available to the public.

The Catawba County School System will only accept foreign exchange students through approved programs.

B. Sponsoring Organization

The exchange program shall be responsible for assuring that all matters associated with the exchange are facilitated. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Filing a copy of the program guidelines with the Student Services Division;
2. Working with governmental agencies to ensure that the exchange student has fulfilled all requirements for entry into the United States;
3. Assuming all financial and legal responsibility for the exchange student;
4. Providing the Catawba County School System with background information about the student at least one month prior to enrollment of the student in the district;
5. Assuming responsibility for all matters associated with living arrangements for the exchange student, such as selecting and orienting the host family involved in the exchanges (Host families shall not be recruited through the Catawba County School System.)
6. Meeting with an administrator of the school to which the student is assigned to establish a liaison for the program, the host family, and the school;
7. Notifying, in writing, the principal of the assigned school of the need to award and transfer academic credit and informing the principal of any unique procedures

involved in this process. Exchange students must sign "Acknowledgement of Non Diploma Policy for Foreign Exchange Students in Catawba County Schools", but will be allowed to participate in graduation exercises, if they are members of the senior class; and

8. Informing the exchange student of the policies of the Catawba County School System concerning the student exchange program.

C. Acceptance of Students

Students who are accepted in the Catawba County School System must meet established criteria that include requirements that the student:

1. Apply for admission to the Catawba County School System by **July 15**, of the year in which the student wishes to enroll;
2. Be eligible for enrollment in grades 9-12, be eighteen years of age or younger, and have not graduated in their own country;
3. Have adequate command of the English language so as to function in a regular class without special assistance;
4. Provide the registrar with:
 - a. A valid J-1 visa;
 - b. Results of a recent physical examination and proof of required immunizations;
 - c. Proof of host family's residence; and
 - d. Any other data required by the school or the Catawba County School System.
5. Provide the principal with:
 - a. Insurance documentation (accident and medical coverage);
 - b. Written permission of the participating foreign exchange program to take driver education and participate in interscholastic athletics, if applicable;
 - c. A copy of any special rules and requirements contained in the exchange agreement; and
 - d. Present documentation of acceptable academic achievement.
6. Live with a host family that resides in the Catawba County School District.

D. Placement of Students

The school to which the exchange student is assigned will be based on the residence of the host family. If the board of education has determined that a school is closed to further enrollment, it is still possible for one foreign exchange student to be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis as determined by the superintendent's or assistant superintendent's office.

1. The receiving school will determine final acceptance of an exchange student.
2. The student will be placed in the grade corresponding with the grade placement at the home school. All foreign exchange students will be registered as visiting students.

E. Selection of Courses/Extra-Curricular Activities

The selection of courses and extra-curricular activities will be made through agreement with the program representative, the host family, school personnel and the student.

1. A member of the host family or the local program representative should contact school personnel to register the student and select courses and activities.
2. Students will be allowed to participate in all extra-curricular activities and

intramural athletics available to them at the assigned school except where prohibited by restrictions of the exchange program.

3. Exchange students may participate in interscholastic athletics with written permission of the program representative, if they meet applicable eligibility requirements under the policy of the Catawba County School System and the North Carolina High School Athletic Association, and provide any other necessary documentation.

F. Special Agreements

1. Tuition is waived for all exchange students who enroll in the Catawba County School System under these guidelines.
2. Exchange students are subject to all rules and regulations governing other students in the Catawba County School System.

Student Services Division has a list of approved Foreign Exchange Programs.

Superintendent's Signature _____ Date _____

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF NON DIPLOMA POLICY
FOR FOREIGN EXCHANGE STUDENTS
IN CATAWBA COUNTY SCHOOLS**

As a representative of a foreign exchange program approved to place students in the Catawba County Schools, I understand that high school diplomas will not be issued upon completion of the cultural exchange experience. Catawba County Schools provides exchange students with a Certificate of Attendance upon completion of the cultural exchange year for students placed in the senior class.

I have discussed this policy with each prospective student and host family. Signatures below indicate that we understand and accept the policy.

Name of Exchange Program

Signature of Representative

Date

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Host Family

Date

**Please complete one form per student.
Form may be reproduced.**