



**Livingstone
Range**
SCHOOL DIVISION

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM
Student Orientation Handbook



Welcome!

Located from the Canadian Rockies to the foothills and prairies, Livingstone Range School Division is an amazing place for students from around the world to study and learn. In addition to the exciting and beautiful location which offers great opportunities for outdoor activities and experiences, our students are engaged in academic programming to be successful in school and beyond.

Homestay placements are carefully chosen and inspected to meet each student's unique needs, and offer safe and caring homes that encourage the international student to be part of the family.

Quality education, safe, caring homestay families and schools located in communities which are situated in one of the most beautiful parts of the province make Livingstone Range School Division a perfect place to study, learn and grow.

Further information about our programs can be found on our website at <https://www.lrsd.ca/international>

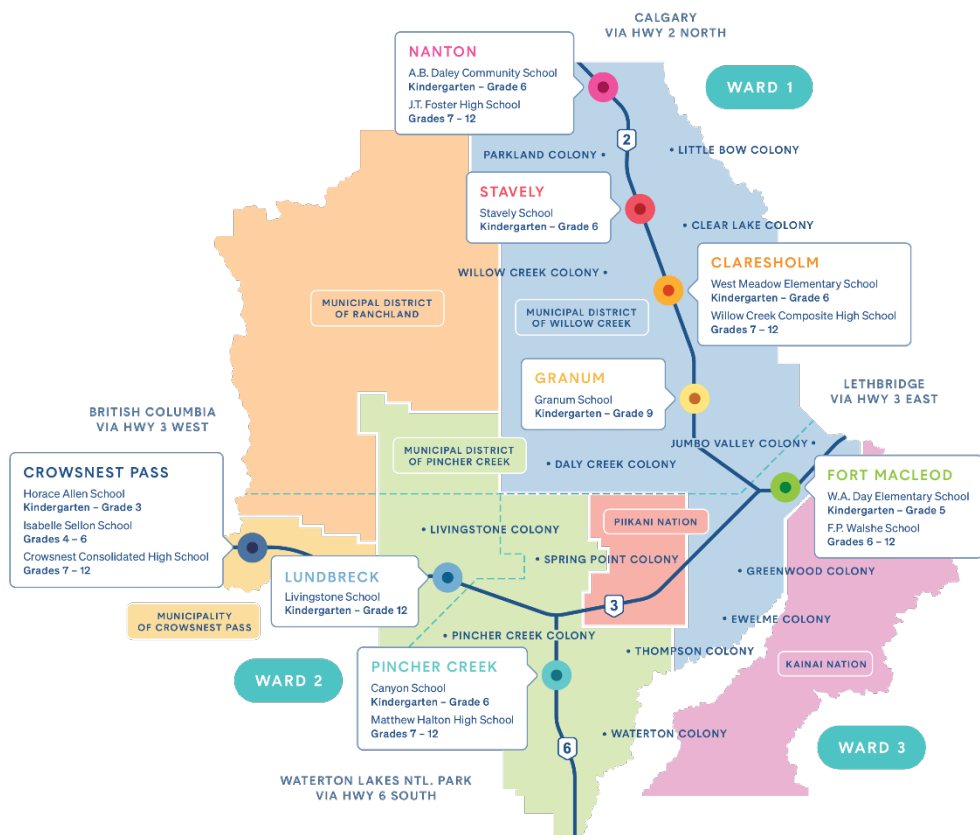
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Southern Alberta, Canada

Southwestern Alberta, an area embraced by brilliant blue skies, picturesque sunrises and sunsets, a haven for camping, fishing, water sports in the summer and skiing in the winter. The weather can change very quickly in this area; summers can be very hot and dry with hot gusty winds followed by electrical storms and in the winter, large amounts of snow can disappear overnight, all due to the 'Chinook': warm air coming over the mountains and meeting with our cold arctic air. How breathtaking the sky appears when a chinook arch embedded with many stunning colors forms in the west.

Located within this area is Livingstone Range School Division which is comprised of 6 high schools located in 6 distinct communities: J.T. Foster High School (Nanton), Willow Creek Composite High School (Claresholm), F.P. Walshe School (Fort Macleod), Matthew Halton High School (Pincher Creek), Livingstone School (Lundbreck), and Crowsnest Consolidated High School (Coleman). The Division spans a distance of over 9500 square kilometers: 100 kilometers from Fort Macleod in the East, to the Crowsnest Pass in the West, and a distance of over 300 kilometers from Nanton in the North, to Waterton Lakes National Park in the South.



Contact Information

Livingstone Range International Students Services is located in Fort Macleod, Alberta. The office is open Monday to Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Mountain Time. The office is closed on the weekends and statutory holidays.

Office: 410- 20th Street, Fort Macleod Alberta T0L 0Z0
Phone: 1-403-625-3356
Toll Free: 1-800-310-6579
Email: globalstudents@lrsd.ab.ca
Website: www.lrsd.ca/international

International Services contacts

Jas Schmirler, International Coordinator

Email: schmirlerj@lrsd.ab.ca
Office: 403-625-3356
Emergency: 403-682-7159

Yolanda Toone, Homestay Coordinator (Nanton- Claresholm -Fort Macleod)

Email: tooney@lrsd.ab.ca

Alana Merritt, Homestay Coordinator (Crowsnest Pass – Lundbreck- Pincher Creek)

Email: merritta@lrsd.ab.ca

StudyInsured Assistance

Emergency Assistance: 1-866-883-9787 or 416-640-7865
Claims information: 1-866-883-9485 or studentclaims@studyinsured.com
Website: <http://www.studyinsured.com/lrsd>

School contacts

Crowsnest Consolidated High School - Coleman	Grades 7-12	1-403-563-5651
F.P. Walshe School – Fort Macleod	Grades 6-12	1-403-553-4411
J.T. Foster High School – Nanton	Grades 7-12	1-403-646-2264
Livingstone School – Lundbreck	Grades K-12	1-403-628-3897
Matthew Halton High School – Pincher Creek	Grades 7-12	1-403-627-4414
Willow Creek Composite High School – Claresholm	Grades 7-12	1-403-625-3387

Check out the individual [school's websites](#) and the [High Schools Guide](#) for more information.

What to Bring with You to Canada

Clothes

The dress in Canada and in our schools tends to be relaxed and casual. The normal day-to-day wear of female students consists of jeans, skirts or shorts, t-shirts, blouses and sweatshirts or jerseys. Male students tend to wear jeans, shorts, casual shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters and t-shirts. Footwear is usually shoes, sandals or sports shoes. Our climate consists of four seasons, winter, spring, summer and fall. The school year begins in the fall season wherein the days are warm to cool and the nights are cool, temperatures range from 10C to 15C. The winter season begins in late October and temperatures can range from -5C to -30C. Appropriate winter clothing is required and it includes a warm insulated jacket, a hat (toque), mittens, and warm insulated boots. The summer season begins in early June and students often wear shorts, tee-shirts and sandals, temperatures range from 15C to 25C.

Personal items

You will need to bring your own toiletries and some personal items that make you feel at home, including pictures, souvenirs, books in your own language. If you wear glasses, you would be advised to bring a spare pair or your prescription. Ensure you have a monthly allowance to access funds for purchasing additional clothing, personal hygiene and care items, entertainment expenses etc.

Travel & Arrival in Canada

Documents/other items to have with you at the airport

Remember to double check that you have all your travel documents:

- Passport
- Letter of Acceptance from Livingstone Range
- Approval Letter from Immigration Canada (if you are in Canada for more than 6 months)
- Proof of your medical insurance (card will be issued on arrival)
- Important phone numbers (Emergency, Consulate of your country in Canada, host family, International Services, parents, etc.)
- Bank Card (that is accessible via the Interac or Cirrus networks) Credit Card (Visa, MasterCard or Amex)

Airport arrival in Canada - Immigration & Customs

Students with connecting flights in Canada will go through Canadian Immigration and Customs at the 'First Port of Entry' to Canada. For example, students travelling from South America to Toronto and from Toronto to Calgary will clear Customs and Immigration in Toronto.

Upon arrival in Canada,

1. Follow the signs to baggage claim and immigration
2. Go to the immigration area
3. Have ready for the Immigration Officer:
 - a. Customs Card (given to you on the airplane to complete) Passport
 - b. Letter of Acceptance from Livingstone Range
 - c. If here for more than 6 months, Letter from Immigration (to get the study permit from the Immigration Officer). Be ready to tell the Immigration Officer you are here to 'Study' for a semester or a school year.
4. Go to the Baggage Claim to pick up your suitcases

5. Go to Customs (have your Customs Card ready)
6. Register your baggage again by placing on the luggage belt
7. Go to the gate for your connecting flight

If you miss your connecting flight, contact Livingstone Range School Division International Coordinator Jas Schmirler at 1-403-682-7159. Go to the Airline Desk to rebook your connecting flight.

Destination airport: Calgary, YYC

Your destination airport will be Calgary, Alberta.

1. Follow the Baggage Claim signs and pick up your suitcases
2. The 'Person-in-Charge' who is picking you up will be a representative of Livingstone Range School Division International Program and will be in the area holding a sign with Livingstone Range Logo.
3. If the person who is picking you up doesn't seem to be there, contact Livingstone Range International Coordinator Jas Schmirler at 1-403-682-7159.

En route to your homestay family

The car (or bus) ride to your location will take between 1 1/2 to 3 hours, depending on the community in which your homestay is located. You will be driven to the local town you will be residing and arrangements for your home-stay family will have been made to be there to pick you up.

Your Homestay Experience

Contact home

When you arrive at your Homestay, please call or email your family at home to let them know you have arrived safely. If you didn't have the opportunity or device to do so at the airport when you first arrived and you require assistance to call or email your home, your homestay family will be happy to assist you.

Tour your new surroundings

Ask for a tour of your new home when you first arrive. Your host will show you where everything is, with special care to point out your bedroom and bathroom; the kitchen and dining area; the laundry room and so on. Please make sure you understand how to use:

- The bathroom, including the bath / shower, toilet and sink
- Appliances and entertainment items, like the TV, the microwave, etc.
- The safety features of the home; the fire extinguisher, as well as what to do in the event of a fire, as well as where to locate the emergency phone numbers.

Within the first couple of days, ask your host for a tour of your new neighborhood, including directions to and from your school and any local attractions or meeting places.

Life inside the Canadian home

Your host family will have certain rules concerning daily life in the house. These may include when to

have baths and showers, where food can or cannot be eaten, how to do laundry, limits on the use of the television/stereo/computer, bedtime hours, use of personal cell phones and tablets, and so on.

Your host parents will welcome you into their home as a member of the family. As part of this family, you will be expected to do some assigned chores. For example, you will be responsible to keep your room clean, as well as other areas of the house if you use them. You should also be prepared to help with meal preparation, cleaning of dishes and doing your own laundry.

We ask our host families to arrange a family meeting to go over the house rules at the beginning of your stay to discuss their schedules, meal times (breakfast, lunch and dinner).

Building positive relationships with the homestay family

You are encouraged to develop positive relationships with your homestay family, based on mutual trust and open communication. You should also take responsibility for your own practices, behaviors and needs. You can build a positive relationship with your homestay family by:

- Communicating in an honest and respectful way with members of the homestay family and the Homestay Manager.
- Communicating with the homestay family on a day-to-day basis and being open about needs and wants, such as the need to make a late-night phone call or being hungry after meals.
- Being open to participating in family activities.
- Making every effort to take full advantage of the cultural exchange and family environment that homestay provides. Keep contact with parents and friends in home country to a level that does not hinder the development of a fulfilling relationship with the homestay family.
- Being aware of acceptable levels of hospitality and do not take advantage of the generosity offered by the homestay family.
- Asking the homestay family for permission if planning to be absent for a meal or to participate in social activities outside the home.
- Being considerate of the needs of the members of the homestay family in the use of common household areas, sharing bathroom and laundry facilities, using the telephone, television, computer, and the internet.
- Participating fully as a member of the homestay family. This will range from going to bed and getting up at the same time as the family. Maintaining a clean and tidy bedroom and helping with household chores, such as setting and clearing the table and keeping common living spaces clean and tidy.
- Being aware that food is an important part of everyone's diet and culture. While in Canada, you will want to ensure that you are open to sharing the food of the Canadian culture during meal times.
- Being aware that school rules and laws in general may be different than the country from which you originate. One example is that in Alberta, all passengers in a vehicle must wear a seatbelt.
- Respecting the curfew set by the family. This requires you to be at home at a specific time at night. In many cases the curfew will be earlier on Sunday to Thursday night, to ensure that you are able to get a full night's sleep before school.

Openness to cultural exchange

Every effort will be made to place you in the most appropriate homestay family given your interest, your dietary and physical needs, and any health concerns, such as allergies to pets. You should understand that Canadian families are incredibly diverse in terms of composition, ethnicity, religious practices and income level. Your level of success in your homestay experience will be dependent upon your ability to:

- Respect and be aware that cultural differences and beliefs of the homestay family may be different from your own.
- Adopt an attitude of openness and curiosity when it comes to cultural sharing.
- Avoid stereotypical expectations of what constitutes a Canadian family and the sort of practices and behaviors they should engage in.
- Be aware that Livingstone Range School Division cannot be expected to honor placement requests that are discriminatory in nature.

Abiding by rules, laws & regulations

It is important that you respect and adhere to the guidelines and rules for living in the household as outlined by the homestay family as well as:

- Seek permission from the homestay family before inviting friends to stay or visit.
- Abide by Canadian laws. For example, wear bicycle helmets and seat belts.
- Sleepovers are typically not an acceptable practice for international students. You may have a sleepover if you have the approval of the homestay family and the Homestay Coordinator, and the sleepover takes place in another approved homestay family.
- Be considerate and keep noise to a minimum after 8:30 pm. Respect and observe the times the homestay family uses for going to bed at night and rising in the morning.
- Show courtesy by informing the homestay family of your plans and schedule, in respecting meal times and in honoring arrangements made with the homestay family.
- As a student of the International Student Program, you are prohibited from drinking alcohol, smoking and using illicit drugs. Violation of this policy will bring disciplinary actions that may include expulsion from the program.
- Students should not engage in dating/sexual relations
- Students are not permitted to drive motorized vehicles. Students are permitted to accept rides with those who have a valid class 5 driver's license (age 16 or older), only within town limits. They are not permitted to travel to other towns and on the highway to the cities with anyone under the age of 18.
- Show courtesy and respect by speaking English only at all times.
- As a student of the International Student Program, you are not allowed to take a paying job while in Canada.

Health insurance

All students are covered for health insurance by a group benefit plan from StudyInsured. This is compulsory. The plan issues a health insurance card for each student, and provides a policy wording explaining the coverage as well as a claim form. All costs for health-related services are the responsibility of the student. At the time of a visit to a physician, the physician may bill the student directly. The student will be reimbursed for expenses eligible under the insurance plan as long as a claim is submitted to StudyInsured with the original bill(s) and any other relevant supporting

documentation. Your homestay parent or International Student Program staff will assist in making claims for refunds as necessary. Visit <http://www.studyinsured.com/lrsd> for more information on the insurance.

StudyInsured Assistance is available 24/7 by phone for questions about the coverage, help locating medical providers, reporting serious injury or illness, and help with submitting a claim.

Note that StudyInsured **MUST** be notified as soon as possible if a student suffers a serious illness or injury resulting in hospitalization/surgery/the need for a high-level diagnostic, or if they receive any type of medical care outside of Canada. Failure to notify within 48 hours may result in an eligible claim being paid to only 80%. 1.866.883.9787 in North America, 1.416.640.7865, worldwide.

Virtual Doctor - StudyInsured provides access to virtual health appointments for minor illnesses. We encourage all students to sign up soon after arriving to Canada. Once a student has their profile set up, they can login anytime, fill in an intake form, and see a doctor within minutes. Note that not all medical conditions are appropriate for virtual health appointments. If your request for a virtual health appointment is rejected, please call 1.866.883.9787 to ask the StudyInsured Assistance Team for guidance to another medical provider.

Dental

The health insurance policy does not cover routine dental work. You may wish to ensure that all dental work is up-to-date, as dental care is expensive in Canada. You will need to consult a private practitioner for any dental problems. Since dental care is expensive in Canada, you may wish to consider insurance to cover this aspect of your health care.

Food in Canada

Food may seem a little bland to those who are used to spicy food. It is essential you do not bring in any fresh food, fruit or vegetables, or home prepared dishes, even if they are given to you as departure gifts. The Customs Department is very strict on these matters and any such goods will be confiscated at the airport. Further detailed information about customs requirements can be found at www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca.

The following is a description of a fairly typical meal pattern in Canada, although there is, of course, a wide range of variation according to personal taste.

Breakfast: Occurs around 7:00-8:00 am and can consist of fruit juice, cereal, toast and jam, coffee or tea. Some people enjoy a cooked breakfast of eggs.

Lunch: Lunch takes place around 12:00-1:00 pm and can consist of a sandwich, salad or light cooked dishes, such as pasta or soup.

Dinner: Occurs around 5:30-7:00 pm and can consist of possibly soup, followed by meat, chicken or fish with vegetables or salad and rice, pasta or potatoes. Dessert or fruit may follow.

Communication - ask questions

You have come to Canada to become more confident and assertive in English, so be brave! If you don't understand what someone is saying, let them know. Ask questions, lots of questions. You might make

mistakes at first but your host family will help you. Practice your English as part of the normal household routine; talk with your family during dinner and relaxation time.

The first new weeks living in a new country with a new family can be difficult. You may feel homesick and frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings.

Making the most of your experience

Your homestay experience will largely depend on your own attitude and friendliness. How can you make the most of living in Canada? Come with an open mind and be ready to embrace the ways in which Canada and the people you will meet here are different and unique. Your host family will be eager to help you adapt to their family and Canada. The more you get involved in your new life the happier you will be.

As a newcomer to Canada, you will go through a predictable sequence of stages in adjusting to your new circumstances:

1. Arrival and First Impressions! You will be excited to be in a new environment and everything will seem new and wonderful.
2. Culture Shock! You may become less optimistic as you find it difficult to make friends and learn English. You will miss your friends, family and everything that was familiar. You may become de-pressed and long for home.
3. Recovery and Optimism! You feel better because you are experiencing success at school and making friends. You feel more confident about fitting in at school.
4. Acculturation! You become more comfortable in your new surroundings and can balance the new culture with your own culture. You can appreciate what the new experience is bring to you.

School in Canada

School Supplies

For students who are participating in the long-term or the short-term program, textbooks and course related materials will be provided. Students are required to provide their own pens, pencils, notebooks and binders.

First Day of School

High School Students will meet with the school office staff at their high school when they arrive. The staff member will review your transcripts and ensure you are placed in courses suitable for your program and success. Please remember to bring your study permit with you to office staff to copy. Students are expected to participate in some activity during their stay either a sport, club or community activity. It will help enrich your experience and be involved and meet new people.

Characteristics of Canadian Education

You will likely find some differences between the education/value system in your own country and that in Canada. It is essential for you to understand the appropriate and accepted roles for students in the Canadian educational system.

Students will attend regular classes and be integrated with local Canadian students. Students will enjoy their exciting new experience as an international student within our school division!

Students are encouraged to ask questions for clarification, to challenge information, or to extend thinking. The philosophy of education in Canada includes the idea that students should be involved in an interactive learning process, that is, they should not sit passively and accept or memorize what the teacher says.

Teacher-student relationships tend to be relatively informal compared to those in many other countries. For example, teachers may begin the class with a joke or with friendly conversation. Group work is an important part of school learning, it stresses cooperation, tolerance, and compromise. It is also evaluated as part of your mark.

Discussion is often used as a means of teaching. Students are expected to be able to discuss in order to develop their ideas and opinions and to present them in class.

Students learn not just information, but how to arrive at conclusions, to solve problems, and to analyze. As part of this process, students are often asked how they got an answer, rather than just what the answer is.

Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand. Teachers expect to be questioned. Make sure you understand what the teacher wants you to do in an assignment. If you are quiet, the teacher will think that you understand. Teachers are usually available before and after school for questions and extra help.

Common Challenges

We hope that you enjoy your time with your host family and at school. If you experience any problems speak with your host family immediately, or your school principal, if you are upset by something. They will be happy to talk to you and to find out what can be done to resolve the problem.

If the problem cannot be resolved, please call the International Coordinator Jas Schmirler at 1-403-682-7159 for help. We ask that you do not call your parents or agent before you speak to us. We can help you better and more quickly if we hear about the problem directly from you. You can always contact them later if you are not happy with our solutions.

We look forward to meeting you upon your arrival in Canada. If you have any questions you would like to discuss prior to your arrival, please talk to your agent and they will notify us if they are unable to answer your specific concern.



Communication / Protocol

Student

School

Course Selection
Attendance
Grades
Discipline
Any other school related issues

Homestay

Daily Routine
Food & Meals
Activities
Discipline
Any other homestay related issue

Emergency

Medical Emergency
Accidents
Illness
Custodianship
Any other emergency or after school issues

Speak with appropriate school staff first such as the teacher, guidance counselor or a member of student services.

Speak with a homestay family parent first. Communicate for better understanding and discuss a compromise.

Speak with the host family immediately so they can assist and offer help with the situation.

If the concern remains unresolved, speak with ISP Personnel and the School Principal or Vice-Principal. The ISP Program Administrator will also assist with addressing the concern at this time.

If the concern remains unresolved, speak with ISP Personnel and the ISP Program Administrator.

Also remember to contact ISP Personnel immediately at the office or after-hours cell phone numbers.

Even if concerns are resolved without involving ISP Personnel, it is still very important to keep them apprised of all concerns or issues. These communications are essential to help to ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.