



# International and Homestay Student Handbook

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A Ministry of Calvary Baptist Church

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# Welcome to PCA

All teachers and staff at PCA warmly welcome you to our campus. We are delighted that you have chosen to study at PCA and to live with a host family. Our goal is for each student to have a positive, supportive and enriching experience with their host family. Please know that the host family you have been placed with has specifically requested an international student to live with them because they value their family will have by living with you. Your host family wants to learn about you, your native language and your culture. To make this a good experience for both you and your host family, we have provided some information in this handbook to guide you through the many experiences you will have living and studying in the United States. Please read the information carefully and please ask all questions you have.

## What we believe about youth

The Christian faith teaches us about how to value and train young people. We believe the following (with verses from the Holy Bible):

- All people are created in the image of God.  
“So, God created man **in** his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Genesis 1:27
- All people are created with a purpose.  
“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11  
“for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” Philipians 2:13
- All people are given talents and gifts from God.  
“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” 1 Corinthians 12:7
- All people are created equal in God’s eyes.  
“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28

Whether you are in the classroom or at home with a family, you can expect to be treated with respect, compassion, grace and Christian love, and that in all situations we will seek truth and goodness.

## What to expect in an American family

Many families in America have different traditions, habits and styles. In general, most American parents love and support their children and place high priority

on the educational, social, physical and spiritual development of their children. Many American parents try to balance teaching their children directly and letting their children learn on their own so that the children will develop confidence and independence. Most American families value the family unit, but also nurture the individuality of their children. Although it can be common for extended family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins) to live in different states, most American families take care of their relatives and make special efforts to spend time together, especially during holidays or vacations.

## **What to expect in a Christian family**

Again, many families have different traditions, habits and styles, even in the Christian faith. In general, most Christian families attend church together once or twice a week, may be involved in service/volunteer projects at church or in the community, will read the Bible together, will sing and pray together, will talk openly about how the Christian faith relates to what each family member is experiencing on a daily or weekly basis. Most Christian parents teach their children how to make wise and positive choices about the things that influence their children, such as music, TV programs, movies, Internet, video games, activities, friends, etc. Most Christian parents set boundaries and limitations on their children. For example, children might be allowed to socialize with friends in the evenings, but they will be required to be home by a certain time. Children might also be given time limits on how much time per day they can spend on video games, the Internet, etc. Even though most Christian parents allow their children to participate in many events individually, the parents typically seek to know all about the event such as location, other participants, contact information, detailed schedule of event, etc. Most parents want to know where their children are and what they are doing at all times to ensure availability in the event of emergency, to ensure safety for the children and to monitor the experiences their children are having. It is very common for families to spend time together going to sporting events, movies, concerts, out to restaurants, playing games at home together, etc. as well.

# Primary Expectations of Homestay Students

## **Orientation**

Orientation will be a time for the student to come to PCA and get to know the faculty, staff and other students. The time will be spent familiarizing oneself with PCA and the neighboring communities.

## **Discipline Structure and Administrative Prerogative**

Obedience to homestay program, homestay family, and PCA rules and respectful compliance to the direction of PCA faculty and staff is expected at all times from PCA students. As much as possible, consequences for any misbehavior will be naturally related to the offense. Consequences are meant to be formative - and not punitive - in nature. The PCA administration retains at its sole discretion the prerogative to assign specific consequences up to and including homestay related offenses warranting up to an expulsion with no refund.

Homestay students are under the direct care and supervision of PCA and the assigned homestay family parents. Homestay students must respectfully comply with all rules and expectations of the family in which they are living. These rules and expectations are to be communicated to the students through each family's **Family Covenant**. Homestay students are expected to abide fully by the Family Covenant of their homestay family. Homestay parents are authorized to exercise discipline over the student just as they would their own children and in a way that is consistent with the Family Covenant and PCA regulations. Failure to comply with the rules and expectations of the homestay parents may result in consequences up to and including the student's expulsion from Plymouth Christian Academy. Grievances with the Family Covenant should be first shared with the homestay parents. If a resolution cannot be reached, students need to appeal to the Homestay Coordinator.

## **Behavior and Standards of Conduct**

Prior to leaving the home country, the student's parents should discuss the importance of good behavior with their student and ensure the he or she understands the significance of acting in a manner that will reflect well on his or her family and country.

All students must obey the laws of the United States of America and the states

where they live and visit. A student found violating the law will be returned home at his/her family's own expense as soon as the student is released by the authorities.

Students must read, sign, and obey the Plymouth Christian Academy student code of conduct. Students violating the code of conduct will be held accountable according to the policies of PCA.

US law strictly forbids the consumption of alcohol for anyone under the age of 21. Students must refrain from the possession or use of alcoholic beverages, narcotics (unless prescribed by a physician), or illegal drugs at all times, including non-school hours. Smoking or the use of any tobacco product is forbidden. Violation of these standards will constitute grounds for immediate dismissal from Plymouth Christian Academy.

All students must abstain from sexual activity. Romantic involvement or dating is discouraged. International students may not take any action that may change the nature of his or her life (e.g., become engaged or married).

Students must not possess any type of firearm - including BB or pellet guns, paintball guns, airsoft guns, switchblades, bows and arrows, explosive devices, martial arts weapons, fireworks, or any other weapon considered illegal or dangerous.

Lewd, indecent or obscene conduct will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. This includes possession or display of pornographic material in any form.

Slander, profane language, physical or verbal abuse of any person will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

Theft or vandalism of PCA, public, or private property will result in disciplinary action.

Software piracy is a theft and the unauthorized copying or duplication of licensed computer software is a violation of federal law and may expose the individual and PCA to legal processes.

All students are expected to do their own work and refrain from plagiarizing the work of others. When writing a research paper, students must provide citations and bibliographic information. If you do not know how to correctly cite sources, you will need to ask your English teachers for help. Students may not use an editor for any work turned in under their name unless approved in advance in writing by the instructor.

Students and families agree to support the Plymouth Christian Academy staff in its goals, procedures, and discipline policies, and understand that PCA is a private institution reserving the right to cancel the enrollment of any student who does not abide by the Plymouth Christian Academy standards and

requirements. Students whose enrollment has been canceled will have 30 days to leave the United States, at their own expense, and their SEVIS record will be terminated.

Students are expected to cooperate fully with the dress and grooming standards of Plymouth Christian Academy.

## **Student Complaint Procedure**

It is common for misunderstandings or even problems to arise. More important, however, is that you understand how to get help when needed. For any problem, concern or complaint you have about your host family, please follow the steps below:

1. Talk directly to your host parent(s). Even if this seems too direct, Americans value directness and will want to know immediately if you are having any kind of difficulty.
2. If you talk with your host parent(s) and are not satisfied with the outcome, talk to the International Student Director.
3. If you talk to the Homestay Coordinator and you are not satisfied with the outcome, talk to the Superintendent.

## **Changing Homestay Families**

Changing homestay families is not generally permitted during the school year. Homestay students and families are asked to make a one-year commitment to the homestay arrangement at the beginning of each school year. Homestay arrangements are reviewed by the International Students Director in the spring of each school year to make timely placements for the following school year. Students who desire a change in their homestay arrangement for the following school year must appeal to the International Students Director either verbally or in writing by the end of April.

There are extenuating circumstances that do allow for the changing of families during a school year. A student seeking an immediate change in their homestay arrangement during the school year must submit a written appeal to the International Students Director. Circumstances warranting a mid-year change may include but are not limited to harassment, abuse, ongoing and irresolvable family conflict, life changes in the homestay family's situation, etc.

The Homestay program reserves the right to grant or refuse a student's desire to change families both during the school year and over the summer. All homestay family assignments are made at the discretion of the Homestay program and the PCA administration reserves the right to remove students from a homestay situation immediately and without warning if necessary.



Students who demonstrate an inability to adapt to homestay arrangements may be asked not to return to PCA or may be dismissed from PCA at any time if deemed necessary by the PCA administration. Students who regularly request or seek changes in homestay family placements may be asked not to return to PCA or may be dismissed from PCA at any time if deemed necessary by the PCA administration.

## **End-of-Year Procedures**

In May of each school year, homestay students will be required to complete a Homestay Student Survey. These online surveys are used to assist PCA in adjusting the homestay program that will benefit students, homestay families, and the PCA administration. These surveys are confidential in nature.

# **Homestay Program Regulations**

## **Airport Information**

PCA Homestay students are required to fly in and out of the Detroit Metro (DTW) Airport. Students are required to inform both the Homestay Coordinator and their homestay family of all departure and arrival dates and times. Homestay families are responsible for providing transportation to and from the airport. More information is available on the airport website at <http://www.metroairport.com/>.

## **Documentation**

When traveling inside the U.S., you should always take your passport with you.

## **Immunizations**

The State of Michigan requires immunizations for students attending school. The homestay student will need to provide proof of immunizations as part of the application process. Please see attached Immunizations spreadsheet listing these requirements.

## **Transportation and Use of Vehicles**

Homestay students are not allowed to possess or drive a vehicle while in the homestay program. Transportation of the homestay student should be provided by the homestay family. This requires advanced planning on the student's part as the homestay family needs to plan to meet the needs of all family members. Homestay students may only ride in vehicles driven by any PCA homestay parent, a high school student driver from their personal homestay home with natural parents' permission, an official PCA approved driver, or an official church approved driver. Homestay students are not permitted to ride with any other drivers without the express permission (i.e., dual enrollment, college visit etc.) of the Homestay Coordinator.

On occasion, the homestay student might want to travel with another family or friends to local or regional events. When students travel by car without any of the above approved drivers, the driver must be over 21 years old. The driver must be approved by the Homestay Coordinator, and the homestay student must have a riding permission form in addition to the traveling permission form turned in by the natural parents. The driver must give a copy of the driver's license and proof of the car insurance policy to the Homestay Coordinator seven (7) days prior to the first day of travel.

The metropolitan Detroit area as well as the Plymouth-Canton area does not have a public transportation system.

## **English Language Use**

Most international students enrolled in the PCA Homestay Program exhibit a need to improve their English language skill to some degree. For this reason, PCA requests that students use English as much as possible while at PCA (except when studying or practicing another foreign language being studied by the student).

Out of common courtesy, when in a group of people who do not all speak the same non-English language, English should be the exclusive language used by all members of the group. Speaking in a language other than English when all listeners cannot understand can be interpreted as rude and disrespectful in American culture and may result in alienating people from each other.

Most Americans are interested in other cultures and languages and enjoy hearing international students speak, even with an accent. Do not be shy about your English, or your native language. Many Americans will be curious about your language and could ask you how to say certain words or phrases in your native language. This is a great opportunity to share your language and culture with your new friends.

Student communication with their parents (via phone or computer) in the student's native language is allowed. Homestay parents have the right to ask a student to move to another location in the home if the student's conversation with his or her parent(s) is interfering with the home environment. Otherwise, students are expected to speak English at all times while at home or with the homestay family.

## **Home Phone Use**

A home phone is defined as the landline telephone provided by the homestay family. Not all families use landline telephones, so do not assume that your homestay family will have one available. If a home phone is available, it is the student's responsibility to establish with the homestay parents when and how it is acceptable for the student to use this phone. It is highly recommended that students refrain from using this phone to make foreign calls to family or friends in another country. Students should schedule appropriate times with the homestay family for international parents to call using this phone line. The student will be held responsible for any charges incurred through their personal use of the home phone.

Students are encouraged to utilize Skype or other social media communication instead of the telephone to communicate with family or friends in other countries. These communication methods are often free of charge and utilize the internet over phone lines. However, students are responsible to establish with the homestay parents when and how it is acceptable for the student to communicate with family or friends using these methods.

## **Cell Phone Use**

Many American homes utilize cell phones for family communication. The student is responsible to discuss with the homestay family whether the use of a cell phone is expected or preferred. The student is responsible to pay for his or her own cell phone plan and/or use. Any exceptions to this must be negotiated with the homestay family directly.

A personal cell phone must be provided to each International student by the natural parents. This will cost approximately \$500 for the year depending on the service plan. If the student wants to purchase a cell phone or the plan in the U.S., the host family will be happy to help the student to do this.

Homestay families reserve the right to monitor a student's cell phone use and may restrict the student's cell phone use in a manner consistent with the Family Covenant. The student should discuss any expectations regarding cell phone use with the homestay family upon arrival into the home. The student needs to clearly understand when and where cell phone use is acceptable or unacceptable.

## **Dress/Attire with Homestay family**

When in the home or involved in family life, students should dress in a manner consistent with homestay parent expectations. Homestay parents reserve the right to decide what is acceptable or unacceptable while living with their family. The student should always be sensitive to other members of the household as well as to family values. Clothing is to be purchased by the student and is not the responsibility of the homestay family to purchase clothing for the student. In general, most American teenagers wear jeans and tops that are modest. Some examples of clothing that might not be acceptable are shirts that show too much of the stomach or abdomen, pants that are worn too low or that reveal undergarments, clothing with negative images/words/symbols.

## **Chores/Domestic Duties**

The student may be expected to participate in the family domestic structure, including assigned chores around the home, as most members of the family have

one or more assigned chores on a daily or weekly basis. The student is not to be a servant to the home, but is to act with a heart of service to others in the home by doing what is expected to help around the home. The student should offer to assist with duties such as washing dishes, cleaning their room, doing laundry, etc. Some families may assign specific household duties to each child in the home. Specific domestic duty expectations should usually be communicated through the Family Covenant. Homestay students are expected to participate in this household structure with the appropriate attitude.

A student who feels he or she is being asked to do an excessive amount of work should first talk directly to the homestay family. If the student continues to feel unfairly treated, he or she may talk to the Homestay Coordinator.

## **Damage to the Home**

The student is responsible for any damage caused to the homestay family's property (beyond normal wear and tear. furniture, walls, flooring, etc.). The student must settle these damages with the homestay family directly within 30 days. These situations will be mediated by the Homestay Coordinator.

## **Money**

Students will be expected to open their own debit/credit account at Bank of Ann Arbor in Plymouth. Students will be expected to pay for all personal needs/requests. Homestay families will receive a \$900 pre-tax monthly stipend for the cost associated with hosting an international student

### Included as part of tuition payment:

Tuition and fees to attend PCA

Rent

Utilities in the home

Food for breakfast, lunch, dinner (see Meals section for further clarification)

Transportation or gasoline costs unless for a special trip

### Homestay students DO have to pay for:

Personal toiletries

Clothing

Entertainment

Special foods, snacks, drinks

Souvenirs

Extra-curricular activities

Personal cell phone and provider plan

Medical insurance and medical expenses not covered by insurance

## **Bedtimes & Quiet Hours**

Students are expected to follow their homestay family's bedtimes as well as respect quiet or study hours in the home. Students should understand that each family may vary in expectations regarding study or quiet hours and bedtime. Some families require students to be in bed with lights out by a specific time in the evening. Students are to respect whatever the family requirements are for their homestay. Students are expected to communicate their needs for quiet hours with their host parents and to establish an agreed upon policy regarding study or quiet hours and bedtime, which will be stated in the Family Covenant. Any changes to this agreement must be requested to the homestay parents directly.

## **Visitors to the Homestay**

Homestay parents must grant permission in advance to host visitors of the student. Visitors of the opposite gender cannot stay overnight under any circumstances and are not allowed in the student bedroom area. Out-of-town visitors (e.g., parents, siblings, family, and friends) are expected to obtain their own lodging outside of the homestay home unless the homestay parents specifically invite the visitors to stay in the homestay home.

Students who have visitors coming to the Detroit Metro area are required to notify their homestay parents and the Homestay Coordinator of the visit as early as possible. Visitors should not impact the student's normal activities (e.g., school, studying, and other activities). Any change in schedule due to visitors should be discussed with the homestay parents in advance.

## **Socializing & Dating**

The public display of any sort of romantic affection — hand-holding and kissing, for example — is not allowed. Students are encouraged to develop healthy friendships. Homestay students will abstain from all sexual activity. Any romantic involvement or dating is not allowed.

Homestay students may not take any action that may change the nature of his or her life such as becoming engaged or married.

International students who attend the homecoming dance, winter dance and/or prom, must be in groups and not as a "couple date." One-on-one dating is not allowed. Homestay students must also get approval from their host parents or the Homestay Coordinator to attend dances or group dates.

## Meals

Homestay students can expect to be given three meals per day by their homestay families, including lunches on school days. Some families may choose to send a bag lunch with their homestay student while others may prefer to place money on a lunch account and allow the homestay student to purchase lunch at school. Homestay families are only expected to provide a reasonable amount of food or money to purchase food at school for the homestay student.

When homestay families eat together the homestay student is expected to participate in the meal as a family member. Homestay students may volunteer to help prepare some meals for the family and may request specific food on occasion. However, meals are determined by the Host Parents in a manner consistent with their family guidelines and household expectations. Homestay students are not to avoid family meals, whether at home or eating out.

Homestay student cooking should be done in the kitchen with the permission and supervision of the homestay parents. No cooking is permitted in a homestay student's room.

## Cooking

Student cooking should be done in the kitchen with the express permission of the homestay parents. No cooking is permitted in a student's room unless there is host parent's permission. Clean-up must occur immediately after meals, and any leftovers or other food must be kept in a properly sealed container and refrigerated as needed. Students must get permission from the homestay parents before using any cooking utensils or appliances. All students cooking should be done under the supervision of the homestay parents.

## Church Attendance

Homestay students are required to attend church with their homestay family. Some families may choose to attend church functions more frequently than others. Church attendance is not optional.

Some of the churches attended by our PCA family include:

Calvary Baptist Church: [www.cbcjoy.org](http://www.cbcjoy.org)

Northridge: [www.northridgechurch.com](http://www.northridgechurch.com)

Life Church: [www.lifechurchcanton.org](http://www.lifechurchcanton.org)

Berean Bible Church: [www.bereanbible.net](http://www.bereanbible.net)

Oak Pointe Church: [www.oakpointe.org](http://www.oakpointe.org)

Trinity Presbyterian Church: [www.trinityepc.org](http://www.trinityepc.org)

Ward Presbyterian Church: [www.wardchurch.org](http://www.wardchurch.org)  
Solid Rock Bible Church: [www.solidrockplymouth.org](http://www.solidrockplymouth.org)  
Connection Church: [www.connectionchurch.info](http://www.connectionchurch.info)

## Technology

Students are expected to leave the room door open when using technology and the computer screen should be faced to the room door. Homestay parents reserve the right to determine appropriate study areas and areas where technology devices are on or off-limits to the student. Homestay parents reserve the right to monitor all computer activity using internet filters or other filtering programs as outlined in the Family Covenant. This is to ensure the safety of all students and not meant to invade the privacy of the students.

Students are required to turn off all electrical devices at bedtime (if one is prescribed in the Family Covenant) or 11 p.m. (whichever is earlier). Students may occasionally request permission from the homestay parents for late night with technology for academic purposes or for communication with family/friends in their home country. Homestay parents will make reasonable efforts to grant access for such purposes but reserve the right to grant or deny such a privilege as they see fit. Students are responsible to follow all family guidelines regarding technology use as prescribed in the Family Covenant.

## Medical Insurance

Students must obtain health insurance with companies in the U.S. through the student's agency or PCA. If any student plans to remain in the United States during the summer, medical insurance coverage must be extended at an additional cost to the student. The medical insurance provided offers excellent coverage of most physician visits and other accident or sickness medical expenses. However, medical insurance does not usually cover 100% of all medical bills or in the case of large or expensive medical procedures. Students are responsible to purchase any necessary medication or prescriptions; such expenses are not always covered by medical insurance and maybe expensive in the U.S.

## Sports Eligibility

International students placed in PCA homestays are not allowed to participate in interscholastic sports unless they have come from a CSEIT approved agency. PCA is a member of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA). International students must meet all other eligibility requirements found in MHSAA Bylaws and the Secondary Student Handbook found on the school website: [www.plymouthchristian.org](http://www.plymouthchristian.org).



Further information regarding international students and athletics will be determined later.

## Weather

Temperatures in Michigan vary greatly depending on the season. It is wise to bring clothes that you can layer and to be prepared for all types of weather conditions. It will be hot in August when homestay students arrive and will start to cool during September. Winters include snow and slush so a warm coat, boots, gloves, and hat are necessary.

Below are average temperature ranges for the seasons:

Summer (June - August):	70 - 95 degrees Fahrenheit
Fall (September - November):	40 - 70 degrees Fahrenheit
Winter (December - February):	0 - 40 degrees Fahrenheit
Spring (March - May):	40 - 70 degrees Fahrenheit

## Federal Holidays

Federal law establishes the following public holidays for federal employees. If the holiday falls during the weekend, it may be observed on a different day. Many government offices are closed on federal holidays and some private businesses may close as well. If you plan to visit a government office on or around a federal holiday, you should contact them to determine when they will be open.

### New Year's Day

New Year's Day is January 1. The celebration of this holiday begins the night before, when Americans gather to wish each other a happy and prosperous coming year. Many Americans make New Year's resolutions. Some popular resolutions include losing weight, volunteering, get out of debt, manage stress, read Bible daily, etc.

### Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is celebrated on the third Monday in January. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was an African-American clergyman who is recognized for his tireless efforts to win civil rights for all people through nonviolent means.

### Washington's Birthday

Washington's Birthday is observed the third Monday of February in honor George Washington, the first President of the United States. This date is commonly called Presidents' Day and many groups honor the legacy of past presidents on this date.

### Memorial Day

Memorial Day is observed the last Monday of May. It originally honored the people killed in the American Civil War, but has become a day on which the American dead of all wars are remembered.

### Independence Day

Independence Day is July 4. This holiday honors the nation's birthday - the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. It is a day of picnics and patriotic parades, a night of concerts, and fireworks.

### Labor Day

Labor Day is the first Monday of September. This holiday honors the nation's working people, typically with parades. For most Americans, it marks the end of the summer vacation season and the start of the school year.

### Columbus Day

Columbus Day is celebrated on the second Monday in October. The day commemorates October 12, 1492, when Italian navigator Christopher Columbus landed in the New World. The holiday was first proclaimed in 1937 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

### Veterans Day

Veterans Day is celebrated on November 11. This holiday was originally called Armistice Day and established to honor Americans who had served in World War I. It now honors veterans of all wars in which the U.S. has fought. Veterans' organizations hold parades, and the president places a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

### Thanksgiving Day

Thanksgiving Day is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November. In the fall of 1621, the Pilgrims held a three-day feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest. Many regard this event as the nation's first Thanksgiving. The Thanksgiving feast became a national tradition and almost always includes some of the foods served at the first feast: roast turkey, cranberry sauce, potatoes, and pumpkin pie.

### Christmas Day

Christmas Day is celebrated on December 25. Christmas is a Christian holiday marking the birth of the Christ Child. Decorating houses and yards with lights, putting up Christmas trees, giving gifts, and sending greeting cards have become holiday traditions even for many non-Christian Americans.

## Other Celebrations and Observances

There are many commonly observed celebrations in the United States that are not federal holidays. Some of these observances honor groups of people, such as National African American History Month and Women's History Month, or causes, such as National Oceans Month and National Substance Abuse Prevention Month. Many of these holidays and observances are proclaimed by the President every year.

Below are some of the most popular American celebrations and observances that occur every year.

### Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is celebrated on February 14. The day was named after an early Christian martyr, and on Valentine's Day, Americans give presents like candy or flowers to the ones they love. The first mass-produced valentine cards were sold in the 1840s.

### Mother's Day

Mother's Day is the second Sunday of May. President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation in 1914 that started the holiday. He asked Americans to give a public expression of reverence to mothers on this day. Carnations have come to represent Mother's Day, following President William McKinley's habit of always wearing a white carnation, his mother's favorite flower.

### Father's Day

Father's Day celebrates fathers every third Sunday of June. Father's Day began in 1909 in Spokane, Washington, when a daughter requested a special day to honor her father, a Civil War veteran who raised his children after his wife died. The first presidential proclamation honoring fathers was issued in 1966 by President Lyndon Johnson.

### Halloween

Halloween is celebrated on October 31. On Halloween, American children dress up in funny or scary costumes and go "trick or treating" by knocking on doors in their neighborhood. The neighbors are expected to respond by giving them small gifts of candy or money.

## Ethnic and Religious Holidays

Various ethnic and religious groups in the United States celebrate days with special meaning to them even though these are not national holidays. For example, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter, Jews

observe their high holy days in September, and Muslims celebrate Ramadan. There are many other religious and ethnic celebrations in the United States.

*The policies and procedures of the Plymouth Christian Academy Homestay Program are subject to revision and change at any time as deemed appropriate by the PCA administration. Individuals will be notified of such revisions and changes in a timely manner, should they occur.*

# Plymouth Christian Academy

## International Student Host Family Job Description

**Job Title:** International Student Host Family

**Department:** International Student Program

**Reports To:** Caryn Huntsman, Superintendent/Secondary Principal; Peggy Paulson, Advancement/Homestay Coordinator

Plymouth Christian Academy began accepting international students in the Fall of 2016. Your role serving as a host family is one of the most important components of this program. Plymouth Christian views you as professional partners in the international student's education, serving as part of a team with the parents in the home country, teachers, students, church family and administration. We depend on your loving care, parental discernment and confidential, professional communication with the school as we educate these students and bring them up in a Christian context. It is important that the host family and teachers view each child as a unique creation of God and seek to aid the student in developing his/her gifts and abilities to their highest potential based on a proper understanding and acceptance of himself/herself and how God has made them. (Psalm 139:13, 14)

**Qualifications:** We are looking for the following characteristics in you and your family as we together consider this role for your family.

- You have a growing personal relationship with Christ.
- You can demonstrate a healthy marriage.
- You can handle and resolve conflict.
- You are willing to admit if you've made a mistake.
- You are financially responsible.
- Your children in the home are doing well academically, socially and spiritually.
- You are willing to learn and respect others and other cultures

**Expectations:** We have made a commitment to the international student's parents to carefully screen and match students with our school families. We have also assured them that we would have on going monthly training with the host families for enhanced understanding of cultural learning and academic, emotional and spiritual support in the home. Therefore, we expect the host families to follow our expectations. Specifically, host parents are responsible to:

- Provide a safe and healthy home environment
- Provide emotional and spiritual support
- Be involved in a church family and attend church weekly
- Support the student as they learn and adjust to American culture. Simultaneously, learn about their culture in a respectful manner.

*Relational Capital – Get to know the student, what motivates them, how they are unique. Expect high standards from them. Build trust as quickly as possible. Catch them doing things right (different from a renter or boarder).*

- Provide intentional counsel with the student on choices of friends. International students might need help initiating friendships. Also, please discuss and monitor friend choices for honest, trustworthy

friends who desire to grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ and who also seek to learn about the international student's culture, country and story.

- Discuss conflict resolution with your student. See them as having the potential to grow in interpersonal skills.
- Identify special needs of your student and be in dialogue with Mrs. Huntsman regarding those needs.
- Work with the student to meet dietary preferences or needs, learning about their nutrition in their home country and preparing common foods from their country.
- Provide accountability and discipline when necessary. Know where your student is at all times and monitoring their choice of friends.
- Provide academic support and accountability. Help them as they learn proper communication strategies with American teachers and communicate with teachers alongside them as needed.
- Communicate weekly with parents in home country.
- Discuss any challenges in any area with Mrs. Huntsman or Mrs. Paulson throughout the year
- Model a healthy marriage relationship within the home.
- Work alongside other host families to develop common guidelines when possible. Coordinate with each other for time off as needed.
- Be positive regarding the home environment of each host family. Each home will be different. Be careful to build up other host homes if comparisons are made in conversation at your home.
- Maintain standards in the home that fall within the school's acceptable range, to insure consistency and positive student morale.
- Participate in orientation and monthly meetings and complete monthly reports and medical insurance paperwork in a timely manner.

**Responsibilities** include the following:

**Summer:**

- Email your international student and family with pictures and information about your family
- Attend host family orientation meeting. Date and Time TBA
- Research a little on your student's country before they arrive.  
[www.asiasource.org/profiles](http://www.asiasource.org/profiles) is a great resource for Asian countries and [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com) is a good source for current events.
- Prepare room for host student(s); each student needs a separate bed and desk.

**The first week with your host student:**

- Visit the grocery store and a Target type store together and if possible and an ethnic food store
- Establish a place and list for the student to add items to the grocery list during the week
- Set up computers in a family area, not in the bedroom
- Establish household standards for garbage, bathrooms, laundry and assign chores
- Gently help insist they stay awake until 8PM so their sleep patterns adjust to the US time zone
- Establish a weekly/daily family devotional time- devotion led by parent and prayer requests, family business can be shared/ discussed
- Watch an American movie (and a movie from their culture if possible) to talk about cultural differences

**Daily:**

- Provision of breakfast, dinner and a packed lunch (or they can purchase their own meal card with their own funds)
- Transportation to and from PCA with host parent or host sibling or approved car pool or bus
- Review next day schedule in detail via School Records
- One hour of academic support and emotional check-how the day went, concerns, etc.

- Note: International students typically will spend twice as much time as an American student on academics in the evening. So, the average international student should be allowed to do up to 4 hours of homework a night. This means that after co-curricular involvement, a student may complete homework up to 10:30 or 11 each night
- Provide the opportunity for the student to use the internet for at least 30-60 minutes per evening. If a student is struggling academically, limiting usage to 30 minutes is recommended.

**Weekly:**

- At least 3 cooked dinners together with the family with some informal “how are you doing” conversation
- Family devotion time weekly or daily
- Review between student and host parent on use of time during the past week; sleep habits, internet usage, etc.
- Look ahead to next week and confirm plans around anything unusual
- Weekly church attendance

**Monthly:**

- Host parent meetings (2-hour meeting including a meal, required attendance for both parents)
- Sleepover swap with another boarding family both ways to give you and other families time off
- An email to the home parents (and copied to Mrs. Huntsman) in the home country including highlights of the month, funny moments, any minor concerns, etc. Feel free to send a picture when possible. (Please talk with Mrs. Huntsman first if there is any concerns or issues to discuss in email conversations with the host family.)
  - As needed:
    - Doctor visits
    - Completion of insurance claims within 1 week
    - Email general report of visit to Mrs. Huntsman within 24 hours

**Systems in place:**

- Monthly host parent meetings (required attendance for both parents)
- Required weekend respite for each host family per semester
- Student activities once a month – Schedule will be determined
- Students will have academic tutoring available to them
- Semester trips
- Weekly email to you from Mrs. Huntsman
- Mrs. Huntsman and Mrs. Paulson can be your back up as needed/available for unexpected needs



# Required Immunizations

## **Required Childhood Immunizations for Michigan School Settings**

School communicable disease rules are the minimum standard for preventing disease outbreaks in school settings. To best protect patients from all diseases we have the power to prevent, healthcare providers in Michigan should follow the 2014 Recommended Immunization Schedule at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines) or [www.michigan.gov/immunize](http://www.michigan.gov/immunize).

**\*\*All doses of vaccines must be given with appropriate spacing between doses and at appropriate ages to be considered valid. \*\***

*\*Current laboratory evidence of immunity is acceptable instead of immunization with antigen. \**

<b>Entry Requirements for All Public &amp; Non-Public Schools</b>		
<b>Age → Vaccine** ↓</b>	<b>4 years through 6 years</b>	<b>7 years through 18 years including all 7th grade students</b>
<b>Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis</b>	<b>4</b> doses DTP or DTaP, one dose must be on or after 4 years of age	<b>4</b> doses D and T <b>OR</b> 3 doses Td if #1 given on or after 7 years of age.  <b>1</b> dose of Tdap for children 11 years of age or older upon entry into 7 <sup>th</sup> grade or higher.
<b>Polio</b>	<b>4</b> doses, if dose 3 administered on or after 4 years of age, only 3 doses are required	<b>3</b> doses
<b>Measles,* Mumps,* Rubella*</b>	<b>2</b> doses on or after 12 months of age	
<b>Hepatitis B*</b>	<b>3</b> doses	



<b>Meningococcal</b>	None	<b>1</b> dose for all children 11 years of age or older upon entry into 7 <sup>th</sup> grade or higher
<b>Varicella* (Chickenpox)</b>	<b>2</b> doses of varicella vaccine at or after 12 months of age OR current lab immunity OR reliable history of disease	

## Family Covenant

Welcome to our Family! Our family believes in The Bible and loves God and others. We will treat you like one of our own children, but also as a guest in our home and country. We enjoy spending time together as a family for meals. We also enjoy travelling and sharing new experiences with you. We believe that this exposes you to our American culture and helps you to learn English better. We will show love and respect for you and would ask that you do the same for us. Please come to us if there is something you need as you would with your own family. We are more than happy to help with school work or problems or to take you places that you need or want to go. We want you to know that we are always available for you if you have a need or are just missing your home. We want you to feel safe and comfortable in our home and like a part of our family!

These are expectations we have while living in our home:

1. Household chores: We will encourage our student to participate in household chores such as keeping their room neat and clean; helping with their own laundry; picking up after themselves; helping our other children with the weekly garbage and helping with meals and dishes.
2. Household items: We want our student to become familiar with proper usage of items such as television, appliances, etc. before using them independently.
3. Communication and attitude: We believe that proper communication and a respectful attitude towards one another is vital in a loving family. We want our student to have open communication with us regarding school work, upcoming school projects, things that we may need to help with, etc. If our student wants to make plans with friends, we ask that they check with us first to make sure our schedule works with theirs. Knowing early about needed school supplies, church activities, or plans with friends is very important.
4. Punctuality: We will expect our student to get themselves up and be ready for school each day and church on Sundays to leave the house at a specific scheduled time. Bedtime will usually be no later than 11:00 p.m. on school nights since all family members must get up early each morning.
5. Beliefs-We are a Christian family and we go to church on a regular basis. It is expected for you to attend church as the International Homestay Program requires, but you are welcome to go with us anytime. We ask that you respect our beliefs and do understand that you may have your own religious beliefs. We welcome questions about our beliefs.
6. Love and Respect-We ask that you respect us and we will love and respect you.

7. Internet and Social Media-You are welcome to use the Wi-Fi in our home for the internet and social media sites like Facebook, Snap Chat and Instagram. However, we ask that you do not use the internet or social media for things like gambling, pornography or adult websites or post any pictures of yourself or others that are not appropriate or fully clothed. We also ask that you do not post any profanity on social media websites. There should be no phone, computer, or internet usage from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. unless special permission is given.
8. Clothing-We respect your ability to show your personality through your clothing choices, but ask that clothing be modest and not have profanity or inappropriate pictures on it.

We look forward to having you join our family. We want to make you feel loved, cared for, and to enjoy your experience here.

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Student Signature

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Family Signature