



Foreign Exchange Student Protection Policy Merit Preparatory Academy

I. PURPOSE

To provide Merit Preparatory Academy staff with guidance to ensure a safe environment and fair treatment for foreign exchange students.

II. DEFINITIONS

“Foreign Exchange Student” : A student sponsored by an agency approved by Merit Preparatory Academy’s Governing Board.

“Safe Environment” : The exchange student will receive proper care and supervision while at Merit in compliance with Utah Code 53G-6-707. Additionally, the exchange student agency will sign a sworn affidavit in compliance with Utah Code 53G-6-707-4(a)-(b) and Merit Preparatory Academy’s Governing Board policies to ensure student safety.

III. POLICY

Foreign exchange students from diverse backgrounds and cultures provide a rich learning experience for all students. Because of these benefits, Utah schools are encouraged to enroll foreign exchange students annually.

- Criteria for Foreign Exchange Students
 - Merit Preparatory Academy (MPA) shall be compensated to pay the costs of educating foreign exchange students who meet all criteria in Utah Code § 53A-2-206.
 - All foreign exchange students enrolled at MPA must meet the criteria outlined in 53G-6-707(7) and be reported to the USBE at the annual Superintendent Report by October 1st.
 - Foreign Exchange Students admittance will be approved by Merit Preparatory Academy administration with approval from the finance committee.

- Merit Preparatory Academy may enroll foreign exchange students who did not qualify for state monies and:
 - Pay the cost of the student with other LEA funds; or
 - Charge the student tuition
 - Merit Academy shall only enroll a foreign exchange student if the student is sponsored by an agency approved by the USBE and Merit Academy's Governing Board.
 - Foreign exchange students qualify for a high school diploma if they meet all the Utah State requirements for graduation.
- Promoting Safety for Foreign Exchange Students
 - Prior to accepting students through the foreign exchange student agency and to ensure student safety,
 - Merit Preparatory Academy shall require and maintain from the foreign exchange student agency from which Merit Preparatory Academy accepts students, a sworn affidavit that:
 - The agency and the foreign exchange student are in compliance or willing to be in compliance with all policies of Merit Preparatory Academy's Governing Board
 - A household study, including a background check, of all adult residents has been completed of each household where foreign exchange students will reside
 - The information found in the background check has been reviewed and approved by the agency and reviewed with an appropriate school employee, assuring that the exchange student will receive proper care in a safe home environment;
 - The agency has provided host parents with training appropriate to their positions, including information about enhanced criminal penalties under Subsection 76-5-406 (10) For persons who are in a position of special trust
 - A representative of the exchange student agency shall visit each student's place of residence at least monthly during the student's stay in the state;
 - The agency shall cooperate with Merit Preparatory Academy and other public authorities to ensure that no exchange student becomes an unreasonable burden;
 - Each exchange student will be given, in the exchange student's native language, names and telephone numbers of agency

representatives and others who could be called at any time if a serious problem occurs; and

- The agency shall have Alternate placements readily available so that no student is required to remain in a household if conditions appear dangerous to the student.
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- Merit Preparatory Academy shall provide each approved foreign exchange student agency with a list of names and phone numbers of individuals not associated with the agency who could be called by an exchange student in the event of a serious problem.
 - The foreign exchange student agency shall provide a copy of that list in the student's native language to each foreign exchange student.

Board Approved: 1/17/2023