

Covenant Christian High School International Homestay Program Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is the International Homestay Program?

Homestay gives qualified international students the opportunity to study at the school and exposes local students to other cultures and perspectives. Overall, the program's goals are to promote cross-cultural learning and a global or Kingdom school culture that encourages students to look beyond themselves to what God is doing around the world.

Covenant Christian recruits, screens, trains, and cares for international students who attend the school. In keeping with our mission, these international students must live with Christian homestay families for the academic year, including school holidays.

2) What is the process for becoming a homestay family?

- Interest – Let the Homestay Coordinator know that you are interested in hosting. Contact Kay Richter at kayrichter@covenantchristian.org or (317) 390-0202, Ext. 209.
- Application – Complete a written application. Applications can be found online at covenantchristian.org/international or in the International Office.
- References – Provide references who will be contacted by the school.
- Interview & Information – The Homestay Coordinator will arrange an informal meeting with the applicants to offer more information and an overview of the expectations.
- Background Check – The school will conduct a criminal background check on all adult members (over 18 years old) of the homestay household.
- Home Visit – The Homestay Coordinator will arrange an in-home visit with everyone who lives in the home to view the home, talk with the family, and take some photos.
- Family Guidelines – Approved families will be given information about establishing written Family Guidelines for their family while hosting. They will also be asked to write a “family story” to share core values and the family routine. Instructions and examples of a family story will be provided.

3) If we are approved as a homestay family, what will be our responsibilities?

Homestay families are a ‘home away from home’ for the international student providing supervision and support as well as housing, meals, and transportation. International students and their parents are expected to cover school tuition and fees (including a homestay fee) and personal expenses such as money for recreational activities and trips.

4) If we host an international student, will we receive a stipend?

Yes. Homestay families receive a tuition discount in addition to a monthly stipend to cover many of the expenses associated with housing a student for as long as they are hosting the student.

5) Will we be able to choose which international student we host?

Once the homestay family has been selected the International Program Coordinator and Homestay Coordinator will decide which student(s) are the best fit for the home. Homestay families always have the option to decline hosting a student if they do not approve of the match.

6) Will our international student be able to speak English?

Yes. Students will have enough English ability to be accepted by the school. Students' language ability will vary but all students should be conversant in English, although not necessarily fluent. Students will have studied English in school, but may not have ever been immersed in the language. Therefore, homestay families will need to be patient and to give students helpful advice and informal instruction.

7) When will our international student arrive and leave?

Arrival dates for the 2014-2015 school year are July 18 or 19 for new international students and July 25 or 26 for returning international students, departure dates are May 31 – June 2, 2015. The Homestay Coordinator will inform homestay families about their student's arrival date. Some students may participate in a summer English study program. Participation over the summer is optional for homestay families.

8) What resources will CCHS provide for homestay families?

Each homestay family will be provided with an International Student Handbook to explain program expectations and policies. The Homestay Coordinator and International Program Coordinator will be available throughout the year to answer questions and help work through any difficulties that might arise.

Homestay parents will attend a meeting each semester that provides opportunities for fellowship, training, networking and prayer. Monthly Host Family Gatherings provide international students and host families opportunities to fellowship together in informal settings and promote relationships throughout the homestay community.

9) What should we consider as we think about applying to host an international student?

- Prayer – What is God saying to us about this possibility?
- Interest – Are we interested in learning about another culture and country? Are we interested in providing a home to a high school international student? Are all our family members interested in this opportunity?
- Adaptability – Are we willing to adapt to someone living in our home who will be culturally different? Are we willing to learn and grow? Are we willing to help an international student learn by taking time to explain differences?
- Logistics – Will we have enough time to invest in another child in our home? Will we be able to provide reasonable transportation for activities? Do we have a place in our home where another child would have space to study and sleep?
- Current Family Situations – Are there situations in our family right now that would make it difficult for us to host well?