



POLICY 5.045

5-D I recommend that the Board approve development of the proposed revised Policy 5.045, entitled “International Student Exchange Program.”

[Contact: Ana Meehan and Ray Ranghelli, PX 48010.]

Development

CONSENT ITEM

- The revised policy provides for the School District’s acceptance of international students through the US Department of State exchange visitors programs under which foreign national secondary school students are afforded the opportunity for up to one year study while living with an American host family.
- The revised policy also provides a process for School District students’ participation in international exchange students programs, based upon a decision of the student and the student’s parents or guardians. See Paragraph 4.
- The revised policy provides definitions consistent with federal laws for the sponsoring organization, sponsor, local representative, and J-1 Visa exchange student. See Paragraph 2.
- For an organization to be a sponsoring organization, the revised policy provides the organization must be a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization and listed officially with the Council of Standards for International Educational Travel, an organization approved by the US Department of State for the School District. See Paragraph 3A.
- The revised policies outlines responsibilities for the sponsoring organization which include ensuring the prospective international exchange student has fulfilled all requirements to obtain the required J-1 Visa; obtaining a host family placement and completing the federally required background check of the host family members; securing required information from the prospective international exchange student’s high school; obtaining clearance from the School District by providing certain documented evidence; and assuming responsibility for the international exchange student’s health, safety, educational financial and legal obligations. See Paragraph 3B.
- An acceptance process for a prospective international exchange student provides the student may not request or require a diploma from the School District, but affords the student all rights and responsibilities accorded other students in the School District. The process also requires the school principal to approve the admission of the student, as the student is to be assigned

within the regular school attendance boundary of the host family's residence.

- This revision also updates statutory references.

POLICY 5.045

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM
Foreign Student Exchange Programs

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4 1. **Purpose.** The School Board encourages participation in international student
5 exchange programs to improve foreign students' knowledge of the American
6 culture and language through active participation in American family, school and
7 community life; to improve American students' knowledge of a foreign culture and
8 its language(s); to contribute to international understanding through a sharing of
9 personal experiences; and to provide a balanced understanding of the world.

- 10 2. **Definitions.**
 - 11 a. Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) is a not-for
12 profit organization that sets standards for international educational youth
13 exchange programs; monitors organizations' compliance with CSIET
14 Standards; provides a process to review and evaluate an organization's
15 compliance with its standards; annually publishes the results of the evaluation
16 process in the Advisory List and distributes the Advisory list throughout the
17 educational community. CSIET is endorsed by the United States Department
18 of State.

 - 19 b. Sponsoring Organization is a non-profit organization as conferred by the
20 Internal Revenue Services (IRS) pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal
21 Revenue Code and offering international educational and cultural youth
22 exchange experiences through their programs and appears in the Advisory
23 List of International Travel and Exchange Programs of CSIET. There shall be
24 documentation that the organization has a local representative meeting the
25 requirements herein or as required by federal laws.

 - 26 c. Sponsor is the person from the participating international exchange student
27 organization who undertakes responsibility for the recruitment, placement and
28 overseeing the local, organization representative of the international exchange
29 student for the student's entire exchange experience.

 - 30 d. International Exchange Student is a international national secondary student
31 who has been selected by a sponsor of a youth exchange organization, to
32 participate for up to one year of study in a United States public or private
33 secondary school, while living with an American host family or residing at an
34 accredited U.S. boarding school, and who is seeking to enter, or has entered,
35 the United States temporarily on a J-1 VISA.

 - 36 e. Local Organization Representative is the person from the participating

37 international exchange student program/organization that lives within 120
38 miles of the international exchange student; authorized to act on the sponsor's
39 behalf in both routine and emergency matters arising from the student's
40 participation in their exchange program.

41 3. **International Exchange Students Entering a Palm Beach County School**

42 a. Approval of Sponsor.

43 i. Only organizations with tax-exempt status as conferred by the IRS
44 pursuant to section 501(c)(3), and organizations that are listed officially
45 with the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel
46 (CSIET), may sponsor an international exchange student program in the
47 Palm Beach County School District.

48 ii. The School Board reserves the right to work with international exchange
49 organizations that have proven their commitment and responsiveness.
50 Sponsors who do not consistently screen and monitor exchange students
51 and host families, or who have been suspended or terminated from the
52 student exchange visitor program, will lose the privilege of placing
53 students in the School District.

54 b. Sponsor Responsibilities.

55 i. The sponsoring organization shall work with the appropriate
56 governmental agencies to ensure that the prospective international
57 exchange student has fulfilled all requirements for entry into the United
58 States on a J-1 Visa.

59 ii. Sponsors of student exchange organizations shall secure, prior to the
60 student's departure from their home country, a host family placement for
61 each student participant.

62 iii. As required by the U.S. Department of State, a background check must
63 be completed by the sponsoring organization for each member of the host
64 family household, eighteen years of age or older, and for the local
65 organization representative of the organization.

66 iv. In the event of unforeseen circumstances that necessitate a change of
67 host family placement, the sponsor shall document the reasons
68 necessitating such change and immediately provide this information to
69 the school's guidance department.

70 v. A written statement from the sponsoring organization or student's home
71 school indicating that the student has not received a high school diploma
72 from his/her country of origin.

- 73 vi. Procedural clearance for enrollment in the School District must be
74 finalized not less than fifteen (15) workdays prior to the student's
75 departure from the country of origin. If subsequent documentation
76 indicates that such procedural clearance was not finalized within the
77 required timeframe, the exchange student shall not be admitted to a
78 school in the School District. Requests for procedural clearance
79 submitted from any designated sponsor after the required fifteen (15)
80 workday periods shall not be honored.
- 81 vii. Ensure a valid transcript from the student's sending school, which
82 includes the criteria for translating the foreign grades into an English
83 comparison is provided to the School District.
- 84 viii. The designated sponsoring organization shall assume responsibility for
85 the student's health, safety, educational financial and legal obligations.
- 86 ix. For the international exchange student to be eligible for enrollment in the
87 School District, the local organization representative, from the sponsoring
88 organization, of the international exchange student shall provide
89 documented evidence of the following:
- 90 A. The named host family that has pledged to provide housing for the
91 student during the period of enrollment in the school system.
- 92 B. Health, accident, and liability insurance that is valid in the United
93 States.
- 94 C. Immunization in accordance with Florida statutes prior to the
95 student's first day of attendance in the School District.
- 96 D. A written statement indicating who is responsible for the affected
97 student in case of emergency.
- 98 E. Evidence of sufficient English language proficiency, including
99 reading, writing and speaking, that will enable the student to
100 successfully function at the academic level in which he/she is
101 enrolled.
- 102 x. The sponsor organization shall adhere to all provisions required by
103 federal laws and regulations.
- 104 c. ACCEPTANCE OF STUDENT
- 105 i. The exchange student shall gain legal entry into the United States as
106 certified with a J-1 Exchange Visa, which includes clearance by
107 Homeland Security or the appropriate government agency, be a high

108 school (grades 9-12 or the equivalent) student, and shall present
109 documented proof with a birth certificate or passport, showing that he/she
110 will be at least sixteen (16) years of age, but not have attained the age of
111 eighteen and a half (18.5), prior to attendance at a school in the District.

112 ii. The exchange student shall not, as a condition of enrollment, request or
113 require a diploma of graduation from the School District. International
114 exchange students have all rights and responsibilities accorded to
115 students in the School District except the right to a diploma.

116 iii. The exchange student who is a high school graduate or equivalent
117 (General Education Equivalency diploma or similar document) from the
118 country of origin must be cleared for the program by the appropriate Area
119 Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and
120 Instruction/Student Support or designee.

121 iv. The principal of the school or designee shall approve the admission of
122 each exchange student.

123 v. Upon receiving procedural clearance, the student may register at the
124 appropriate high school, which shall be designated as the school within
125 the regular school attendance boundary of the host family's residence.

126 vi. Rules, regulations and policies for all students, including The Code of
127 Student Conduct of the School District, shall apply to and shall be
128 adhered to by the exchange student.

129 4. **Palm Beach County Students Participating in an International Exchange**
130 **Program.**

131 The participation of School District students in such programs is a determination to
132 be made by the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student. Therefore,
133 neither the School Board nor its employees shall endorse a specific international
134 exchange study program, nor is the School Board in any way responsible for the
135 activities of the program. Any student of the School District participating in an
136 international exchange program shall:

137 a. Be withdrawn from their home school in the United States.

138 b. Upon application for re-enrollment in the School District present an official
139 transcript from the international school attended for evaluation by the receiving
140 School District high school.

141 ~~The School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida, encourages participation in approved~~
142 ~~foreign student/visitor exchange programs in order to improve foreign students'~~
143 ~~knowledge of American culture and language through active participation in American~~

144 ~~family, school, and community life; to improve American students' knowledge of foreign~~
145 ~~languages and cultures; and to contribute to international understanding through a~~
146 ~~sharing of personal experiences.~~

147 ~~The Superintendent shall establish guidelines, rules, and regulations governing the~~
148 ~~participation of foreign exchange students/visitors in/from district schools. These~~
149 ~~guidelines shall:~~

150 i. ~~limit participation to students sponsored by agencies recognized and~~
151 ~~approved by the United States Information Agency;~~

152 ii. ~~restrict participation to senior high school students, 16 years of age or~~
153 ~~older, who have not received a diploma or its equivalent in their home~~
154 ~~country;~~

155 iii. ~~require that all district, state, and federal requirements are met prior to the~~
156 ~~arrival of the student at the school center; and~~

157 iv. ~~establish procedures for Palm Beach County students to apply for~~
158 ~~participation in exchange programs with other countries.~~

159 STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Fla. Stat. §§ ~~230.22; 232.41~~ 1001.41; 1001.42; 1001.43

160 LAWS IMPLEMENTED: 8 USC 1101; 22 CFR 62.25

161 HISTORY: 11/4/87; ___/___2008

Legal Signoff:

The Legal Department has reviewed proposed Policy 5.045 and finds it legally sufficient for development by the Board.

Attorney

Date