



FPS International Student Handbook

CONTENTS

- Program Overview
- Guardianship
- Student Arrival & Departure
- Orientation
- Host Family Assignments
- Living with a Host Family
- Academics
- Student Expectations
- Attendance & Vacation Periods

- Health Information and Other Logistics

Program Overview

Furtah Preparatory School has been welcoming students from around the globe for over 10 years. We have recently hosted students from China, Korea, Japan, Germany, Italy, Spain, Chile, Switzerland, Serbia, and Montenegro, to name a few. Our program is family centered and values full cultural and academic immersion. Students live with host families, adapting to the lifestyle and expectations of an American household while maintaining a fulltime course load at FPS.

International students who attend FPS have the opportunity to be challenged academically, whether in the classroom or online, and will leave high school well prepared for study at an American college or university. In addition, they will gain a strong understanding of American culture and will have opportunities to pursue interests in athletics, art, and other interscholastic and extracurricular activities.

Our international program focuses on academic and cultural assimilation, making it a fulfilling experience which will broaden students' horizons and set them up for future success.

Guardianship

International students enrolled at FPS are officially under its guardianship while school is in session (*in parentis loci*). In turn, FPS assigns students to a host family approved by the school who agrees to provide a safe, supportive home life for the student and serves as the guardian for the student while in the home. The host parents are considered the student's parents while in the United States. FPS has the authority to approve, deny, and/or require a student's participation in any activity should the school deem it necessary.

Student Arrival & Departure

New international students are expected to arrive in Atlanta in time to attend International Student Orientation. Returning students are expected to arrive in time to attend the first day of school. All students are required to email their host families during the summer to keep them informed of their travel plans to the U.S. Host families will meet their student at the airport and bring them to their new home in the States. Students should plan to return home after the end-of-year ceremonies in June. Students returning for the following school year will be required to have their I-20 Form signed by the International Student Coordinator prior to their departure home.

Orientation

All new international students are expected to attend International Student Orientation, which may be held one week after classes begin. The goal of the International Student Orientation is to acquaint students to FPS culture, introduce them to other international students and familiarize them with campus resources. Orientation is held in coordination with the International Student Coordinator, along with the Parent and Teacher International Student Advocates. Experienced international students and current FPS students will show the new students around campus and will act as their mentors.

Host Family Assignments

FPS assigns students to live with a host family. In most cases, our hosts are families who have a son or daughter attending FPS. The School makes housing assignments based on the information collected from the student after they enroll and does its best to match students with a family who can meet their housing requests. FPS will provide each student with contact information for their host family so students and host families can begin communicating over the summer.

Changes to housing assignments are not permitted unless a formal request has been reviewed and approved by the School. FPS implements a three-week waiting period at the beginning of the school year before considering requests for housing changes. Many times, students who are uncomfortable with their housing assignment are experiencing culture shock and simply need some time to adjust. In rare cases when a change is deemed appropriate, the School will work to identify a new host family and facilitate the move.

Housing Fee

Unless prior arrangements are made, a monthly fee (determined by the agency or by the school) should be paid to the school in order to remit this amount to the host family for assistance with groceries, monthly bills that increase due to extra bodies in the home, and other miscellaneous, unforeseen expenses.

Living with a Host Family

Participation in Family Life

At FPS, the International Students are fully integrated into the classrooms, as well as into Interscholastic and Extracurricular Activities. Therefore, we expect students to be integrated in the family life of the home. This includes respecting the house rules, eating with the family, participating in family activities and completing chores as appropriate. FPS expects both the student and their host family to make a genuine effort to communicate and nurture a mutual understanding and friendship.

Room Furnishings: What is Provided & What to Bring

International students at FPS might have their own room, or they may, with permission of the Natural Family, share a room with another international student. Each student will have his/her own bed (w/ linens), place to study, and access to a bathroom with a shower/bath. Students provide all their basic toiletries, such as toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, hair and eye care products, deodorant, etc. Students are responsible for bringing their own computer or laptop.

Meals

FPS believes in the value of a nutritious diet. We ask our host families to provide healthy menus in their homes. Host families provide a nutritious breakfast and dinner daily, lunches on weekends/holidays and snacks. Students should feel comfortable talking directly to their host family about foods they prefer to eat and foods they do not like. If the student has any specific dietary needs (such as food allergies) it is important to inform the host family so they may provide appropriate meals that meets those needs.

Learning about food is an important part of understanding a new culture. Students are encouraged to embrace the cultural experience of the family meal as prepared by the host families as part of their learning experience. Often times, the International Students will have an opportunity to teach their host families about food from their own countries as well.

Curfew

Students are expected to maintain healthy sleep habits in order to be productive and engaged in their school and community. Therefore, host families may set “lights-out” times or quiet hours. As part of their house rules, families will set a curfew that students must respect.

Homesickness/Culture Shock

Culture shock is a phenomenon that many international students encounter, and it is often related to homesickness or difficulty adapting to a new environment. Studying in a foreign country is exciting, but can be overwhelming at times- especially at the beginning of the school year! Culture shock and homesickness can sometimes feel like sadness, loneliness, fatigue or depression. Speaking with family from back home can help, but the best way to overcome culture shock is to try connecting with new friends and family in the United States.

The faculty and staff at FPS are always willing to talk to a student who is experiencing feelings of sadness or loneliness. Students should also feel comfortable speaking with the International Student Coordinator or Parent/Teacher International Student Advocate to help them work through the symptoms of culture shock.

Religion

Host families may invite students to attend worship services as part of the cultural experience, but students are not required to participate. Host families are accommodating of religious differences and students are allowed to practice and worship according to their own belief system.

Academics

Course Schedule

International students carry a full course load appropriate for a college-bound, High School student. The FPS International Student Coordinator will Skype with students during the summer to discuss appropriate courses for graduation, as well as specific interests the student has in order to determine electives. Transcripts are reviewed and discussed, and the Georgia Department of Education requirements for High School are followed and adhered to.

ESL

English as a Second Language is a course that is offered if necessary. Students are evaluated on their English skills, both speaking and written, and will be placed in this class accordingly.

Field Trips

Students at FPS may take field trips throughout the school year. There may be an additional cost associated with these field trips, and as such the International Student may be billed separately for field trips.

College Counseling

Students at FPS have the opportunity to speak with the Teacher Advocate on site regarding their college plans and needs. Many International Students attend FPS to further their athletic abilities and opportunities, but they should be focusing on the academic side as well, and therefore they could need help determining which college would best suit their needs.

The Teacher Advocate

FPS has assigned an International Student Teacher Advocate (ITA) for students to go to in times of academic or emotional needs. This teacher assists in the

emotional well being of the students, the academic needs in regard to FPS and college choices, and anything the students find they need assistance with.

The Parent Advocate

FPS has also assigned an International Student Parent Advocate (IPA) that the students may address if they are experiencing anything uncomfortable within the school or at their home. This parent is assigned in order to maintain balance between the home and school life in case the student feels the need to speak to an adult outside of the host family and school.

Student Expectations

International students are held to all FPS academic and behavioral standards, including the Dress Code and Code of Conduct. Just as our regular students are required to sign that they have read the FPS Student Handbook, so shall our International Students be required to sign that they have read and understand the FPS Student Handbook.

FPS Dress Code

International Students must abide by the FPS Dress Code and are expected to dress in a manner that is neat, clean and appropriate. The Dress Code can be found in the FPS Student Handbook and on the FPS website.

FPS Code of Conduct

International Students are held accountable to the FPS Code of Conduct as described in the Student handbook. As international students are always under our care and supervision, the code of conduct applies to both their school and home lives.

Students found in violation of a major school rule, state law, or Department of State law will be required to see the Teacher Advocate and subject to disciplinary consequences.

Decisions and discipline regarding academic distress or violations of the Code of Conduct are in the domain of the International Student Coordinator, Teacher Advocate, Director of Academics and Student Success, and finally the Headmaster.

Students with serious or repetitive academic and/or behavioral issues may be removed from FPS at the School's discretion, with the option to be sent home.

In terms of communication normally conducted with parents (i.e.

discipline, progress reports and parent conferences), FPS will keep both the host family and the International Student Coordinator informed as appropriate. All formal communication will be mailed or emailed to the student's families in their home country.

Attendance and Vacation Periods

Attendance and Sick Days

Students are expected to attend school every day unless they have an excused absence that is reported to the Main Office. In the event of illness, the host family will notify the Office Manager. If a student repeatedly misses school, FPS reserves the right to re-evaluate that student's ability to remain enrolled at the School.

School Holidays and Vacations

The host family is expected to host their student during the one-week Thanksgiving break, the two-week December break, the February winter break, and April spring break. Students are allowed to return home during the December break in order to spend time with family and friends.

Students are required to communicate their plans in writing to the International Student Coordinator and host family prior to each vacation period.

Travel

International students are not permitted to travel within the U.S. without school approval while under the school's guardianship. All travel plans need to be communicated to the International Student Coordinator and host family in advance. In the case of unusual travel plans, FPS reserves the right to confirm these plans with the student's parents and secure permission in writing.

It is the student's responsibility to make sure their I-20 form is signed prior to travel outside of the U.S.

Health Information

Health Insurance

All international students are required to purchase a health insurance plan before arrival.

To purchase comprehensive health insurance, FPS recommends using ISO Insurance, a company that offers insurance plans for international students who will be studying in the United States.

For more information, visit the ISO website at www.isoa.org.

FPS requires all immunization forms to be transferred to the Georgia Immunization Forms listed on our website. There may be certain immunizations required upon arrival according to the Georgia State law. These immunizations and the necessary forms can be obtained at the local health department. It is the responsibility of the Host Family to help ensure the International Student is in compliance with Georgia law regarding immunizations.

Physicals to Play Sports

International students who want to play a winter or spring sport may need to get an updated physical in the United States if the one they have on file expires during the school year.

Doctor's Visits and Emergency Treatment

All host families are provided with a Medical Release Form assigning them permission to seek medical treatment for their host student, if necessary. Both the School and the host family have the legal right to sign all emergency medical release or authorization forms which may be required by doctors, hospitals and other medical emergency care providers should the need arise.

The costs associated with Doctor's visits and other medical treatments are the responsibility of the student (the host family is not responsible for paying the costs associated with medical care).

Transportation and Other Logistics

The host family is responsible for providing transportation to and from school and school functions. The host family and student are expected to work out an agreement regarding extracurricular activities, such as athletic team practices, social gatherings, movies, etc. As in any family, the goal is to find a good balance between allowing the student to experience a full range of school activities with the family's availability to provide the transportation.

Driving & Insurance

International students are not permitted to rent, own or operate a motor vehicle while under the guardianship of the School.

Cell phones

Students are responsible for establishing their personal cell phone plan. While some students may choose an international cell phone plan from a carrier in their home country, it is most cost effective to purchase a prepaid or cell phone plan in the United States after they have arrived. Host families are asked to assist students in selecting their cell phone plan and setting up an account with the provider of their choice. It is recommended that the International Students have their own plan if they have a cell phone. They should not be placed on the Host Family's plan.