

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SCHOOL DIVISION

Where is the Division located and how large is it?

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD) is a school jurisdiction located in Alberta, Canada. The rural region stretches from just west of the province's capital city of Edmonton to world renowned Jasper National Park, and north to the Town of Grande Cache. The Division includes 17 schools, five distance education centres, approximately 4,500 students, and 600 staff members.

Is the Division a private school or a public school system?

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division is a government funded, public school jurisdiction.

What are the requirements for admission?

A completed application form, a letter of recommendation from the student's current teacher, two years of academic transcripts, and a short statement from the student indicating why they would be a successful candidate for the international student program.

What is admission based upon?

Attitude and maturity are crucial to success in international study and should be addressed in both letters of admission. Students are assessed upon arrival to their school to determine the appropriate program placement and any other supports, such as ESL, that may be required.

What is the academic calendar?

GYPSD operates from September through June. Visit [Calendar](#) for a complete view of the academic calendar.

What is the application deadline?

Applications are accepted throughout the year; however, early applications are preferred as semesters begin in September and early February, and schools must decide if they are prepared to accept students prior to these times. Placements are made as long as space is available and the services are in place to ensure the student's success.

How big are the towns?

Each of the five communities that host international students has less than 10,000 residents.

Is bussing available?

Transportation is available for those students who live more than 2.4 kilometres from the school.

What is the weather like?

GYPSD enjoys four distinct seasons and a range of weather conditions. Visit [Government of Canada - Weather Information](#) to learn more.

Which subjects are available?

Schools teach the Alberta curriculum as well as specialized courses designed to meet the needs and interests of their students and communities. Extra-curricular and multiple sports programs are also available at GYPSD schools and in their communities. Visit [Alberta's Program of Studies](#) for more information.

Are students required to wear uniforms?

No, GYPSD schools do not require uniforms. International students should come with clothing appropriate to the seasons in which they will be in Canada and their interests.

Do students have to buy school books?

No, students are not required to purchase school books. Students are expected to bring or purchase basic school supplies, such as binders, papers, and writing utensils.

Is lunch available at a school cafeteria?

Some schools have hot lunches available for purchase but most students bring a lunch to school or leave the school for lunch. Students who choose to remain at school have a place to eat and often have access to the library, computer labs and the gymnasium.

Is there an orientation for international students?

Yes, each school provides an orientation session for new students, as well as a number of opportunities for these students to receive extra assistance and attention from staff and other students.

Is English language support?

Students will receive English instruction and support as part of the school programming. Some students also hire private tutors upon arrival, but this decision and the associated cost is negotiated directly between the student, their family and the tutor.

What countries do your international students come from?

GYPSD has hosted students from Asia, Europe, South America, and North America.

Are students of the same nationality placed in the same school?

Students and their families are invited to choose their school based on the special programs and extra-curricular activities available, as well as community demographics and services. The Division endeavors to limit the number of students from a particular nationality at each school in order to encourage students to learn English and interact with their Canadian peers.

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HOMESTAYS

Where do international students live while attending GYPSD?

Grande Yellowhead arranges homestay accommodation and fees charged include room and board with a carefully selected Canadian family who will treat the student as one of the family.

Generally how far are homestay locations from school?

As our communities are small, homestay locations are generally within walking distance of a school. If the student is placed in a home that is more than 2.4 kilometres from their school a school bus will pick them up and drop them off before and after school each day.

What agreement does GYPSD have with homestay families?

Families are carefully selected to ensure that they are aware of the responsibility and rewards of hosting international students. These families agree to treat their guest student as a member of their family, sharing with them the support and activities Canadian families enjoy together.

How are the host families selected?

Host families are selected by an application and screening process. The families must provide a private bedroom, study space, and three meals a day to their host child.

Is a 'Host Family Profile' available to international students prior to their arrival in Canada?

Pictures and detailed information about the host family are arranged and sent once an appropriate host family is chosen for the student.

Are students placed in multi-ethnic homes? If yes, what is their command of English?

In the GYPSD area, the vast majority of families are English speaking, though their first language and culture may vary. International students are placed with an English speaking family who will help the student adjust to life in Canada.

TUITION AND FEES

How much is the tuition fee for a semester and for a year, and what are the services included?

Tuition includes all school fees and academic expenses. However, extra costs such as those associated with extended field trips and specialized courses that require unique supplies are not included in student tuition. Less than full year stays are prorated per month. Please see the current fee schedule for more information.

How much "pocket money" do students need to bring?

Extra money required would depend on the activities and expectations of the student, however, a minimum of \$100 per month should be brought for basic expenses. For example, if the student chooses to ski, significantly more money is required.

How about medical insurance?

It is Division's requirement for the student to have medical insurance prior to arrival and will be arranged with the current fees.

What is the cancellation policy?

Refer to the application form for the current refund policy.

Can students pay for tuition in installments?

GYPSD requires the full payment of all fees prior to issuing a letter of acceptance.

What payment options are accepted?

Payment must be made in Canadian funds by bank transfer.

Are academic, social adjustment and host family experience reports available?

Academic reports are sent at the midpoint and end of each semester. Other types of reports can be arranged to meet the student or their family's needs.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Please visit us at www.gypsd.ca or by email: international@gypsd.ca