

COQUITLAM
SCHOOL DISTRICT



International
Student
Handbook



INSPIRING
ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE

WELCOME TO COQUITLAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to Coquitlam School District. Coquitlam's International Education Program is the most dynamic and global education system for international students. Our major goal for all our students studying abroad is to be able to experience the highest levels of academic and personal achievement while enjoying our Canadian west coast culture.

We know that you will have a very enjoyable and rewarding experience studying in beautiful Coquitlam.

Have a safe journey to Canada. We look forward to meeting with you soon.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Gartland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Patricia Gartland
Superintendent
Coquitlam School District

**INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM
OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION**

Superintendent	Patricia Gartland	pgartland@sd43.bc.ca
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Chinese Youth Worker	Hong Yang	hyang@sd43.bc.ca
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CLOTHING SUGGESTED FOR A YEAR IN SCHOOL DISTRICT 43

*Please note: This is a general guideline as to what to pack

Fall (October/ November)

- Rain jacket, umbrella, warm coat
- Long sleeves shirts
- Hoodies, sweaters
- Jeans, sweat pants
- Gloves
- Warm pajamas, slippers



Winter (December/January/February)

- Warm coat, umbrella
- Jeans, pants, tops, hoodies
- Warm hat
- Gloves you would wear in early spring or fall
- Warm pajamas, slippers



Spring (March/April/May)

- Sweaters (fleece, wool, cotton, etc.)
- Hoodies, jeans
- Long and short sleeved shirts
- Pajamas
- Umbrella
- Sun glasses



Summer (June/ July/ August/ September)

- Shorts, cropped pants, skirts
- T-shirts, light jeans
- Good walking shoes
- Bathing suit, sun hat, sun glasses
- Sandals
- Light sweater
- Light hoodies



ADAPTING TO A NEW CULTURE



Culture shock is a very real psychological process everyone experiences upon arrival in a new country. There are four stages of culture shock and they affect everyone differently. The key to coping with culture shock is to understand the stages and that the feelings associated with each one is normal. The good news is that all students get past these feelings and end up having a wonderful experience.

- **THE HONEYMOON STAGE**

When students first arrive in Canada everything that is new and different is also wonderful and interesting. This is the only stage most tourists experience because they never have to settle into a new culture. This stage can last anywhere from a week to a month or more.

- **THE DISTRESS STAGE**

This is the stage where the reality of being abroad for a longer period of time hits home. Cultural differences that you found interesting earlier in your stay can become taxing. You may feel confused, isolated and/or overwhelmed during this stage. This stage can be exhausting, particularly if learning English is proving a challenge as well.

- **THE TRANSITION STAGE**

This is the most important stage to understand. During this stage, some students become angry or frustrated with Canadian life. They constantly compare it to their home culture and begin to lament the differences. Don't worry, this is normal. The key is to recognize the symptoms of this stage and not give in to them.

- **THE INTEGRATION STAGE**

Cultural challenges and language issues begin to subside as students accept and embrace the differences that previously frustrated them. This is the stage when your study abroad experience becomes everything you hoped it would be; you feel confident and relaxed in your community, your school and your homestay.

While it is important to be aware of the stages listed above, it is equally important to point out that not everyone goes through every stage. Some students arrive and are immediately homesick. Others never experience the frustration of the transition stage and skip quickly to the integration stage. The key is to be aware of what is happening and to remember that people are available to help you like your homestay coordinator, homestay family, school counselor, International Education school based coordinator and our office.

AROUND THE HOME AND COMMUNITY



Family Involvement:

Your homestay is your “home away from home”. We encourage you to participate in all family functions.

Coquitlam Community

Coquitlam is the third largest school district in British Columbia with 31,000 students in 70 schools. The district includes the cities of Coquitlam, Port Moody and Port Coquitlam, and the villages of Belcarra and Anmore. The total population in the Tri-Cities area is 210,000 spread over 200 square kilometers.

We are only 30 minutes from downtown Vancouver by car or Sky Train. Two major universities, Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia, are both a short commute from Coquitlam. The world class Whistler Mountain ski resort, the host site of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, is less than 2 hours away by car. We enjoy a mild climate with a safe environment and an affluent lifestyle. Nestled in the mountains and edged by the Pacific Ocean and Fraser River, Coquitlam truly is an ideal setting for international students with excellent year-round recreation, shopping and ethnic dining.

The following is a list of relevant links in our general area:

www.sd43.bc.ca

www.internationale.com

www.coquitlam.ca

www.coqlibrary.ca

www.portmoody.ca

www.library.portmoody.ca

www.portcoquitlam.ca

www.pocolibrary.org

www.twitter.com/Coquitlam_IntEd

www.facebook.com/SD43International

www.tanslink.ca

Recreational Teams & Activities

Each school offers a variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs including **drama, band, choir, yearbook, skiing, chess** and athletic activities such as **field hockey, mountain biking, golf, tennis, basketball, soccer, wrestling, swimming, track & field** and many others as well. Students are encouraged to join in these extra-curricular activities to experience a feeling of involvement, as this is an excellent way to improve language skills in a friendly environment. There are many community sports and performing arts programs available to students within the Coquitlam School District area.



TIPS FOR STUDYING IN COQUITLAM:

Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand. Teachers expect to be questioned. Make sure you understand the teacher's instructions regarding any assignments. If you're quiet, that will be taken as a sign of understanding. Teachers are usually available before and after school for questions and extra help.

Be on time for class. If you can't attend or be on time, notify the school in advance and explain the reason. If you miss classes, see the teacher the next day to find out what was missed.

You will probably find the classes more informal in Canada. You will also have to organize your own time since you won't be given a schedule to cover non-class time. Plan your time carefully, balance school work, English practice, and relaxation.

Hand in all assignments on the day they are due. If you are not able to finish your assignment on time, talk to your teacher before it is due. If you miss any assignments/quiz/exam, see the teacher and ask if there is any way to make up.

Organize your notes. Keep all handouts from your teachers.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS!

For more questions/answers please visit our International Education website.

<http://www.internationaled.com/resources/questions-answers/>



EMERGENCIES AND MEDICAL

Medical Coverage:

Please visit our International Education website; information on MSP and Guard.me.

<http://www.internationaleled.com/admissions/medical/>

- Upon arrival to Canada, students must report to Winslow (**International Education office**).
1100 Winslow Avenue
Coquitlam, British Columbia
Canada, V3J 2G3
604-936-5769
- If you are here for a full year, your medical coverage will change to the British Columbia Medical Service Plan (the government medical plan that all British Columbians use) after 3 months. Your MSP card will be sent to your homestay address and it will replace the Guard.Me card that you get on arrival to Canada.
- In the event of an illness, please seek medical care as needed. Ask your homestay family or school teacher for help. If you are seriously ill or have a medical emergency, please go directly to the hospital.

Safety:

- Never carry large sums of cash. Take care of your belongings at school. Do not leave your mobile devices, wallets, laptops, and other items unattended. School lockers may not be completely safe from theft so it is best to keep valuable items on you at all times. Don't tell anyone your locker combination.

EMERGENCY FACILITIES

Listed below is the contact information for local medical and dental facilities. Make sure to keep all medical documents and receipts.

MEDICAL CLINICS

Sunwood Square Medical Centre
#410 – 3025 Lougheed Hwy.
Port Coquitlam, BC
(604) 464-0345
\$100, Cash Only

North Road Medical Centre
Suite S -435 North Road (at Lougheed)
Coquitlam, BC
(604) 936-0411
\$65

Plateau Medical Clinic
8F - 1410 Parkway Blvd.
Coquitlam, BC
(604) 468-1500
\$80, cash only

Newport Medical Clinic
100-205 Newport Drive,
Port Moody, BC
(604) 461-0016
\$90



Eagle Ridge Medical Centre, Inc.
102 - 1173 High Street
Coquitlam, BC
(604) 945-0032
\$80 Cash only

BC Drugs Medical Group (Direct Billing with Guard.me)
(behind Lougheed Mall next to Red Robin restaurant)
9618 Cameron Street
Burnaby, BC
(778) 999-9966
\$120 (9:30am – 5:00pm)

I-Von Medical **Direct Billing**
(near Metrotown Skytrain)
4468 Beresford
Burnaby, BC
(778) 379-8299
\$130 cash or debit

Care Mart Medical Clinic (Inside Walmart, level 2)
2929 Barnet Highway
Coquitlam, BC
(778) 330-3041

Total Life Care Medical Inc. **Direct Billing**
250-7155 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC
(604) 438-9991

Care Point Medical and Wellness Clinic
140-555 6th Street
New Westminister, BC
(604) 523-1166

HOSPITALS

Eagle Ridge Hospital
475 Guildford Way,
Port Moody,
(604) 461-2022

Royal Columbian Hospital
330 E. Columbia St.,
New Westminister
(604) 520-4253

***Coquitlam International Education does not endorse the above. Rather, we are providing a list of local facilities as a courtesy.**

PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

On the Street:

- Plan your route – know exactly where you are going and let others know your schedule.
- Avoid shortcuts & dark, isolated places.
- Carry ID and limited money.
- Never accept rides from strangers.
- 911 calls are free from any phone (pay-phone/cellular, etc.)
- Keep homestay parents and friends informed of your whereabouts.
- When crossing a street, wait for the traffic light to turn red and for traffic to be stopped; walk quickly, do not walk out onto the road and expect traffic to stop for you.

Bicycling:

- BC law requires that legal safety helmets be worn when riding a bike.
- Traffic rules for bikes are the same as for cars. Observe signs and traffic signals.
- Don't ride on the sidewalk or in crosswalks.
- Always wear brightly coloured, reflective clothing and a helmet.
- Front and rear lights are required at night.
- Lock your bike at all times. Lock frame and wheel to a bike rack.
U-Lock is recommended.

Scams / Fraud:

- Never give or loan money to a person who approaches you on the street. People will take advantage of your trust.
- When you buy something make sure that you get a receipt and are charged the right amount.
- Make sure that your card is returned promptly.
- Never give your credit card information or copies of your card unless you are ready to buy something.



Here are some important dates for the school year. Make a note of them!

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2020- 2021

Schools open	Tuesday, Sept. 8
Pro D Day	Friday, Sept. 25
Thanksgiving Day	Monday, Oct. 12
Pro D Day	Friday, Oct. 23
Remembrance Day Stat Holiday	Wed. Nov. 11
Schools close for Winter vacation (last day in session)	Friday, Dec. 18
Winter vacation period	Dec. 21 – Jan. 1
Schools reopen after Winter vacation	Monday, Jan. 4
BC Family Day	Monday, Feb. 15
Pro D Day	Friday, Feb. 26
Schools close for Spring vacation (last day in session)	Friday, Mar. 19
Spring vacation period	Mar. 22 – Apr. 1
Good Friday	Friday, Apr. 2
Easter Monday	Monday, Apr. 5
Schools reopen after Spring vacation	Tuesday, Apr. 6
Pro D Day	Friday, Apr. 23
Victoria Day	Monday, May 24
Last day of school for all students	Tuesday, June 29
Administrative Day	Wed. June 30

**** Please note: an additional 2 school-based non -instructional days will be selected by each school.**

Here are some important dates for the school year. Make a note of them!

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2021- 2022

Schools open	Tuesday, Sept. 7
Pro D Day	Friday, Sept. 24
Thanksgiving Day	Monday, Oct. 11
Pro D Day	Friday, Oct. 22
Remembrance Day Stat Holiday	Thursday, Nov. 11
Schools close for Winter vacation (last day in session)	Friday, Dec. 17
Winter vacation period	Dec. 20 – Dec. 31
New Year's Day Stat	Monday, Jan 3
Schools reopen after Winter vacation	Monday, Jan. 4
BC Family Day	Monday, Feb. 21
Pro D Day	Friday, Feb. 25
Schools close for Spring vacation (last day in session)	Friday, Mar. 11
Spring vacation period	Mar. 14 – Mar. 25
Schools reopen after Spring vacation	Monday, Mar. 28
Good Friday	Friday, Apr 15
Easter Monday	Monday, Apr 18
Pro D Day	Friday, Apr. 22
Victoria Day	Monday, May 23
Last day of school for all students	Wed., June 29
Administrative Day	Thursday, June 30

**** Please note: an additional 2 school-based non -instructional days will be selected by each school.**