

# Nova Scotia – Quebec Student Exchange Program

## STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW

1. The selection committee is comprised of two people (minimum): the Liaison teacher and at least one other person from the school or regional centre for education (“RCE”). The committee members must consist of teaching staff and/or members of the RCE. Should a family member of a student applicant be employed by the RCE, all efforts will be made to form a selection committee without ties, direct or indirect, to the applicant.
2. At least one member of the selection committee is required to conduct an interview with the student applicant’s parent(s) or guardian(s) in the home where the Quebec exchange student will be staying. In the event of a change of residence before the beginning of the exchange in September, a representative of the school or RCE will be required to re-assess and communicate with the Provincial Coordinator before the exchange can take place. Please note that the selection committee will conduct two interviews in the case where the Quebec exchange student will be staying in different residences while in Nova Scotia.
3. The interviewer(s) will ask a series of questions to assess established criteria. This information will be submitted electronically (Form C) to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Student must demonstrate:

- an ability to adapt to new situations
- an openness towards other people and cultures
- a maturity and sense of responsibility
- positive behaviour

At the end of the interview process, the Liaison Teacher must also conclude:

- the home is clean and safe (inside and outside)
- parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are welcoming to a temporary family addition

**The Department will not process applications from students who have not had an in-home interview conducted by the Liaison Teacher or one other member of the selection committee. The interview must be conducted with both the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) as outlined in the established guidelines.**

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

**The first part of the interview is to be conducted in the company of Parent(s)/Guardians only.**

1. Describe the personality of your child.
2. Is your child shy or timid? If so, do you think this will be an issue?
3. Describe your child's ability to adapt to a completely different environment where they will encounter differences in culture and new experiences (language, school, family, food, friends, etc.)
4. How well will your child accept a new type of parental authority, for instance if the discipline in the host family is stricter or less strict than your own?
5. Do you expect the exchange student to do chores while staying in your home?
6. Will your child accept to do household chores in their new household?
7. Is your child currently in a dating relationship with a significant other?
  - a. If yes, how do you think this will affect the attention and time your child will offer to their exchange partner? What are the family rules about visits by or with the significant other?
8. Does your child have any physical or mental health conditions?
9. Please briefly describe the state of health of other family members who will be present in the home during the exchange.
10. Does your child have allergies?
11. Is your child currently taking prescribed medication?
  - a. If yes, is this something they can manage on their own?
12. If your child requires medical attention while in Quebec, should the physician be made aware of any specific health-related concerns?
13. **Is there consumption of alcohol in the home by family members of legal age?**
  - a. If yes, is alcohol kept away from minors? Would you accept placing your son/daughter in a family where alcohol is consumed by individuals of legal age?
14. **Is there consumption (smoking/vaping or other means) of cannabis in the home by family members of legal age?**
  - a. If yes, is cannabis kept away from minors? Would you accept placing your child in a family where cannabis is consumed by individuals of legal age?
15. **Is there consumption (smoking/vaping or other means) of tobacco products in the home by family members of legal age?**
  - a. If yes, is tobacco kept away from minors? Would you accept placing your son/daughter in a family where smoking is permitted in the home?
16. Are medications and other noxious substances properly secured and out of the reach of minors?
17. Are there regular adult visitors to your home that will be spending a significant amount of time around the exchange partner (i.e. another child who returns home on weekends, a

partner that regularly spends the night)? These people are also expected to complete the required checks.

18. Does your child follow a special diet (i.e. vegetarian, gluten-free)?
19. Does your family follow a special diet?
20. Would you be willing to accommodate an exchange student with special dietary needs?
21. Would you be willing to accommodate an exchange student with accessibility needs?  
(*physical or intellectual – i.e. mobility or sensory needs*)
22. Are there any domestic or farm animals at your house?
  - a. If yes, where do they stay and how much interaction would you expect the exchange student to have with the animal(s)?
23. Would your child be comfortable in a home where there is domestic or farm animals?
24. Have you ever hosted an exchange or international student in your home before?
25. What are your personal expectations of the program? What are your reasons for involving yourself and your child in this exchange program?
26. Has your child been away from home for a long period of time before?
27. Do you think your child will be homesick to the point of wanting to return home prematurely?
28. Do you feel that having another young person in your home for two months will be financially difficult for your family?

**You, as a host family, will assume all local costs including school lunches and any transportation for your visiting student (other than the trip to and from Nova Scotia at the point of arrival and departure). However, this does not include pocket money, which is the responsibility of your visiting student's parents/guardians.**

**The use of drugs and alcohol IS NOT permitted during the exchange. Any use of drugs or alcohol by students involved in the exchange will mean the automatic cancellation of the exchange and the student will be returned home at the parents'/guardians' expense.**

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**The second part of the interview is to be conducted in the company of Parent(s)/Guardians and the Student**

1. Describe activities that you might organize or offer your student in order that they become more familiar with Nova Scotia culture, lifestyle, etc.
2. What method of contact will you use while your child is in Quebec (texting, email, phone, facetime, social media, etc.)?
3. Is public transportation easily accessible so that your child and the Quebec student will be able to participate in various activities? If not, how will the Quebec student be able to participate in the social, cultural, and athletic activities that may be of interest?

4. Please indicate the activities that you permit your child to participate in, and when they are expected home.
5. Does your child have a part-time job outside of school hours?
  - a. If yes, how many hours a week do they typically work?
  - b. How would you expect this to affect the time and attention they have to offer their exchange partner?
6. Do you have any expectations regarding the exchange student's manner of dress?
7. Do you have any comments, questions or apprehensions concerning the fact that a new teenager will live in your home for a two-month period?
8. Briefly explain how you would react in a family whose rules are stricter (strict curfew, limits on going out, limited television or computer access, etc.) (*Question specifically for the student*).
9. Will your child accept to do household chores in their new household?
10. Does your family have certain expectations around religious practices or political beliefs?
11. Would your child being placed with a Quebec family with different religious practices or political beliefs be of concern?
12. How do you plan to accommodate a Quebec student with different religious practices/ political beliefs?
13. Are there places in your community, other than the school that you attend, where you can easily meet other people your own age? (*Question for specifically for the student*).
14. Would you consider hosting a student with a gender identity that is different from your child's? (*this can include asking if a female student is comfortable being paired with a male student and vice versa, or if they are accepting of being paired with a trans or non-binary student*)
15. Do you have any comments, questions or apprehensions concerning the Nova Scotia-Quebec Four Month Student Exchange program in which your child wishes to participate?

**Remind the student to send the following to you by e-mail:**

- **One photo of the interior and one photo of the exterior of the home.**
- **One photo of the room where the Quebec student would be staying.**
- **One photo of you and all your family members together.**
- **One photo of your birth certificate.**

**The family who receives a Quebec student must agree to provide a completely English-speaking environment, as this is a program to enhance language skills and cultural awareness. English should be the language spoken at home, during activities, in conversation and on television programs. The family should also commit to involve the exchange student in various other family and cultural activities.**

## ITEMS TO READ ALOUD AND DISCUSS AT THE END OF THE INTERVIEW

- A. A family that accepts participation in the exchange must have at least one parent/guardian in permanent residence at the home for the duration of the program, including when your child is in Quebec. Any disregard of this rule will cause automatic cancellation of the exchange.
- B. The Liaison Teacher must be informed of any changes to the students' living situation. (i.e. new family member in the home, parental separation, moving homes or schools).
- C. By accepting the student's application, the Department does not guarantee participation in the program. The exchange depends on finding a compatible exchange partner from Quebec and on the exchange being accepted by all parties involved.
- D. Students participating in the exchange are required to follow all rules and complete all work required by their school in Quebec. They are also required to complete all work required for completion of their grade in Nova Scotia. (Completion of this work should mainly take place either before or after the stay in Quebec). Every effort will be made to find comparable courses, but it is not always possible. Please note the Quebec schools are non-semestered and that their mathematics curriculum is one year ahead of the Nova Scotia mathematics curriculum.
- E. English must be the language spoken inside and outside the home for the duration of the Quebec student's stay. Television and radio programs should also be in English. The family should also occasionally involve the student in cultural and other various activities.
- F. If the exchange is cancelled for misconduct or at the request of the student or parents for reasons not condoned by the program, the parents will be responsible for paying their child's return airfare home.
- G. Students are not permitted to miss classes at the exchange school without a valid reason. Absences must be approved by authorized school personnel.
- H. A Nova Scotia family that accepts participation in the exchange will be required to complete a criminal record check, vulnerable sector check, and Child Abuse Register search.
- I. The Nova Scotia – Quebec Student Exchange program is considered a critical service under the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development emergency management plan. In the event of a declared disaster or emergency situation, the host family has the responsibility to provide safety and security for the exchange student until EECD makes timely arrangements to safely collect the student and organize his or her transportation home.

## **FINAL CHECKLIST**

A complete application must contain the following:

- Forms A, B and C have been completed online
- A final summary of the interview and photographs submitted by the Liaison Teacher
- A cheque for the sum of \$100 made payable to the Minister of Finance. The \$100 registration fee will be reimbursed if a suitable exchange partner in Quebec is not found
- Consent form has been read and signed by all identified parties
- The criminal record and vulnerable sector check has been completed and is up to date
- The Child Abuse Register Search has been completed and is up to date

Please send the cheque and forward any paper copies to:

Nova Scotia-Quebec Exchange Program

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

French Programs and Services Branch

2021 Brunswick St.

P.O. Box 578

Halifax NS B3J 2S9

Please forward all electronic documents to: [cultural.exchange@novascotia.ca](mailto:cultural.exchange@novascotia.ca)

As the liaison teacher will be required to work beyond normal teachers' hours to support the selection process and to provide continuous support for the exchange students, the liaison teacher will receive a \$220 stipend per exchange student from their school at the completion of the program.

Complete applications should be received at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development no later than March 31.