

Together We Learn



**Central Okanagan
Public Schools**
International Education



Arrival Guide



Central Okanagan Public Schools
International Student Program
January 2026

Updated 2025-12-12

Arriving to the Central Okanagan



January 2026

We look forward to welcoming you to the Central Okanagan Public School District. Our staff continues to prepare for your arrival. We hope you are excited to start your new adventure very soon.

Please take some time to review the travel and arrival information in this package. To ensure a smooth trip, it is important that you follow the outlined guidelines.

We are excited to host you in the beautiful Central Okanagan.

Program Contact Information

Central Okanagan Public Schools International Education Program

1040 Hollywood Road S
Kelowna, BC, Canada, V1X 4N2

Phone: +1-250-470-3258

Email: international.education@sd23.bc.ca



Website: www.internationaleducation.ca



Instagram: okgn23world

Emergency Phone Number (in Canada)



+1-250-801-5684

Monitored 24/7 by staff members

Program Staff

					
Carolina Moreno	Lori McPhail	Masao Matsubara	Sherry Rainville	Wendy Burridge	Wynter Oakes
<i>GES area</i>	<i>MBS area</i>	<i>OKM area</i>	<i>KSS area</i>	<i>RSS area</i>	District Principal
Program Managers					

Program Dates for 2025/2026

DATE	EVENT
Aug. 25 – 27	Suggested arrival dates for students
Aug. 28 / 29	Orientation & English assessment for new students
Sep. 1	Labour Day - office and schools closed
Sep. 2	First day of school - half day session
Sep. 10	International Student Welcome Event
Sep. 30	National Day of Truth & Reconciliation – office and schools closed
Oct. 13	Thanksgiving – office and schools closed
Nov. 11	Remembrance Day – office and schools closed
Dec. 22 – Jan. 2	Winter break – office and school closed
Jan. 5	First day of classes after Winter Break
Jan. 21	Last day of instruction for Semester 1
Jan. 22 – 23	Departure dates for first semester students
Jan. 24 – 25	Arrival dates for second semester students
Jan. 26	Orientation & English assessment for new students
Jan. 27	First day of Semester 2
Feb. 16	Family Day - office and schools closed
Mar. 16 – 27	Spring Break - school closed
Mar. 30	First day of classes after Spring Break
Apr. 3 / Apr. 6	Good Friday / Easter Monday - office and schools closed
May 18	Victoria Day - office and schools closed
Jun. 19	Last day of school
Jun. 20 – 22	Suggested departure dates for students

Pre-Departure

Add Emergency Phone Line to Contacts in Phone



- Enter the International Education **Emergency Phone** number into your cell phone contacts:

+1-250-801-5684



- This number is monitored 24/7 by staff members who can help.

Cell Phone in Canada



For safety reasons it is a requirement that all international students have a Canadian phone number during their time in Central Okanagan.

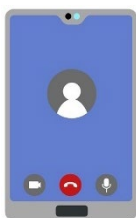
- A Canadian phone number is needed to connect with 911 services.
- The Program Emergency Phone line is unable to receive calls from apps such as What's App.
- Students need to be reachable by their host family and the program staff when they are not on a Wi-Fi network.



PhoneBox™ (one option)

- PhoneBox™ is offering a Winter Student Special which includes a \$10 discount on monthly plans: **PhoneBox™ Winter Student Special**
- Set up before arriving in Canada or you can request a physical PhoneBox™ SIM card at Student Orientation after arriving in Canada.

Connect with your Family in Canada



- Contact your Canadian family to get to know each other.
- Discuss expectations (yours and theirs).
- Having a video chat (WhatsApp, Facetime, etc.) is a good way to do this.

- Exchange emails and cell phone numbers with them so you can update them during your travel here.



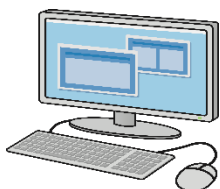
Medical Insurance

You will receive medical insurance through StudyInsured™.

studyinsured™



- Your medical wallet card and policy number will be sent to your email the month before you begin your program.
- You will also receive copy of this information after arriving in Canada.
- Detailed coverage information can be found here - [Medical Insurance](#).



- Additional services are available to students through StudyInsured™.
 - **Virtual Health Service** – Licensed doctor available by secure video chat.
 - **Stay Healthy at School** – Mental health counselling offered in person, by video, or by phone. Available in 190 languages.

What to bring to the Central Okanagan

- Cell phone with a Canadian phone plan
- Clothing for four seasons
 - You will have time to shop after arrival if you need to purchase winter clothing
- Athletic shoes and gym clothing for Physical Education classes and some Program activities
- Swimsuit for water activities
- Prescription medication (if applicable)



Packing your Carry-on Luggage

Include the following in your carry-on bag:



IMPORTANT: If you end up checking your carry-on luggage, remember to keep your documents and any medications with you at all times.

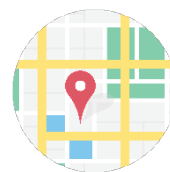
This document



Your passport



Address and name of the family you will be living in Canada



Letter of Acceptance



Letter of Introduction
 (from Government of Canada)
 (if applicable)



Custodianship Declaration



Phone and charging cord



Prescription medication
 (if applicable)



Change of clothes



Power plug travel adapter (if applicable)



Snacks



Airport and Flights



Be Early

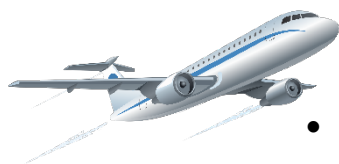
- Arrive early to allow plenty of time to check-in and go through security.



Stay Connected

- Keep your cell phone charged in case you need to contact the International Program or your Canadian family.
- Free Wi-Fi is available in all Canadian airports.

Flight Changes



- Contact our Emergency Phone **1-250-801-5684**:
 - If your flight time changes to Kelowna International Airport.
 - If you need any assistance during your travels.
- You also need to contact your Canadian family if your arrival time to Kelowna International Airport changes.

Canadian Airport Maps

YLW Kelowna International Airport Terminal Map

https://ylw.kelowna.ca/sites/default/files/file/kelowna_airport_2024_terminal_map.jpg

YYC Calgary International Airport Terminal Map

<https://www.yyc.com/en-us/at-the-airport/terminal-maps>

YUL Montréal Airport Terminal Map

<https://international.sd23.bc.ca/documents/Montr-al-Airport-Map.pdf>

YYZ Toronto Pearson Airport Terminal Map

<https://www.torontopearson.com/en/while-you-are-here/terminal-maps>

YVR Vancouver International Airport

<https://www.yvr.ca/en/passengers/navigate-yvr/terminal-maps>

Arrival in Canada – Step by Step

1. Have documents ready when entering Canada (at your first Canadian airport).
 - Passport
 - Letter of Acceptance
 - Letter of Introduction from Government of Canada, the Study Permit approval letter (if applicable, for student studying 6+ months)
 - Custodial Declaration
 - Address that you will be living at when in Canada



2. Speak with a Border Services Officer to indicate the purpose for your arrival in Canada.
"I have been accepted into the Central Okanagan International Education Program."
"I will be studying at [name of school] from January 26 until June 22, 2026."

Canada Border Services Agency



Very important: Students staying in Canada longer than 6 months **MUST** have a Study Permit.

3. With approval from the Border Services Officer, proceed to the Immigration Office with your Letter of Introduction from the Government of Canada.
 - Get your Study Permit processed **AND** printed.
 - This **MUST** be done at the first Canadian Airport you arrive at (ex. Calgary, Montral, Toronto, Vancouver).



4. Find the gate to your connecting flight.



5. Contact the Emergency Phone **1-250-801-5684** and your Canadian family if there are any changes to your arrival time at Kelowna International Airport.



6. Board your flight to Kelowna International Airport - your new home as a student in the Central Okanagan International Education Program.



7. If you are in our homestay program, **YOU WILL BE MET BY YOUR HOST FAMILY** at the airport.



Delayed? Missed a flight? Please call the Emergency Phone **1-250-801-5684** **AND** inform your host family.

After Arrival - What to Do

Stay Connected

- Check to make sure you have access to Wi-Fi.
- Contact your parents to let them know you arrived safely.



Get To Know Your Canadian Family

- Get to know the members of the family you are living with.
- Discuss the rules, expectations, and routines of your home.
- Be sure to learn how to properly use the kitchen, washroom, and laundry facilities.
- Have fun!



Unpack

- Unpack your belongings and get comfortable.
- Your room should have a desk, chair, bed, bedding, lamp and closet or dresser.
- Let your Canadian family know if you need anything.



Talk to your Supports

- Let your Program Manager know if you need anything.
- If you are feeling homesick talk to your host family, Program Manager, or contact your agent.



Keep up with Program and School Information

- Check iCent and your email regularly for important information.
 - Program information is sent to the email you listed in your application.
 - Make sure you do not miss information about:
 - School & program updates
 - Activities & sightseeing trips
 - Skiing/snowboarding information



New International Student Orientation

Monday, January 26, 2026

You will receive more information through email and iCent about student orientation closer to your arrival.

- Canadian families will help you with your transportation to/from the school (either by city bus or school bus).
- Please arrive at least 10 minutes before orientation begins.
- When arriving at the school, enter through the main doors.
 - Your Program Manager will be there to check you in.
- Lunch and snacks will be provided.
- Class schedules will be provided during orientation.
- You will receive a welcome bag.
- Dress in comfortable school appropriate clothing for participation in activities.
- Some students will also complete their English Assessment on this day (if validating your studies, graduating, or requiring special documentation).



As a student in our Program, you are expected to follow all rules and expectations of international students at school, as well as when you are in the Central Okanagan community and in other parts of Canada. During student orientation international student rules and expectations will be reviewed. They are also available and/or discussed:

- In the International Student Handbook and on the International Education website.
- During school lunch meetings.
- When having conversations with school and Program staff and your host family.

It is the responsibility of the student to understand and follow the rules and expectations. If you are unsure of a rule or expectation, it is your responsibility to ask an adult for clarification.

Look In Your Welcome Bag

At student orientation you will receive a Welcome Bag. Please look for:

- Some snacks to enjoy after your trip.
- An arrival gift and information.
- Monthly activities to look forward to during the year.
- Things to do in the Central Okanagan during your first weeks.



First Day of School

- The first day of Semester 2 classes is Tuesday, January 27th.
- Students only attend for a half day on the first day of school.
- School buses run as regularly scheduled.
- Secondary school (grades 9-12) begins at 09:00 am in Central Okanagan.



School Supplies

- You can bring supplies with you or buy them in Canada.
- Most courses do not require any special school supplies.
 - Teachers will inform you on the first day of classes about any special supplies that are required for their class.
 - You will have time to purchase these supplies before needing them in class.
- You are not required to bring a laptop or tablet for school purposes. Teachers plan activities and ensure there are the devices needed at the school for those activities.



Check iCent and your Email Regularly

- Important program information is sent to the email you entered in your application.
- While in Canada you should check iCent daily.
 - You do not want to miss out on information about activities, sightseeing trips, skiing/snowboarding, and many other opportunities.



Instagram



Follow us on **Instagram:** @okgn23world

International Education Website



Website: internationaleducation.ca

You are encouraged to visit our website to access:

- Medical Insurance
- Travel Request Forms
- Student Handbook
- Program Dates
- Information about:
 - Monthly Program Activities
 - Big White Season Pass and Ski Shuttle Information
 - Central Okanagan Community offerings and more.

studyinsured™



Check out your School Website

- Your school website has a lot of useful information about your school.
- It will list the bell schedule and block rotation of your classes.
- Your school website can be found on the [Schools](#) sections of the International Education website.



Travel and Arrival Checklist



Pre-Departure

- ☐ Add the Emergency Phone number to your contacts on your phone.
- ☐ Register for a Canadian cell phone number.
- ☐ Contact the family you will be living with in Canada and introduce yourself.
 - Make sure they have a current photo of you.
 - Provide arrival information and exchange contact information (cell phone & email).
- ☐ Pack the following in your carry-on bag:
 1. Passport
 2. Documents for the Canadian Border:
 - a) Letter of Acceptance
 - b) Letter of Introduction from Government of Canada (if staying more than 6 months)
 - c) Custodianship Declaration
 - d) Address you will be living at when studying in Canada.
 3. Your StudyInsured™ policy number
 4. Prescription medication (if applicable). Do not place in checked luggage.
 5. Phone, charging cord, and power plug travel adapter (if applicable)
 6. Copy of this ARRIVAL Guide



At the Airport and In-Flight

- ☐ Arrive early for your flights.
- ☐ Keep cell phone charged.



Arrival in Canada

- ☐ Have all documents ready to proceed through Border Services.
- ☐ If staying longer than 6 months proceed to Immigration Office.
Get your Study Permit processed AND printed.
- ☐ After entering Canada, if you experience any delays or have difficulty during your travel, call **1-250-801-5684** AND notify your host family.



Arrival in Kelowna

- ☐ If you are in our homestay program, **YOU WILL BE MET BY YOUR HOST FAMILY** at the Kelowna International Airport.

Arrival in your Canadian Home

- ☐ Get to know your Canadian family.
 - Go through the rules and expectations of your home.
- ☐ Unpack your belongings.
- ☐ Stay connected.
 - Get set up with Wi-Fi access.
 - Connect with friends and family.
- ☐ Check your email and iCent daily (until the first week of school is completed) for information from our program.
- ☐ Look through your Welcome Bag provided at Student Orientation.
- ☐ Let your Canadian family or your Program Manager know if you need help or support.

