

BOARD AGENDA ITEM
September 25, 2018

SUBJECT:

Request from an international travel and exchange program seeking approval to place foreign exchange students in district schools

BACKGROUND:

School Board Policy JFABB establishes guidelines for the admission of exchange students to the School District of Aiken County. Prior to a request for placement of a specific student, the "sponsoring organization must petition the Board for recognition/approval and to obtain the Board's willingness to participate in the organization's program of student exchange."

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

International Cultural Exchange Services (ICES) is fully accredited by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). The Chief Administration Officer has been in communication with the Local Coordinator for South Carolina of the organization and has contacted references. ICES has identified a family in Aiken who would like to host a foreign exchange student starting in the January of 2019.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recognize International Cultural Exchange Services (ICES) as eligible to request placements of foreign exchange students in Aiken district schools.

ATTACHMENT:

Names and contact information of the sponsoring organization
International Cultural Exchange Services (ICES) Certificate of Acceptance

PREPARED BY:

King Laurence

International Cultural Exchange Services (ICES)
Galleria Corporate Center
375 North Stephanie Street
Building 16
Henderson, NV 89014
Website: www.icesusa.org
Phone: 1.800.344.3566 or 434.993.1973
FAX: 434.993.9129
Email: bgunter@icesusa.org
Contact: Bonnie Gunter, National Director of Student Services

LOCAL CONTACT:
Elizabeth Harrison
Local Coordinator – South Carolina
Email: ebethjharrison@gmail.com
Phone: 864.723.2490

September 17, 2018

To the School Board of Aiken County, SC:

I would like to request that the board consider International Cultural Exchange Services (ICES) as an approved sponsor group for foreign exchange students in Aiken County.

ICES is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit youth exchange organization recognized by the U.S. Department of State as an official J-1 and F-1 visa sponsor. ICES has been a member of the Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange (ALLIANCE) since 1997 and has maintained a full listing with the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) for 25 years.

International students who wish to go on an exchange with ICES must undergo an extensive vetting process from both their local sending agency and ICES. Students are screened for acceptable grades, written and spoken English capacity, and strength of character before they are accepted into our program. While on their exchange, students will have insurance that will cover their medical health and medical emergencies. Additionally, the student's natural parents are required to provide adequate spending money for educational and recreational activities and any personal items the student may need to purchase while on their exchange.

Host families with ICES are also carefully vetted. Everyone in the home 18 years or older is required to submit to a Criminal Background Check. The family or individual is screened and interviewed by an ICES representative to ensure they have space and means to provide room and board for a student during their exchange and that the home will be a safe and welcoming environment for the student.

Thank you for considering my request and feel free to reach out to me for any further information regarding our organization and exchange program.

Respectfully,
Elizabeth Harrison
International Cultural Exchange Services
Local Coordinator – South Carolina
ebethjharrison@gmail.com | | (864) 723-2490



CERTIFICATE of ACCEPTANCE

This is to certify that the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel has completed its review of applications for listing in the *2018-2019 Advisory List for International Educational Travel & Exchange Programs*.

International Cultural Exchange Services

is hereby granted Full J-1 Inbound & Full F-1 Inbound Listing status in the 2018-2019 edition of the *Advisory List*.

**Christopher Page
Executive Director**