



United States Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Washington, DC 20522

February 1, 2017

Dear School Administrator:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, I want to thank you for accepting the enrollment of a secondary school student participating in the Exchange Visitor Program. The Secondary School Student Program is one of many ways foreign nationals participate in people-to-people exchange programs in the United States. People-to-people exchanges are a valuable tool of foreign policy. This program offers a unique opportunity for your school to experience firsthand the richness and diversity of a culture different from your own, and for you to exemplify American values and culture to a foreign visitor. Through this program, you will join thousands of American educational institutions and professionals who serve as citizen ambassadors of the United States. Many schools have found the secondary school student program to be a rewarding and enjoyable experience.

Secondary school programs have been a part of U.S. public diplomacy efforts since 1949. Approximately 25,000 high school students from around the world participate annually in the Exchange Visitor Program. This program is not only a great opportunity for international students to experience the culture and diversity of the United States, but it allows U.S. students to expand their horizons as well. The goodwill of American high schools in opening their campuses to these young international visitors is vital to this program's success.

Each sponsoring organization has a local representative who will oversee each student's year in your school. They are also available to serve as a point of contact for you, your teachers, and the students' host families. The health, safety, and well-being of the students who participate in this program are our highest priority.

I hope this will be a rewarding experience for you, your school, and the exchange visitor student. It is critical that you notify the student's program sponsor if you have any concerns or if the student's personal health, safety, and/or well-being is threatened in any way. If the sponsor is not responsive to your concerns, please contact the Department of State directly at our 24-hour toll-free number (1-866-283-9090) that has been established for this purpose. In addition, the program sponsor provides each student with an identification card that lists the student's host family address and telephone numbers, separate telephone numbers for immediate contact with the sponsor organization and the sponsor's local representative, and the Department of State's toll-free phone number and email address (jvisas@state.gov). Your exchange visitor students should keep this card with them at all times and contact us if they have any concerns about their health, safety, and/or well-being.

The Secondary School Student Program offers you, your staff, your exchange visitor student, and your local community the opportunity to create a strong lifelong relationship. I hope this will be a positive and rewarding experience for all of you. The Department of State is deeply appreciative of your part in ensuring this program reaches its maximum potential as a quality educational and cultural exchange experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G.K. Saba", enclosed in a circular scribble.

G.K. Saba
Director, Policy & Program Support
for Private Sector Exchange