



Los Angeles Unified School District
PUPIL SERVICES
FOREIGN STUDENT ADMISSIONS OFFICE
Frequently Asked Questions



GENERAL

Who can I contact about enrolling as a foreign student in the LAUSD?

You can contact the Foreign Student Admission Office (FSAO) via email at: studyinla@lausd.net.

Where can I get more information on studying in the LAUSD?

Information is available on our website at: <http://studyinla.lausd.net>.

ADMISSION TO THE LAUSD

Who can study in the LAUSD?

The LAUSD will accept students under both F-1 and J-1 VISA status at the high school level.

Elementary and middle school students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade must attend a private school.

Are there any admission restrictions?

F-1 students must be in grades 9 through 12 and must not have graduated from a high school program or the equivalent. He/she must be under the age of 18 on the first day of attendance. The student must study full time and cannot attend a publicly funded adult education program.

J-1 students must be between 15 and 18 years and six months by the first day of school and not have finished more than 11 years of primary and secondary school, not including kindergarten.

How long can a student study in the LAUSD?

F-1 students can study in the LAUSD (or any public secondary/high school in the U.S.) for one year or two semesters. (*Section 625 of Public Law 104-208, Section 214 (m) of the Immigration and Nationality Act)

Which LAUSD high schools accept foreign students?

The Foreign Student Admissions Office can only place F-1 students at a SEVP certified high school. A listing of schools is available on our website at <http://studyinla.lausd.net>. High schools may recommend the admission of foreign students on the basis of space and program availability but official acceptance to the LAUSD can only be issued by the FSAO.

J-1 students will be placed at the high school which corresponds to the residence address of the host family. Acceptance is based upon space and program availability.

APPLICATION PROCESS

What is the process for submitting an application?

The application process is posted on our program website and is updated on an annual basis.

Formal acceptance to the LAUSD must be issued by the Foreign Student Admissions Office. Individual schools cannot issue the I-20 document needed for the F-1 visa.

Is there an application deadline?

The application deadline for the Fall Semester is May 15th annually. The Spring enrollment deadline is November 15th annually.

How long does it take for an application to get approved?

All documents must be submitted prior to final approval. Incomplete applications will delay the review process. The LAUSD Foreign Student Admissions Office will consider factors such as late enrollment, program and space availability, and school schedule prior to acceptance.

How will I be notified if my application is approved?

Upon approval of your application, the Foreign Student Admissions Office will contact you via email to notify you of your acceptance to the LAUSD. The student, host guardian or agency representative will be provided with the following documents:

- F-1 Students: Original I-20, Authorization to Enroll, and Receipt for Tuition/Fee Payment
- J-1 Students: Authorization to Enroll, Completed Agency High School Enrollment form (if submitted)

If the student is placed through an agency, are there additional requirements?

Yes. All agencies placing students within the LAUSD must be currently listed on the California Attorney General's Registry of International Student Exchange Visitor Placement Organizations (ISEVPO). For more information, refer to <http://oag.ca.gov/exchangestudents>.

Agencies will be asked to submit proof of registration as well as a completed LAUSD Agency Application (F-1 or J-1) and supporting documents.

How do I find a host family? Does the LAUSD assist with housing?

The Los Angeles Unified School District does not assist with host family placement for foreign students. F-1 students can find their own host family and reside with a relative/family friend, or go through an agency to be placed with a host family. A list of approved agencies can be found on our website at <http://studyinla.lausd.net>. J-1 students must go through a government sponsored agency to be placed with a host family. Students must have an identified host family prior to submitting their application.

I-20

What is the Form I-20?

The Form I-20 (also referred to as I-20) is a document issued by schools/districts to individuals seeking an F-1 student visa. The I-20 is required for obtaining an F-1 Visa and informs the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the student's home country that the applicant is eligible to enroll in the designated school/district.

The Foreign Student Admissions Program is authorized to issue and sign I-20's on behalf of the LAUSD.

How long does it take to get an I-20?

Once your paperwork is complete and tuition/fees have been paid, our office will issue the I-20. The process itself may take two weeks depending on how quickly documents are submitted and reviewed. Please note that once the I-20 is issued, it may take additional time for you to receive the I-20 by mail.

How long before I enter the country can I get a Form I-20?

The I-20 can be issued as far as 120 days in advance of your course of study start date. You will also need to schedule an appointment with the U.S. Embassy/Consulate in your home country. Students should factor in the interview wait time when requesting admission. Refer to:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>

<https://www.usembassy.gov/>

How can I get my I-20 transferred to or from the LAUSD?

If you are transferring into the LAUSD, your previous school should transfer your SEVIS record to the LAUSD. Our office will provide a provisional acceptance letter on your behalf after all documents have been submitted.

If you are transferring out of the LAUSD, your new school will need to provide our office with an acceptance letter which includes their SEVIS identification number. The student will need to complete a request to transfer his/her SEVIS record.

What do I do if I lose my original I-20?

If you misplace or lose your I-20, contact our office. We can generate a new copy.

Do I need an I-20 to travel?

You do not need your I-20 if you travel within the U.S. If you plan to leave the U.S., a valid I-20 is needed in order for you to re-enter the country.

I-901

What is the I-901 fee?

After receiving the I-20, a student must pay the SEVIS I-901 fee. This payment can be made on-line at www.fmjfee.com. Payment of this fee is very important since you will need to provide your receipt at your VISA interview. Information on your I-20 information should match that on your SEVIS I-901 fee form.

This fee is separate from the LAUSD Foreign Student Admissions Office processing fee.

STUDYING IN THE LAUSD

When can I enter the country prior to the start of my program?

A student is permitted to enter the U.S. no earlier than 30 days before the start of the program.

What do I need to bring to my VISA interview?

You should bring the following documents to your Visa interview:

- Valid I-20
- Valid Passport
- Visa Application
- Photo
- Transcripts
- Financial Statement
- English Language Test Results
- SEVIS I-901 fee proof of payment

What happens when my semester or year ends?

At the end of his/her course of study, a student has two options. He/she may return to his/her home country or transfer to a private school, college or university. If the student has only completed one semester in a public school, he/she may request to extend his/her stay for another semester.

Can I earn a diploma or graduate?

In order to earn a diploma or graduate from the LAUSD, foreign students must meet the graduation requirements expected of all LAUSD students. Courses taken in the home country may not transfer or be counted towards LAUSD graduation requirements. ***Graduation or the awarding of a high school diploma is not guaranteed.***

Do I need to speak fluent English?

No. F-1 students do not need to be fluent in English since LAUSD schools offer English as a Second Language Programs. Upon enrollment, students will be tested for English proficiency levels.

TRAVEL

What do I need to do if I want to travel outside the U.S.?

If you plan to travel outside of the U.S. and are still enrolled in the LAUSD, you must contact our office prior to leaving the U.S. We will sign the second page of your Form I-20 which allows for travel and re-entry to the U.S.

What documents should I bring when I enter or travel outside the U.S.?

When you travel, you should bring:

- Valid passport (a passport valid for at least the next six months)
- Valid I-20 from the school that you plan to attend
- Proof that you paid the SEVIS I-901 fee
- Proof of financial ability to pay for school costs plus living expenses (the amount shown on the Form I-20)
- An admissions letter from the school or other proof you are a student

TUITION

Why do foreign students need to pay tuition?

Under federal law, F-1 students are required to pay the full, unsubsidized cost of an education. This reimbursement requirement is mandatory and cannot be waived by school districts.

In addition, the student must show that he/she has sufficient funds to cover his/her living expenses while in the U.S. The student cannot access public funds.

What is the cost of tuition and fees for the LAUSD?

Tuition is calculated yearly based upon state/federal regulations and represents the unsubsidized cost of a high school education in the LAUSD. There is an additional processing fee per student. Applications which are not complete by the deadline will be charged a late fee.

Updated tuition and fee information are posted on the program website.

Is tuition refundable?

If a student's VISA application is denied, the student will receive a full tuition refund less the cost of processing fees. Processing fees are non-refundable.

If a student begins school and then terminates/transfers prior to the end of a semester, tuition will not be refunded for the current semester. If the student paid for two semesters, tuition for the second semester will be refunded less the cost of processing fees.

How long does it take to get a refund?

Tuition refunds may take 6-8 weeks to process. The refund check will be mailed to the individual or agency that remitted the payment.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the above information is accurate and up-to-date, it is not intended as legal advice. The Foreign Student Admissions Office cannot provide students or their families with legal advice or guidance on immigration related issues.