



INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT EDUCATION
Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools

Student Arrival Guide

June 2025



Whistler Feb 2025

Nanaimo Ladysmith International Student Education Office
ise@sd68.bc.ca +1 250-751-0197 studyvancouverisland.ca

Welcome to Nanaimo Ladysmith International Student Education Program!

Studying abroad is a life-changing experience! You will explore a new country, learn to live in a new culture, and be open minded to new customs and new languages.

We are happy to share some information in this guide to help prepare you for your safe travel to Canada and your experience in Canada. We look forward to meeting you!

Introduction

Please take time to read all the information in this guide and follow the instruction provided in each Step below. This information will help you follow the rules for entering Canada safely and be prepared for life in Canada.

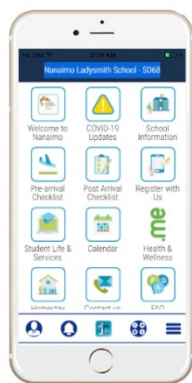
Please note, to enter Canada:

- **As always, travel documents are required:**
 - **Passport,**
 - **'Immigration Canada Letter of Introduction for a Study Permit,' or eTA, or Visitors Visa,**
 - **Nanaimo Ladysmith International Program Official Letter of Acceptance**
 - **Custodian Declaration**
 - **Also, the Government of Canada still recommends that you wear a well fitted mask while you travel.**

Pre-Departure

Step 1 - iCent

Before arriving, download our Nanaimo Ladysmith International Program App called **iCent**. This app will have the latest updates and information you will need for planning your stay in Canada. All students are required to have this FREE app downloaded onto their phones prior to arrival.



*Destination Country: **Canada***

*Institution Name: **Nanaimo Ladysmith School – SD68***

iCent's user interface is easy to download and follow. If you are having difficulty downloading the app, please contact our office staff at ise@sd68.bc.ca

Step 2 – Add Important Numbers to Your Phone

In case you need help while travelling to Nanaimo, please add these Cell numbers to your phone: Principals, our Urgent Matters Number, your school's Homestay Coordinator, and if you are Mandarin speaking add Jim Ning's number. You can also find us all on WHATSAPP



Rob Hutchins
District Principal
rob.hutchins@sd68.bc.ca
+1 (250) 210-1471



Larry Mattin
District Principal
larry.mattin@sd68.bc.ca
+1 (250) 732-0827



Sunny Hall
Homestay Program Manager
Dover Bay Secondary
sunny.hall@sd68.bc.ca
+1 (250) 713-4031



Avegale Morgan
Homestay Coordinator
Wellington, Ladysmith, Cedar
avegale.morgan@sd68.bc.ca
+1 (250) 268-1897



Denny Probizanski
Homestay Coordinator
NDSS and John Barsby
denny.probizanski@sd68.bc.ca
+1 (250) 668-2430



Paulina Vegt
Homestay Coordinator
Dover Bay Secondary
paulina.vegt@sd68.bc.ca
+1 (250) 268-2467



Jim Ning
Mandarin Support Worker
jim.ning@sd68.bc.ca
+1 (250) 802-1856

For emergencies that may arise during your travels, please call (do not text) our URGENT MATTERS number below.

+1 (250) 714-2252

Emergency

Once in Canada, in the event of an emergency requiring police, fire/rescue, or ambulance phone 911

Step 3 - Get to Know Your Homestay Family

1. Contact your Homestay family to get to know them. A video chat using Zoom, WhatsApp or WeChat is a good way. Remember to exchange emails, cell phone numbers, and WhatsApp numbers with your host family. Set up a text chat with your Homestay host before departure.
2. **Be sure to share your flight information and arrival times** with your Homestay family AND ise@sd68.bc.ca as soon as possible. If there are last minute changes in your flights and arrival times, please inform both your Homestay host and email ise@sd68.bc.ca

Step 4 – Student Finances

Please discuss with your bank advisor, family, agent and/or students who have previously travelled in Canada about the best student banking card options for international travel to Canada. Your country's bank card may not always work in Canada. (Several students from Türkiye, Spain, and Brazil have had issues with their bank card.) It is recommended that students use a chip-based debit card from Visa or Mastercard. Some services such as fitness gyms no longer accept cash and require students to pay with Canadian credit card. If your credit or debit card does not work in Canada, we can help you set up a Canadian bank account with a Canadian debit card once you arrive. This is free for students.

Step 5 – A Canadian Phone Plan

– For your personal safety, it is an ISE requirement to have a Canadian phone plan, with data, for the duration of your stay in our program. In the event you need to access a Mobile Doctor, for medical help, you need a Canadian phone number. (Mobile Doctor will NOT work with WhatsApp or WeChat!)

We recommend you set up a phone plan for use in Canada before you leave your home country. Many international students in BC use PhoneBox but you can use any phone plan provider you choose if it gives you a Canadian number **with a data plan**. We have found that PhoneBox is the most convenient for international students to sign up for, because it does not require an adult to co-sign with a credit card. (Please note your Homestay family cannot sign for this service.) Also, it is very simple to end the services with PhoneBox.

PhoneBox offers plans for \$35/month + 12% taxes. There is also a 1-time SIM card fee but using the link below PhoneBox will waive that charge.

It is best to set up a phone plan **prior to departure** to ensure you have access to your phone once you arrive in Canada.

You can use an e-SIM or have your physical sim card delivered to your Homestay address, so it is ready for you when you arrive. We recommend that you use the e-SIM service. An e-SIM card is simple to use – you will be emailed a unique QR code.

Welcome to Canada!

Enjoy Your **First Week Free!**

— Stay Connected with Friends!

We'll show you everything about PhoneBox, what we offer, and how to make the most of it!

Why Students Love **PhoneBox?**

- ✓ **Affordable & Simple:** No deposits, hidden fees, or history checks.
- ✓ **Free Global Shipping:** Delivered anywhere in the world.
- ✓ **Multilingual Support:** Assistance in 13 languages.
- ✓ **Reliable 5G Networks:** Nationwide coverage and speed.



eSIM : Skip the Card, **Just Scan!**

Activate your plan with a QR code – no SIM card needed!
* Check if your phone supports eSIM first.

Check our **BEST** offers

\$ **40** CAD /month
100 GB

PLUS! Exclusive offer

Get Your First Week Completely Free!

*A \$11 discount will be applied

All the plans include:

- ✓ 1,000 minutes of International calls to 30 countries
- ✓ **Unlimited** International SMS
- ✓ **Unlimited** Nation-wide calls and texts
- ✓ **No Overage fees!** Your plan automatically stops once you hit the limit.

Get **Started!**

- ① Scan QR code
- ② Already have a SIM? Enter the SIM Card number to choose a plan.
- ③ Need one? Select eSIM or order a SIM card.
- ④ Pick your activation date and pay!



Scan here!

 **On your activation date,** you will receive your phone number and QR code (for eSIM).

 **SIM card** :Insert the SIM card into your phone and restart it to activate the service.

 **eSIM** : Scan the QR code to download and and restart it to activate the service.

Attention!

When you pay, you can turn on Auto Payment by saving your credit card. Your plan will **renew every 30 days** by itself — so you won't forget or lose your number.

Want to pay by yourself each time? That's okay! Just remember to pay before the 30 days are up.

Save for Auto Payment

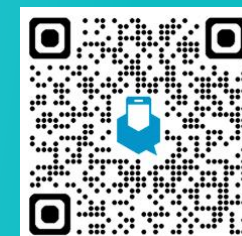


Manage your Account!

With the PhoneBox App, you can easily top up your plan, check your data, change how you pay, or turn off auto-pay when you're heading home. Need help? Your parents or host family can use the app too—from anywhere in the world!



**Download the App
& Sign Up Now!**



Need Help? Contact Us!

- Email : services@gophonebox.com
- WhatsApp: [+1-403-966-2412](https://wa.me/+14039662412)
- Toll-Free: 855-886-0505

- WeChat: [PhoneBox Official](#)
- KakaoTalk: [Plus Channel PhoneBox](#)
- Line: [@phoneboxcanada](#)

Step 6 -Packing - Be sure to check with your airline on weight limits for your carry on and checked baggage.

You will need to bring the following things with you on the plane:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Passport <input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone, phone charger, electrical outlet adaptor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ISE Contact Numbers in your cell <input type="checkbox"/> Laptop/tablet (recommended) <input type="checkbox"/> Money (to take a taxi, purchase food, in the event you miss a flight) <input type="checkbox"/> Change of clothes (in case your luggage is delayed) <input type="checkbox"/> Hand sanitizer (travel sized - 100 mL or less - recommended) <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 masks (recommended) <input type="checkbox"/> Disinfecting wipes (recommended) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Visa, or eTA or 'Immigration Canada Letter of Introduction for a Study Permit' OR Study Permit (if you are a returning student) <input type="checkbox"/> Custodianship Documents <input type="checkbox"/> 'Nanaimo Ladysmith International Student Official Letter of Acceptance' <input type="checkbox"/> 'Travel and Arrival Checklist (found at the end of this guide) <input type="checkbox"/> Host Family Profile with contact information <input type="checkbox"/> Food/Snacks & Water bottle <input type="checkbox"/> Prescription medication
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Please note: It is best to keep your travel documents in a plastic pouch separate from your passport. Your passport should be always kept on you, at all times. In a pocket with a zipper or button, or in a passport holder hung around your neck.

Safe Travel Practices For All Students

While travelling to the airport, in airports and during flights:

Wear a Mask and Wash Your Hands

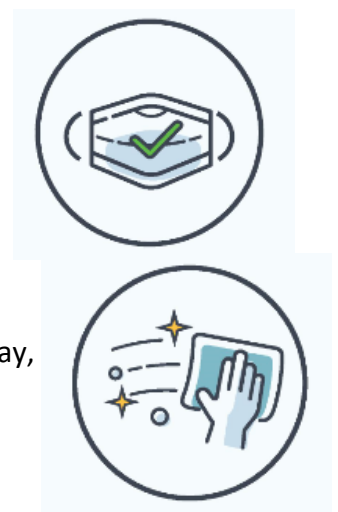
It is recommended you wear a mask. Wash your hands before you board the airplane and continuously use hand sanitizer. Touch as few surfaces as possible.

Keep Safe

When you get to your airplane seat it is a good idea to wipe it, and your meal tray, with a disinfectant wipe. Keep your cell phone charged in case you need to contact your host family. Bring some snacks in your carry-on bag.

If You Become Ill While Travelling

If you become ill while travelling, please contact Principal Rob Hutchins (email rob.hutchins@sd68.bc.ca or WhatsApp +1 250-210-1471) or Principal Larry Mattin (email larry.mattin@sd68.bc.ca or WhatsApp +1 250-732-0827). Our ISE Team will assist you!



Arriving in Canada

You finally made it! You will need to clear (go through) Canada Immigration and Customs before heading to your next flight on your journey to Nanaimo. Follow the passengers on your flight, as they are heading to Immigration as well. If you are uncertain where to go, ask an airport employee.

To prepare for Immigration, have the following documents ready:

- Your Passport, or eTA or Visitor Visa, or Immigration Canada 'Letter of Acceptance for a Study Permit' OR Study Permit (if you are a returning student.)
 - If you have an Immigration Canada 'Letter of Introduction for a Study Permit', this is where you will receive your Study Permit.
 - The barcode on this letter MUST be scanned while you are at the Immigration area.
 - Please make sure the Immigration Officer prints and gives you your **STUDY PERMIT BEFORE leaving the immigration area.**
 - Please email or text a photo of your Study Permit to Devon Slater devon.slater@sd68.bc.ca or Cell phone: (250) 668 - 5017 (+1 if using WhatsApp)
- Your Nanaimo Ladysmith International Program
 - ☐ 'Official Letter of Acceptance'
 - ☐ 'Travel and Arrival Checklist'
 - ☐ Custodianship Documents
 - ☐ Host Family Profile with contact information
 - ☐ Before flying to Nanaimo, contact your host family and confirm your arrival time in Nanaimo.



IN THE EVENT YOU MISS YOUR FLIGHT TO NANAIMO - A MEMBER OF OUR ISE STAFF WILL BE AT VANCOUVER AIRPORT (YVR) TO ASSIST YOU, ALL DAY MONDAY, AUGUST 25 AND TUESDAY AUGUST 26. THEY WILL BE LOCATED BY THE INFORMATION DESK LOCATED AT THE END OF BAGGAGE CAROUSEL #4

Arriving in Nanaimo

Welcome to Vancouver Island!

- You will be greeted at the Nanaimo Airport or BC Ferry Terminal by a member of your Homestay family or an ISE staff member. Please keep your Homestay family updated on the status of your arrival. It will be easy to find your family or the ISE staff member as we have a small friendly airport.
- Gather your luggage, sanitize your hands, and get ready to say hello!

Participate in New Student Orientation Activities!

New Student Orientation Activities will take place during the last week of August 27 to 29. All new students will participate in an ISE Program Orientation and a School Orientation. Students will get to meet their Homestay Coordinator, School Advisor, and program staff. Most importantly, students will get to meet each other! Important information will be shared, and social connections will be encouraged.

New Student Orientation

The ISE Program Orientation: August 27 and August 28 – learn about our schools, community, and Vancouver Island. Other topics will include international student activities & excursions, transportation, health services & safety, and program rules. Students and their Homestays will be given specific date and time of the ISE Program Orientation session upon arrival in Nanaimo and Ladysmith.

School Orientation: – learn about your assigned school, your course schedule, school expectations and culture, our computer systems (Google Classroom, Learn68, etc.) and school activities. Times and details about School Orientations vary based on the students' school, but most will take place on Friday, August 29.

If your flight is delayed, Do Not Worry! We will ensure you will receive the Program and School Orientation at an alternate time and date.

Other Important Information:

For the Love of Soccer - Playing Community or Club Soccer in Canada

Many of our international students who love to play soccer have asked how they can continue to play soccer while in Canada. The good news, in addition to school soccer, the Nanaimo Ladysmith communities have great soccer organizations that provide opportunities for you to play soccer during your stay in Nanaimo Ladysmith.

There are three great soccer organizations in our communities offering recreational and competitive soccer for all students, from September to March and a May/June Season as well.

For students in Nanaimo

Nanaimo United Football Club offers competitive and recreational soccer opportunities for boys and girls of all ages, including BC Soccer Premier League and League1 BC.

Learn more at <https://www.nanaimounitedfc.com/> or contact Emma Montpetit at admin@nanaimounitedfc.com

Elite XI Soccer Academy Situated in North Nanaimo, Elite XI Soccer Academy is for aspiring soccer talent ages 5-17 through advanced training and competitive play. Programs are led by expert coaches in a challenging environment.

Learn more at www.elitexisoccer.com or contact Jazz Sohal at jazz.sohal@elitexicanada.com

For students in Ladysmith

Mid-Isle Soccer Club offers competitive and recreational soccer opportunities for boys and girls ages 5- 17
Learn more at <https://midislesoccer.ca/> or contact Jaymee Shea at midislecommunications@gmail.com
Registration is online at <http://midislesoccer.powerupsports.com/>

All three clubs are governed by FIFA regulations and students need to obtain an **International Transfer Certificate**. This process can take anywhere from 2 weeks to 1 month, and students are unable to play in games with NUFC, Elite XI Soccer Academy, or Mid-Isle Soccer Club until the forms have been approved by Canada Soccer.

Step 1. Visit the three websites above and discuss with your parents if you want to apply to play club soccer while in Canada. If the answer is Yes, proceed to Step 2.

Step 2. Contact your club of choice at the website above and register with that club.

Step 3. Notify our department at ise@sd68.bc.ca of your intention and which club you have registered in. **The DEADLINE for this notification is July 15, 2025!**

Step 4. Start preparing your application package:

- a. Compile the information to complete the following:
 1. First Name (s) _____
 2. Surname: _____
 3. Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY) _____
 4. Nationality/Nationalities _____
 5. Country of Last Registration: _____
 6. Club Played for in that Country: _____
 7. Date of last match played: _____
 8. Club Registering for in Canada: _____
- b. Obtain a colour scan of Player's Passport (photo page)
- c. Obtain a colour scan of Player's Birth Certificate
- d. Obtain a colour scan of both Parents' Passport (photo page)
- e. Obtain a letter from Home Country Football Association stating whether the player has ever been registered with a member club, and if yes, was the player amateur or professional.

Step 5. All students who notified our office that they were interested in playing community soccer (Step 2) **by July 15**, will be contacted by our offices no later than Monday, **July 21** with the how and when to submit your application to apply for an International Transfer Certificate.



Travel and Arrival Checklist

We look forward to welcoming you the Nanaimo Ladysmith International Education Program in August 2025! To ensure that your travels and arrival to Nanaimo and Ladysmith go smoothly, please follow all the directions of this Arrival Guide. **Please print this page and bring it with you as you travel.**

Pre-Departure

- Read this Arrival Guide carefully and make sure you understand expectations
- As per Step 1 ensure you have entered all important phone numbers into your phone
- Contact your Homestay Family and ensure they know your flight number and arrival time at Nanaimo Airport and exchange contact information (cell number, WhatsApp number, email)
- Be sure to download and login to the Icent App
- Determine what phone plan you will use when in Canada (example: [PhoneBox](#))
- When you are travelling, carry with you:
 - ☐ Passport
 - ☐ Visitor Visa, or eTA or 'Immigration Canada Letter of Introduction for a Study Permit' OR Study Permit (if you are a returning student.)
 - ☐ Custodianship Documents
 - ☐ 'Nanaimo Ladysmith International Program Official Letter of Acceptance'
 - ☐ 'Travel and Arrival Checklist (this page)
 - ☐ Hand sanitizer, masks, and disinfectant wipes – Recommended
 - ☐ Change of clothes
 - ☐ Snacks – in case your flight is delayed. (Or bring money to purchase snacks)
 - ☐ Phone charger and electric outlet adaptor

At the Airport – Departing your Home Country

- Wear a mask - Recommended
- Wash hands frequently and use hand sanitizer
- Keep your cell phone charged
- Bring your own snacks and refillable water bottle (Or bring money to purchase snacks)

Arrival in Canada

- Before boarding your last flight to Nanaimo, contact your Homestay family and confirm your arrival time and meeting plan
- Wear a fresh mask in the airport (recommended)
- **Remember - If you have collected a Study Permit while going through Immigration, please email or text a photo of your Study Permit to Devon Slater and be entered to win a prize! devon.slater@sd68.bc.ca or Cell phone: (250) 668 - 5017 (+1 if using WhatsApp)**

IN THE EVENT YOU MISS YOUR FLIGHT TO NANAIMO - A MEMBER OF OUR ISE STAFF WILL BE AT VANCOUVER AIRPORT (YVR) TO ASSIST YOU, ALL DAY MONDAY, AUGUST 25 AND TUESDAY AUGUST 26. THEY WILL BE LOCATED BY THE INFORMATION DESK LOCATED AT THE END OF BAGGAGE CAROUSEL #4