
Questions from Pre-Arrival Video Call

June 18, 2025

1. Will this presentation be recorded and shared?

Yes this video call is being recorded. It will be shared with your agency if you have one, or with your parents directly if you applied directly.

2. Can they have a bank account being minors of legal age? And in case yes, would it be advisable?

Yes minors can have bank accounts. You should have it connected if possible to your parents account in your home country. Your agency may have recommendations on the best type and way to set up an account prior to arrival. Debit cards are the most common means of payment in Canada.

3. I don't have a host family yet. When do you expect I can receive my family?

Homestay family profiles were sent out to your agencies on June 16. Please contact your agency to receive your homestay profile.

4. Can we use iPads in our schools?

Yes, tablets can be used at your school. Wifi is available for personal devices to access. Each school will have restrictions on personal devices during school time including your cell phone. You need to follow the schools device rules. We recommend bringing at least 1 personal computing device (tablet and/or laptop) along with your required cell phone.

5. How do I join a club? Can I do that already online or do I have a person to talk to in orientation week?

There will be information provided at the school based day of your orientation about clubs and teams. You need to wait until orientation and then the first weeks of school to join a club or team. Be sure to listen closely the school announcements each day on the PA system, video screens and on your school website. Another good way to stay informed is your school Instagram accounts. You can start following them now:

SISP: @studyinsaanich

Claremont: @claremontsd63

Parkland: @sd63parkland / @parkland_international

Stelly's: @sd63stellys

6. What equipment do we need for school?

Please refer to the Q&A portion of the pre-arrival video for Mr. Russell's response.

7. Where do I find the prices for the activities?

You can view the activities for next school year at this link.

<https://sisp.saanichschools.ca/students/current-students/activities>. The whale watching trip on September 29 is set at \$135. The remaining trip fees have yet to be determined. The registration information, including fees, will be posted in your google classroom as an announcement about a week before registration opens for each activity.

8. Will SISP staff be at the airport in Victoria upon my arrival and if so, what days?

The homestay team will be at the airport when our largest number of students are arriving. We will be there to support you if you need any help. Your host family will be there as well to pick you up.

9. What is the process of joining a soccer club in Saanich and other sports?

Joining a soccer club in the community takes time. You should begin this process ASAP. Here is the document from [Peninsula Football Club](#) outlining the process - [Soccer Registration Document](#). Students from Stelly's and Parkland who are ideally staying for a full school year and wanting to play soccer in the community and on a school team should complete this process. It is not a service provided by SISP.

For other sports, please consult your agency for specific questions about community sports. Your agency is your representative and can ask these questions directly to SISP.

10. Will each student have their own room and Wi-Fi in the homestay?

Yes, students have access to WIFI and have their own bedroom.

11. When I get hungry and I want to buy some food for myself, do I need to buy food for my entire homestay family?

No, you do not have to provide food for your homestay family. If you want to buy snacks for yourself that is okay.

12. Is it possible to connect beforehand with the other international student that I will be sharing a homestay with?

Have your agent reach out to us with your contact information and we will share it with the other students in your homestay.

13. Is a laptop or iPad better to have at Claremont for the classes?

Saanich Schools uses the windows operating system and PCs. Ipads are great tools and can be used at school but also having a laptop that is windows compatible is advised.

14. Is it possible to sign up for all the SISP activities or is it limited to 2 or 3?

You can register for as many of the SISP activities as you want. Understand in advance that there are always more students requesting trips than seats on each trip. A draw is completed for each school's allotment of seats on each trip. So putting your name in for all the trips you want to attend is advised. Attendance, work habits, grades and behaviour in your homestay family are all factors considered when/if a student's name is removed from the "draw" for each activity.

15. Can we reach out to our homestay families now by email?

Yes, Please reach out to them. They are expecting to hear from you.

16. In case the flight to Victoria is delayed, should we call the emergency number or should we contact you in another way?

Contact your host family and your agent to let them know your flight is delayed.

17. Is there a dress code for school days?

Saanich Schools is a public school district and does not have a school uniform. This is the dress code from [Saanich Schools Code of Conduct](#).

"Clothing should be suitable for a school learning environment. Clothing and footwear should be comfortable and appropriate for students to participate safely in all school activities. Articles of clothing that promote alcohol, drugs, inappropriate language, gang culture, weapons, violence, or racism are not permitted. Students wearing such clothing will be asked to change."

18. How and when will there be information about the flight dates? Does it come from the local agency?

Please refer to the [SISP Calendar for 2025-2026](#). Your agency has a copy and should be sharing it with you. Once your flight is booked, share the complete itinerary with your agency and/or email it to sisp_info@saanichschools.ca. SISP then provides it to your homestay family so they can pick you up at the Victoria International Airport (YYJ).

19. Can I have an email copy of the homestay profile? I am in Canada right now and not with my parents?

If you have an agency, it has been provided to them. You should contact your agent for the profile. If you have directly enrolled, the profile was emailed to your parents.

20. Is there a tennis club at Stelly's?

Yes there is a team at [Stelly's](#). The high school tennis season is April - June annually. There are also tennis lessons available for you to research and sign up for on your own or with your homestay at [Panorama Recreation Centre](#).

21. If we want to go to Vancouver by ourselves or with our friends, is it enough to ask our homestay families?

You need to fill out a [travel application](#) that our office will approve or deny. We will speak more about this at orientation. [SISP Student Travel Overview](#)

22. Can we leave the school during lunch break?

There are school cafeteria's at each school. Students are encouraged to remain on school grounds but each campus is open so you can go to a store nearby to purchase lunch.

23. Do students all bring their individual devices or is there a standardized device for each school that the students are required to bring along?

Students are encouraged to bring a laptop and/or tablet for personal use and to support their learning. The personal device section of the [Saanich Schools Code of Conduct](#) should be followed. Saanich Schools is a PC based district with laptops and chrome books for students to sign out.

24. My house is 25 min. away from my school by foot, am I allowed to walk to school or do I need to use the school bus?

You are definitely allowed to walk to school if you choose.

25. How far away from school do you have to live to register for the school bus?

To be able to register for the school bus you need to be at least 4.8km away. City bus is always an option if you are not eligible for the school bus.

26. Is there prom at each school?

Graduation is slightly different at each school. There is a spring and winter dance at each school. For the most part, you must be a graduating grade 12 student to attend.

27. Regarding school buses, do we need to order the UMO pass also for the school bus?

No, not for the school bus.

28. Will we get the books in the school or should we bring them with us from home?

Textbooks are provided by your school. This will happen after you start your class. If additional books are needed, your classroom teacher will advise after you arrive. You can bring from your home country a binder, paper, pens/pencils etc. or you can purchase at one of the many stationary stores when you arrive (Walmart, Staples etc.)

29. Do we have to bring lunch from home each day or do we buy it in the cafeteria? How much money is needed for lunch at school cafeteria's?

Both are possible. Bringing a healthy lunch from home is the most economical and encouraged. Supplementing your lunch from home is something to consider from the cafeteria. \$10 per lunch would be plenty to get a full meal.

30. Are there any chances to participate in a dance club, like ballroom and Latin dance?

There are dance classes at each school. In the community there are also dance studios that may provide ballroom and Latin dance.

31. Is there a figure skating club?

[Peninsula Figure Skating Club](#) runs at the ice areas at [Panorama Recreation Center](#). There is an association with SISF.

32. Is there a cheerleading club?

Cheerleading is not offered in Saanich Schools.

33. Is it possible to attend year 12 courses if you are in grade 11?

Every effort is made to accommodate the courses you requested on your course request form that was submitted with your True North application. In BC, students in grade 11 and 12 can take classes from either grade level in either school year if there is space in the class, the student is meeting the prerequisites and is capable.

34. Are students allowed to use a bicycle if there is one in the homestay family?

Yes, if the homestay is okay with you using the bike. It is the law here to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle so a helmet is mandatory.

35. When do first semester classes end?

[Calendar 2025-2026](#)

36. How does it work with the sailing club at Parkland?

Sailing is at the Sidney North Saanich Yacht Club within a 5 minute walk of Parkland. It is after school 1 or 2 days per week and on Saturday mornings. You can take the bus home after or get a pick up from your homestay.

[Parkland Sailing](#)