

# ACADEMIC VOLUNTEER INFO



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# 1. IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

## a. Visa

In order to enter the country, you have three options:

1. Visa Waiver (ESTA) for Europeans only: good for max. 3 months. Please refer to 2.b. and 2.c.
2. Tourist Visa: good for max. 6 months. You must enroll in the Visa Update Service and update every year to maintain the visa (<https://www.evus.gov/evus/#/>). Please refer to 2.b. and 2.c.
3. J-1 intern visa: good for up to 1 year. We can arrange contact with an agency that can provide a J-1 visa for you. With that you would have an official intern status. However, you are still unpaid. The costs are about \$1,500.- (12 months) or \$800.- (6 months) for the visa plus monthly \$45.- or \$65.- insurance depending on the insurance sum (\$ 250,000.- or \$1,000,000.- respectively). However, as a public school we may not pay any of your expenses. You might be able to find information about stipends at your university.

## b. Criminal Background Check (does not apply to Japan)

The school requires a criminal background check, a police record, or similar for you to be able to interact with the children. Your university may also issue a letter that confirms that they have proof of a clean police record. Such a letter would be sufficient, but has to be an official document from the university and directed to the "Board of Education of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools." Please bring the background check to school on your first day as an AV.

## c. Proof of Health and Liability Insurance

You have to provide evidence of a health and liability insurance that covers travels abroad. You may have your university issue a letter that confirms insurance coverage through the university or a private company.

Make sure that your insurance covers all expenses in the USA. Health care in the USA is very expensive.

## d. Passport

Make sure your passport is still valid and the expiration date fulfills the current immigration requirements. Please scan the document and SEND A COPY AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE YOUR ARRIVAL to [bernd.nuss@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:bernd.nuss@cms.k12.nc.us).

## e. Confirmation of Academic Volunteering

You must confirm your intention to start the AVship 8 weeks prior to your departure. Else we will not be able to find a host family for you.

## f. Registration as a CMS Volunteer prior to arrival

You must be registered as a CMS volunteer. Follow instructions below. On your first day at Waddell bring your passport. We have to send copies to the central office.

## Registering as a CMS volunteer:

Please go to the website: <https://www.cmsvolunteers.com/volunteer.php?newflag=1>

Fill in the following boxes and submit. Please write down your login and password for later reference.

The form contains the following fields and annotations:

- First Name/Nombre:** First name and last name
- Last Name/Apellido:** First name and last name
- Login/Nombre de usuario:** Password and login with at least 6 characters each
- Password/Contraseña:** Password and login with at least 6 characters each
- Confirm Password/Confirme su contraseña:** Password and login with at least 6 characters each
- Address/Dirección:** street number and street (host family)
- City/Ciudad:** city (host family)
- State/Estado:** NC
- Zip code postal:** 5 digit code (host family)
- Home Phone/Teléfono de casa:** Home Phone/Teléfono de casa
- Email/Correo electrónico:** Email/Correo electrónico
- Business or Organization/Organización o negocio:** Business or Organization/Organización o negocio
- Exam Proctor?:** No
- School 1/Escola 1:** E.E. Waddell Language Academy
- Date Contacted by School 1/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela:** Date Contacted by School 1/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela
- School 2/Escola 2:** School 2/Escola 2
- Date Contacted by School 2/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela:** Date Contacted by School 2/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela
- School 3/Escola 3:** School 3/Escola 3
- Date Contacted by School 3/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela:** Date Contacted by School 3/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela
- School 4/Escola 4:** School 4/Escola 4
- Date Contacted by School 4/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela:** Date Contacted by School 4/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela
- School 5/Escola 5:** School 5/Escola 5
- Date Contacted by School 5/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela:** Date Contacted by School 5/Fecha en la que fue contactado por la escuela
- Information for NC Criminal Background Check/Información para realizar la investigación de antecedentes penales en Carolina del Norte:** Information for NC Criminal Background Check/Información para realizar la investigación de antecedentes penales en Carolina del Norte
- Passport ID/Identificación de pasaporte:** passport
- Maiden Name/Nombre de soltera:** Maiden Name/Nombre de soltera
- Race/Raza:** select appropriate race or "other"
- Address 1/Dirección 1:** Address 1/Dirección 1
- Address 2/Dirección 2:** Address 2/Dirección 2
- Address 3/Dirección 3:** Address 3/Dirección 3
- Address 4/Dirección 4:** Address 4/Dirección 4
- Address 5/Dirección 5:** Address 5/Dirección 5
- Have you ever been arrested, convicted, or received a Prayer for Judgment for a misdemeanor or felony?/¿Ha sido usted arrestado, cumplido condena por un crimen, o declarado culpable, no ha sido arrestado, o ha recibido un Prájer de Juicio por un delito mayor o menor?:** No
- Yes, please explain/¿Si, por favor explique.:** Yes, please explain/¿Si, por favor explique.

## 2. TRAVELING TO, FROM AND WITHIN THE USA:

### a. Language

In order to be able to communicate with your host family and teachers of other languages you should be able to speak English at least on a good survival level and be able to hold simple conversation.

### b. Flights

You are requested to book a flight that is **fully refundable**. Your stay here may be cancelled (also short-term) due to natural catastrophes, an outbreak of a disease or other uncontrollable circumstances. The school will not be able to subsidize any cancellation fees or contribute to your financial loss in any other ways. The risk is solely on your side. It is your responsibility to take reasonable precautions.

### c. Visa

#### i. Visa Waiver

Please see this webpage for the Visa Waiver Program and ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization): <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/visit/visa-waiver-program.html#ESTA>. The Visa Waiver only applies to some countries and is good for 90 days. It cannot be extended!!! <http://www.uscis.gov/visit-united-states/extend-your-stay>. The visa waiver costs about \$15, but is subject to change.

#### ii. Tourist Visa (Please read very carefully!!!)

If your country is not part of the ESTA visa waiver program or you plan to stay beyond the 90 days, you would have to apply for a tourist visa instead. (current fee: \$160.-) <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/visit/visitor.html> and then apply for an extension the latest after the 45<sup>th</sup> day of your stay. <http://www.uscis.gov/visit-united-states/extend-your-stay>. (However, all of our long-term interns have received a six month permission right away upon arrival.) The tourist visa is good for 10 years. So you don't have to reapply for it for quite a while when traveling to the USA in the future.

For China only: Right after receiving your tourist visa, you have to register with EVUS (Electronic Visa Update System) at [www.evus.gov](http://www.evus.gov) (information at <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/electronic-visa-update-system-evus/frequently-asked-questions>). Else you will not be able to board a plane to the US. Use your host family's contact information. You will also have to confirm every year with EVUS to not lose your tourist visa.

For entering the US on a B-2 tourist visa you must fulfil the following five requirements:

1. The foreign national is entering the U.S. for a stay of limited duration;
2. The foreign national intends to depart the U.S. at the end of his/her stay;

3. The foreign national must continue to maintain a foreign residence of which s/he has no intention of abandoning;
4. The foreign national has made adequate financial arrangements to travel to, in, and from the U.S.; and
5. The foreign national will engage solely in authorized business or pleasure activities while in the U.S.

You will sign up for a visa interview at the US Embassy or at a US Consulate to apply for the B-2 tourist visa. You will have to prove that you comply with all five requirements. Numbers 2., 3. and 5. are the most difficult ones to prove. The more solid evidence about your financial, professional, and family ties you can bring the better:

Current proof of income, tax payments, property or business ownership, or assets.

**Bring ALL pages of a multi-pages document, even if pages are blank.**

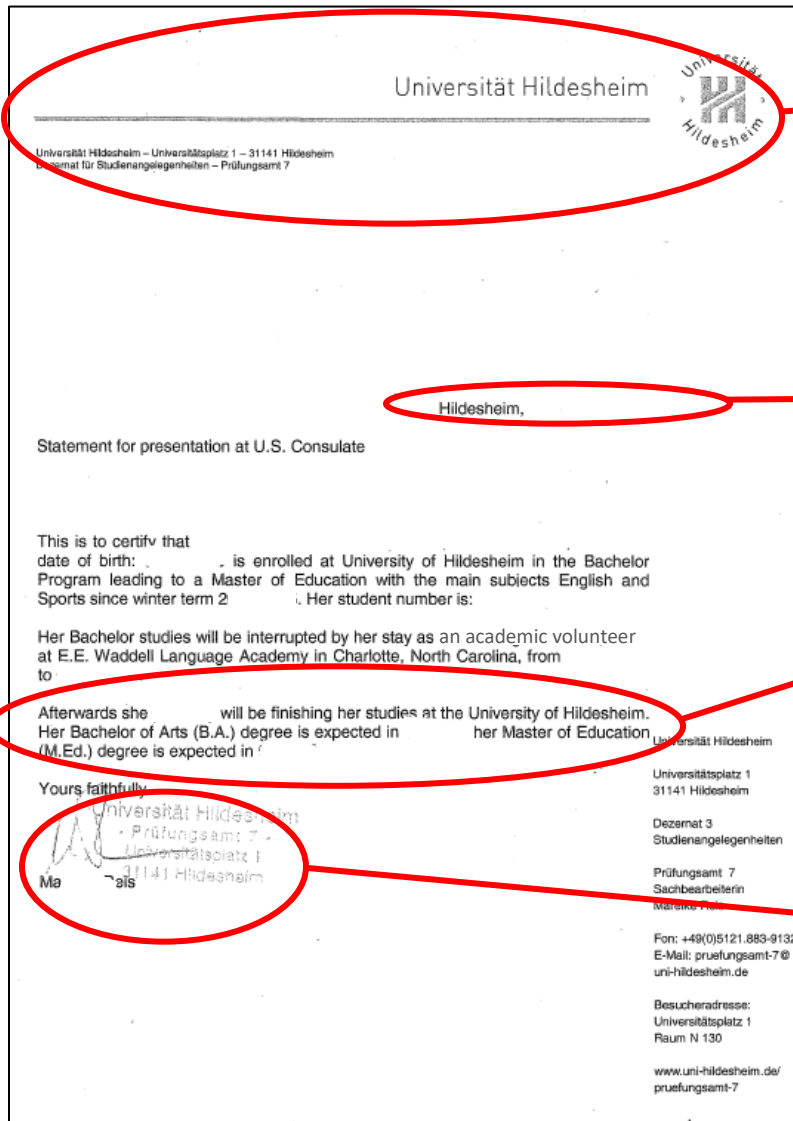
Other very relevant documents are:

- **student ID**
- tuition statement that shows that you are enrolled with the University beyond the stay in the USA
- **a letter from your university**, indicating that you are currently enrolled and this trip is part of your university curriculum (yet, you do not get credits for it), AND that you are returning to finish your degree. (See sample letter below.)
- **the letter from our school** that is attached to this email (make sure the travel dates on school confirmation letter and the university letter match!)
- proof of university stipends for traveling
- tuition statements, student book, etc. that **proves that you are enrolled in the University beyond your stay in the USA**
- **rental agreement** that shows that the contract continues beyond your time in the USA
- car title
- any other proof of valuable belongings or assets that you own in your country
- **bank account information letter** from your bank with letter head, stamp, and signature that confirms your current balance (See sample letter below.) AND a **current bank statement** that confirms that amount. You should have at least \$1.000 for every month that you stay in the US on your account
- proof of insurances (life, health, retirement plan, etc.)
- **list of close family members** with description of relationship and place of living
- **travel itinerary** and/or other explanation about your planned trip.
- etc.

Put all documents organized in a binder with a clear cover to the interview. But also, bring them traveling to the USA. Bring originals. Have your host families address and contact information ready and available. If documents are not in English, write your own translation into English following the same format as the original and highlight important key words so that the immigration officer can compare

the original with the translation and is able to understand in a matter of seconds what the document is all about.

sample letter "university"



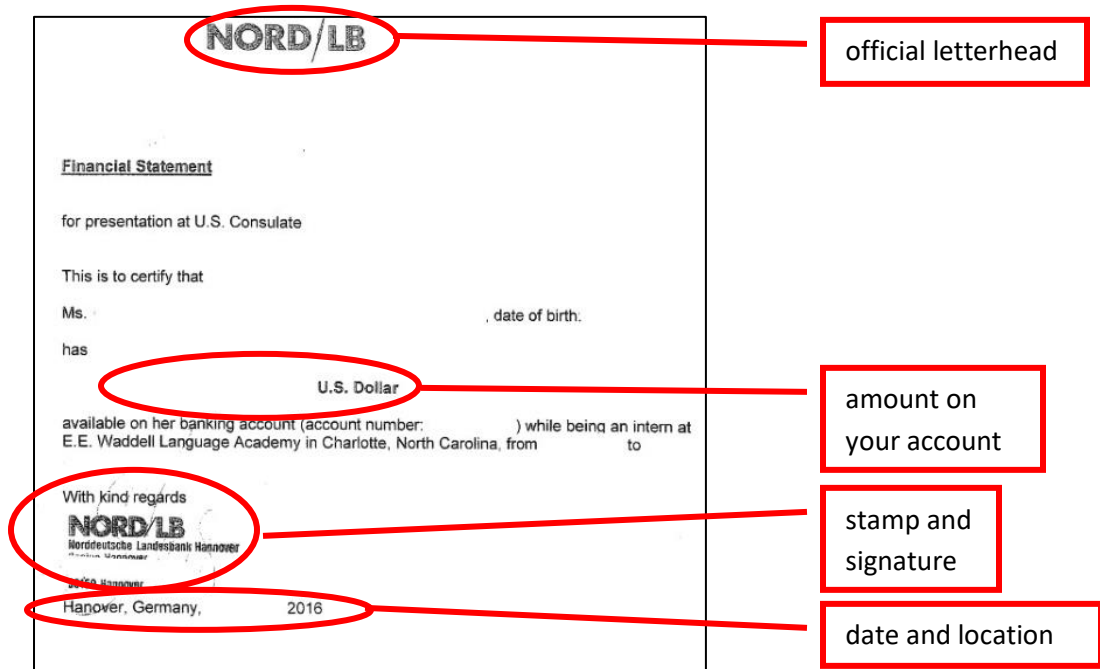
official letterhead

date and location

a paragraph confirming continued studies to get degree after return from USA

stamp and signature

sample letter "bank"



During the interview, keep your answers short, and answer only exactly what the immigration officer asked you. Typical questions you will encounter are: Why do you want to stay longer than 3 months? (take opportunity of university break and travel extended time to learn about the country and improve language) Do you have good reasons to return to your mother country? (education, job prospects, family, financial assets, etc.) Do you have one or two contact addresses in the USA?

Do not mention the word "intern." You are not an intern. You are a volunteer. You do not work; you observe classes and learn about teaching. Interns are usually paid workers, and you would need another visa than the tourist visa. That would be a reason for your visa to be denied. That is the reason why we do not call you "interns" but "academic VOLUNTEERS."

Think about it that way: The interview is meant to last only a couple of minutes. In this short time, the immigration officer has to determine that you have NO INTENTIONS TO STAY IN THE USA. By default, the immigration officer assumes that you want to stay illegally in the USA. It is your job to proof him wrong. You best do that by demonstrating your strong ties to your home country.

Also think about **booking a return flight within the initial 90 days or an open ticket**, which can be changed to a later date. In general, cheap flights have high cancellation or changing fees. So, calculate that into your flight arrangements. **If you did not book a return flight, you will not be permitted into the country.**

#### **d. Immigration Procedure**

Depending on the time of the day of your arrival you might have to line up a considerable time before you get to the immigration officer. He/She will ask you questions about the purpose and duration of your visit as well as about financial means carried into the country. Typical questions are:

- Why are you here?
- How long are you intending to stay?
- Whom are you staying with? Why? Where does that person live? Have you met before? When? Where? How? How old is the person? What does he/she look like?

**YOU ARE NOT HERE AS AN INTERN. DON'T EVER MENTION THE WORD "INTERN," "INTERNSHIP," OR "WORK" AT IMMIGRATION. YOU ARE JUST COMING, TO TRAVEL THE COUNTRY, AND TO IMPROVE YOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS, AND TO VISIT A BEFRIENDED FAMILY!!! Upon further request you can explain that you will visit a school to observe and learn about teaching. You can show the school and university letters.**

Interns according to US standards have a different status. They get paid for their services and require a different visa. You will be sent back immediately if the officer assumes you are here to work. Please read the section "tourist visa" for more detailed information.

Your fingerprints will be taken along with a face shot. No I-94 documentation is necessary anymore <http://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/i-94-instructions> . If you enter through a transit airport, you will have to check out your baggage at the entry airport and check it back in immediately. Practically speaking, you just pick it up and push it back at the exit to the baggage staff, who take care of it without any further formalities.



## Golden Rules at Immigration

### Preparation:

- If you have a connection flight in the USA book with at least 3 hours of time window between flights, in case you are being pulled out.
- Get information from host family (how many children and ages, parents' professions, connections to Germany).
- Share personal information with your host family about yourself beyond your introductory letter. They might be called by the immigration officer and ask them about you.
- Have the following information ready at all times: host family address, phone numbers (family, school (+1 980 343 5815; Bernd Nuss (+1 704 650 1005) connection and return flight information.
- Have the binder with important documents plus translations with highlighted keywords ready.
- If you have computerized printouts of any documents, keep all computer printout pages together, for instance printouts of flight information. That includes the last pages, even if they contain only advertisement or are blank.
- Delete all social media apps or apps linking to your email accounts on your phone before leaving
- Do NOT delete emails before leaving.

### If you are being pulled out for interrogation:

- Keep calm at all times. Always remember you all of your travel purposes are completely legal, you will leave the country again, you do not earn any money, you are not doing anything that is not allowed.
- Remain a self-confident and professional demeanor.
- Always stay friendly and respectful. Address the officers with "Sir" (male) or "Ma'am" (female).
- Demonstrate your willingness to cooperate at all times.
- Endure the waiting. You might be called multiple times for a continued interrogations.
- Show the school and university confirmation letters.
- Be truthful and consistent with answers to questions. Don't let the officers lure you into remarks that you did not say. Clarify if they misinterpret what you had said before.
- Think before you say anything. Have sentences ready in your head before starting to speak. Have some basic sentences rehearsed beforehand.
- Know the facts about your host family. Know what you are doing (observing, learning) and what you are NOT doing (working, earning money) at school.
- Have all documents ready and show them as you explain yourself.

Sample report of an AV, who got pulled out at immigration:

I was well prepared for my travel to the United States and had all documents together. I was confident yet a little nervous about the immigration procedures at the Airport. When lining up, I was addressed by an immigration officer even before getting to the counter. He asked for my passport and started questioning me still in line:

“For how long will you be here? Six weeks? For what purpose? That long? What exactly will you be doing here? Who is your host family? What do they work? How do you know them? How much money do you have on you? How much money is on your credit card? What is your job? How do you pay for your travels? Show me that you have booked a return flight.”

I kept me cools and answered all questions politely and with self-confidence, even though the immigration officer’s tone was somewhat harsh and had that commanding undertone. Even though I could answer most of the questions, I was asked to take my finger prints and ordered into a separate holding room. More officers sat there on an elevated platform, whereas more people sat in rows in front of the counters. The set-up was intimidating as was the demeanor and tone of all officers. After a long waiting period, I was called to one of the counters. I was addressed with my first name and repeatedly asked the same questions from the initial questioning in line. In addition they asked:

“And your parents have no objections for you to stay with a host family? What is your host family’s phone number? What will you do if the money on your card is not sufficient? You want to improve your English? But your English is very good. Do you get money for what you are doing?”

They stumbled over a word that I used trying to explain how I “support” the kids. I was not aware that “support” has in English a strong financial connotation. This whole procedure repeated three times until I was asked to hand in my cell phone and to unlock it. I know that they don’t have any right to do that, but I agreed in order to not be sent back without a reason. Later I found out that they had browsed through every single App and messenger. In fact, I got quite upset about that part of the procedure. But I contained my anger and frustration and remained calm, polite, and self-confident throughout all parts of the questioning. They tried calling the host family, but could not get a connection.

In a last step, I was ordered into a small, separate room, where the interrogation was repeated yet another time with the two officers taking notes of everything that I said. When I finally showed them the letter from the Waddell Language Academy, they obviously changed their mind. After a total of one hour, I received the stamp in my passport and the officers released me with “Have a nice day.”

More updates on immigration as of 6/4/2017.

Source: Garfinkel ImmigrationLaw Firm, Charlotte, NC ([www.garfinkelimmigration.com](http://www.garfinkelimmigration.com)):

## **OMB to Conduct Emergency Review of Increased Information Collection: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants (DS-5535)**

To better evaluate applicants against prescribed national security-related visa disqualifications, the Department of State issued a notice on June 4, 2017, to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requesting to increase the permissible amount of information obtained during the visa application process. As a result, please be advised that some foreign nationals may be required to supply additional information to U.S. consular officers at visa-adjudicating posts. As the State Department made the request on an emergency basis, changes could be implemented immediately and without further notice. New information requirements could include:

- Travel history during the last fifteen years, including source of funding for travel;
- Address history during the last fifteen years;
- Names and dates of birth of all siblings and children;
- Employment history during the last fifteen years;
- Phone numbers and email addresses used during the last five years;
- Names and dates of birth of all current and former spouses, or civil or domestic partners;
- All passport numbers and country of issuance held by the applicant and;
- Social media platforms and identifiers, also known as handles, used during the last five years.

Visa applicants may also be required to provide additional details and supporting documentation related to international or domestic travel.

Applicants may receive additional information requests electronically, orally or in writing during the interview process. Consular officers are prohibited from requesting social media or email user passwords or from compromising any privacy controls users have set on social media platforms.

### **a. Credit Card**

Please bring a credit card. It has to be **Master** or **Visa**. Other visa cards are not accepted in most places. It is the easiest mode of payment. It is accepted almost everywhere also for minor amounts. For renting a car you would need a credit card anyways. If you cannot bring a credit card, be sure to bring enough money in US-Dollars. Changing money is possible only at the airport. In banks it will take a long time (10 business days or more).

### **b. Travel and Arrival in Charlotte**

Bring only light luggage and a durable suitcase. Clothes are very affordable and good quality here. Think about internet connection in the USA: Bring or buy a SIM-card?

Communicate with your host family before your arrival via WhatsApp or WeChat so that you get know the family ahead of time and also know how they look like. That might be important during an immigration interview.

Plan your flight so that it does not collide with family-centered weeks or weekends, like Labor Day, Memorial Day, Christmas through New Year or Spring Break. The school calendar can be found on the school district website: <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/mediaroom/calendars/Pages/Calendars.aspx>

Upon arrival take a full-size picture of yourself and send it to you host family, so that they know whom to look for at the exit. Encourage them to do the same. (Internet is available at the airport.)

### **c. Cheap Airlines within the USA**

JetBlue, Southwest, AirTran, Allegiance are some cheap airlines. But they might not go to your city of choice. For instance, JetBlue almost always flies through their New York hub, La Guardia. So, typically, you will not get direct flights. It sometimes might be cheaper to go with the major airlines and book through online vendors such as Flighthub, Cheapflights, Expedia, or Orbitz. Cheapflights.com directs you to many other cheap travel websites. American Airlines/US Airways have their hub in Charlotte.

### **d. Rental Cars**

Rental cars have become very expensive and are only a travel option when you share. Still this would be the better option than traveling by Greyhound bus or Mega bus.

### **e. Cheap Hotels**

Look first through some of the websites: Trivago.com, Hotel.com, Expedia, Orbitz, and others. Once you have the availability and prices, call directly the hotel and see if you can get a better rate directly. If you travel as a group consider finding Suite Hotels that come with a kitchen and a living room with a sleeper sofa. The hotel rates are per room and not per person.

## **f. Health Insurance**

You have to have your own travel/health insurance. Since you are considered a volunteer at school, you are not covered for any accidents or health issues. In case of an emergency, you would have to pay any bills in the USA and take the receipts/medical reports back home for reimbursement. Some insurances provide direct coverage.

## **g. Emergencies**

The universal emergency number is 911. If you have a minor injury you can go to a pharmacy shop like Walgreens, RiteAid, or CVS. They always have pharmacists and sometimes even a nurse for first aid care. For more serious cases, you would have to find an Urgent Care center. The waiting times are usually quite long. In worst case scenarios you have to go to the emergency room (ER) in a hospital. They are very expensive but have all the facilities like X-Rays, etc. You can find all available medical facilities on this website: <http://www.carolinashealthcare.org/urgent-care-locations#>

## **h. Driver's License and Documents to Carry**

The driver's license is the common identification document (ID) generally used for all and everything. On a tourist visa or waiver, a European driver's license is sufficient to drive a car. An international driver's license might be helpful as an officially translated document but is not a legally valid document. Besides the driver's license, always carry the registration card and the insurance card for the car, when you are driving. If you are stopped by the police and cannot provide these three documents, you are in trouble.

## **i. Driving in the USA**

<b>Papers</b>	
<b>registration card and drivers license</b>	It can lead to major difficulties if you don't have them handy.
<b>traffic checks</b>	A police car will follow you with its emergency lights on. Slow down or drive into the next side street and stop there. Turn the radio off, lower the window and keep your hands to the steering wheel. Be polite and collaborative at all times. Tell the police officer if you have your papers in a purse or your pocket before pulling them out. Police cars are often concealed.
<b>Right of Way</b>	
<b>right of way</b>	There are no signs indicating the Right of Way. Still be careful.
<b>yield</b>	"Yield" signs are rare (red upside down triangle)
<b>stop</b>	2 stop signs border main streets. 3 stop signs are often used at entry streets to parking lots at malls to give preference to the entering traffic. 4 stop signs give the first one to enter the cross roads the right of way. Always sign language and be careful.

<b>Speed</b>	
<b><i>within city limits</i></b>	Usually 35 mph in side streets. Sometimes 45 or 55 on major streets or 65 on inner city highways. Sign posting is often sparse and changes in speed can easily be overseen.
<b><i>outside city limits</i></b>	Depending on the number of lanes and the quality of the road the speed limit changes outside the city. Typically it is 65 mph. A speed reduction is announced way ahead with orange flags. Else sign posting is sparse.
<b>Passing Other Cars</b>	
<b><i>marks</i></b>	Only in very rare cases passing is necessary, because most traffic already runs faster than the speed limit and all major streets and roads are more than one lane. Passing is only allowed where the road is divided by an interrupted line. There are no “No-passing” signs, and solid median lines prohibit passing.
<b><i>rules</i></b>	In general the slower traffic should stay in the right lane, which very often does not happen. But drivers in the South are very relaxed and you can also pass on the left lane.
<b><i>school buses</i></b>	Never pass a school bus with blinking red lights and the Stop-sign pulled out! That is true for both directions! Only on divided streets (e.g. island or greens between both lanes) the traffic on the opposite side of the street does not have to stop.
<b><i>center turn lane</i></b>	On some streets center turn lanes exist. They are marked with left turn arrows in opposing directions. You can carefully enter that lane in order to lane or to merge back into the main street coming from a side street or parking lot.
<b><i>right turn</i></b>	You can turn right at any time – even if the traffic light is on green – yielding the traffic with right of way, unless a sign says “No Turn on Red.”
<b><i>180 degrees turn</i></b>	A “U-turn” or 180 degrees turn is possible at every traffic light unless a sign forbids that maneuver.
<b><i>HOV lanes</i></b>	Those lanes are on major city highways on the very left. Only vehicles with 2 or more or sometimes “3+” passengers may use this lane.
<b><i>Easy Pass Lane</i></b>	Some roads are tolled. Always have cash ready if you know you will use one of those on your travels. Avoid the Easy Pass Lane. They are only permitted for cars with an electronic registration system. Charlotte is currently toll free.
<b>Orientation</b>	
<b><i>sign posting</i></b>	Mostly by Interstate numbers, sometimes by city names or major point of interests
<b><i>exit numbers</i></b>	Exit numbers refer to the mileage not to the ordinal number of exit. A and B refer to first or second exit at the same mileage.
<b><i>street names</i></b>	Street names in Charlotte have a habit of changing or continuing in rather unexpected directions. Sometimes very similar street names are close by (watch out for any streets that contain „Sharon“)
<b>Style</b>	
<b><i>take a deep breath</i></b>	Drivers in the South are very relaxed. They might pull out right in front of you, do not use the blinker or break unexpectedly without meaning any harm. Most drivers respond also in a very relaxed way.
<b>Road Conditions</b>	
<b><i>road quality</i></b>	Be prepared for major pot holes. They are rarer now, but still appear quite unexpectedly. You will also often find debris, blown tires, dead or alive animals in the middle of the highway. Just drive carefully.
<b><i>construction</i></b>	Recently a lot of construction has taken place in Charlotte. Slow down in construction

	zones even if obviously no construction is taking place. You will find many abandoned work zone signs.
<b>Getting Gas</b>	
<b>Gas</b>	At some gas stations you can pay with an international credit card right at the pump. Else you would have to prepay inside and then get your gas. Most cars run on “regular 87” gas. Sometimes you have to lift the gas gun holder in order to start filling.

**If you are involved in a car accident:**

- Pull your car over to the side if possible and turn on your alarm blinkers immediately,
- Take a deep breath and check yourself if you have any injuries,
- Check other involved vehicles if anyone is injured,
- Call 911: they will ask for a number of things:
  - the exact location (highway number or street name, southbound, northbound, eastbound, westbound, inbound, or outbound (the last two ones for highway circles around cities, closest exit number),
  - number of injured persons, if they are still conscious, visible extent of injuries
  - if people are pinned (meaning stuck in the car and can't get out)
- If you need to provide first aid, the operator will give you instructions through the phone.
- Call the insurance company and explain to them the situation. They will also provide advice. You need the insurance policy number, which is on the insurance card.
- Also call your host family and ask for their help.
- Don't be surprised to have a fire brigade arrive first, followed by multiple police cars (traffic police, highway patrol, state trooper, etc.). It might be intimidating but that is just the routine.
- Know where your documents are and have them ready to hand them to the police officer (driver's license, car registration card, car insurance card).
- Stay as calm as possible. Everybody will be helping you. You are not on your own.

### 3. THE SOUTH

#### a. Climate

The climate is considered subtropical with very few snow days in the winter and hot and humid summers. Just across the state line to South Carolina a palm tree is in the state flag. We are roughly on the same latitude as Tangier (Morocco), Aleppo (Syria), Tokyo (Japan), Tehran (Iran), and Las Vegas. So, the sun is really strong early in the year. Even in February you can get severely sunburned even though it might feel cold outside – especially when you are at the beach.

#### b. Social Codes

##### i. Hospitality

People in the South are very open and friendly with strangers. “Southern Hospitality” is not only a term, but a life-style. Please be proactive and ask politely if you have any needs. It is not considered impolite to ask for a favor. People will help you wherever they can.

Please respond to this hospitality by being evenly open to the family. Permit yourself to participate in all of their activities and even just sit together in front of the TV at night. Just be part of the family and don’t lock yourself up in your room when you are at home.

Think about a welcome gift for the family and the teacher. Investigate what kind of gift might be appropriate: for instance a book, traditional clothes or a board game.

##### ii. Manners

Always be polite. Use phrases as “Thank you,” “Please”, and “How do you do?” (Answer: “I’m doing well. Thank you. And you?”) very frequently. Hold doors and smile a lot also with strangers that happen to pass your way. Don’t complain waiting in line. ...

Don’t be surprised if complete strangers call you “Ma’am”, “Sir” and even “Honey”, or “Sweetheart.” Be politically correct. Avoid any racial or minority group remarks or any comments that just indicate racial implications. They are highly charged and you get yourself in trouble. Know the person before you start any social, religious, or political discussion and be sure the person is open to that.

**At school, always act in a very professional manner, even with children that you have developed a good rapport with. Don’t assume that you can loosen the social code. Our children always weigh every word that you are saying and think, if – in case of an accusation – the content could be turned against you. You are not the children’s friend. You are a facilitator to learning.**

DON’T ever use any swear words. What is considered acceptable language in Europe can easily be perceived as rude, disrespectful, offensive, and simply irritating. Language that is considered an absolute Taboo:

1. profanities including connotations with animals, body parts, sexuality, or excretions,
2. racial connotations: Don’t cite any Hip Hop verses that you know or make any remarks that reference even distantly language that is connected with and part of the slave history. People are very sensitive and with good reason. Segregation and discrimination are still a very present reality and a huge social issue.



3. religious connotations: Don't say "Oh, my God," or "Jesus". If you really have to say it, say "Oh, my Gosh" instead.
4. loaded vocabulary: Use "silly" instead of "stupid" and "dislike" instead of "hate" even in regular conversations. Children will tell you immediately when someone used the "S"-word, the "G"-word, or the "H"-word. And there are more letters in the alphabet. Try to moderately circumscribe any emotional state (if you have to) especially with people around you that you don't know.
5. Cleanliness and tidiness: It is a matter of courtesy and respect to follow the rules and routines established at your host family, to keep your room neat, to fix your bed every morning, to respect meal procedures and times, etc.

### **iii. Community Orientation**

Social networks operate on many different levels. Neighborhood support is considered very important as are religious congregations or team sports. A lot of the social life revolves around those and other groups. Many social support systems are in place. People are very giving and donate a lot. Community helpers are much respected.

### **iv. Religion**

Religion is an integral part of Southern society. A lot of the community work revolves around church congregations and events. Expect to frequently participate in religious gatherings and going to church. However, if you feel uncomfortable in participating in religious rituals, please let the family politely know: "I appreciate your invitation and trust. Yet, I feel that I cannot adequately respond to the importance and truthfulness that is tied to the rituals. I don't mind attending services, but would rather do so as an observer than a participant."

### **v. Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited in public buildings, restaurants, and anywhere on the school ground. There is no smoker room for teachers.

### **vi. Alcohol**

Drinking alcohol in public is not permitted. It is constrained to gated areas in restaurants, bars and other venues with a license. Do not leave any bottles of alcohol visibly in the car. Alcohol is not being sold on Sundays from 2 a.m. to noon. Offering alcohol to underage children is a serious crime.

### **c. Living with an American Family**

Our families are an almost perfect mirror of the diversity of the city of Charlotte. Their families moved here only recently or many generations ago from nations all over the world. But they all came to follow the American dream: Anybody can make it, no matter what background they come from. There is no such thing as a "typical" American family. America is a conglomerate of different people, cultures, religions, ethnicities, and ideas sharing the "Pursuit of Happiness." That is where America comes

together and becomes one. Your host family will have a very unique background, but it stands for what America is all about.

Your host family is just as excited, curious, and delighted as you are. You will be a member of the family for the duration of your stay – and maybe even beyond. You don't pay your family to stay with them, but you help out where you can:

- **Be part of the family.** Don't lock yourself up. But share as much time as possible with the family in their daily routines.
- **Be polite.** (See section about manners.)
- **Be tidy and clean.** It is a matter of respect to clean up after yourself. That includes cleaning the oven, range, countertops, and the sink. Prewash dishes before placing them in the dishwasher. Also know that some families do not tolerate food in other areas than the kitchen and the dining room area.
- **Be on time.** Families have a very tight schedule. Nothing is more annoying than having to wait for someone – especially if it is the guest in the house. Times and appointments are binding. You have to plan around them. Organize YOUR outings around the family schedule. Make sure you are not coming home too late. Check with your family what acceptable check-in times are. Don't expect your family to drive you around. They have a busy schedule themselves. Try to organize your own transportation if you want to go shopping.
- **Be respectful with noise.** Consider your noise level after bed time, for instance when chatting with your family and friends back home.
- **Be a helper not a burden.** Offer your help wherever you can: cooking, setting the table, cleaning up, etc. Ask for arrangements for washing your clothes and your sheets. As an independent adult; you should take care of yourself. Know that the shower liner is always inside the tub to avoid splashed water. Toilet paper is always flushed down, but no other objects.
- **Help with homework,** especially with homework in the target language **at least three times per week.** The children will benefit from your help and the family will be very appreciative.
- **Offer to babysit once per week.** Give the parents a break. They work very hard to make a living and raise their children.
- **Engage with the family in English and especially with their children in your language. Don't expect to be asked to talk. You are part of the family and you are expected to be an active participant in conversations. Make it AT LEAST one hour of active conversation with the family per day. As one AV expressed it: "Communicate with your host family and take part in their activities, not stay at your own world." THIS IS YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE ARRANGEMENT OF LIVING WITH A HOST FAMILY!!!**
- You are staying free of charge with a host family. But offer to pay for the weekly grocery shopping at least once a month, especially if you are a big eater. You can also offer to shop for food and cook a traditional meal for the family once in a while.
- **Join all common family time.** Eat together with the family; go to baseball practice; go grocery shopping, etc. Accept invitations to family events/activities/trips. You will learn a lot about American life. Watch TV with the family. You can ask to switch on English subtitles, which will help you a lot with understanding and improving your English.

- If you come here with a friend, understand that you are staying in the first place with your host family. You can certainly see your friend once in a while. But a host family is not a cheap BED & BREAKFAST. You are an integral part of the family of the time of your stay. You are a member of a family. You should not neglect your family and make any arrangements in agreement with your host family.
- Also don't compare standards of living between host families. Our families come from all socio-economic backgrounds. You are welcome at the families and they share with you what they have to share. You should be grateful for what they offer to you.
- Some families might go eating outdoors more often, because it facilitates a very dynamic lifestyle – especially for families with several children and afternoon activities. As the family should provide you with food at home, be prepared to pay for your own meals outdoors (\$10 - \$15 per meal) if the family does not offer to pay for you. Again, please do not compare experiences with other Academic Volunteers, since everybody's life situation will be different.
- [If your academic volunteer time exceeds 4 weeks, be prepared to be placed with two or more families for the duration of your stay.]

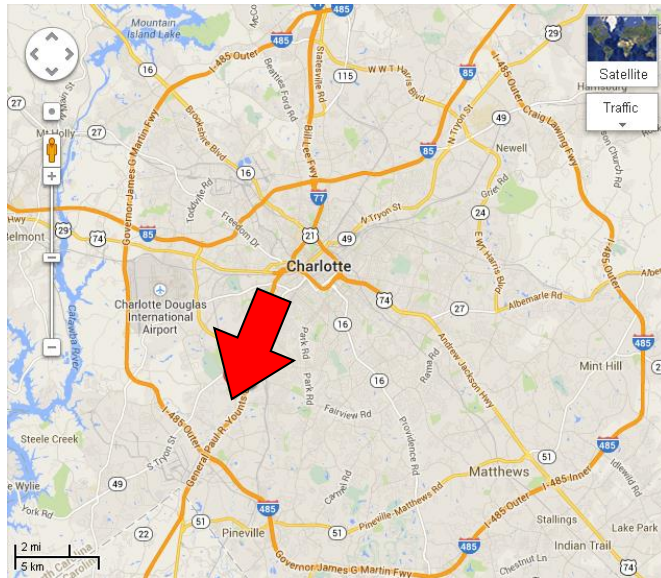
**Important!!!** Always consider that part of your academic volunteer experience is living with a US family. They want you to be a member of their family and want to learn from you and about you. Take advantage of this opportunity and share your life with your new family rather than with your friends from school. It is quite likely, that the host family will connect with other host families for a common activity, where everyone can come together. But in the first place you are an addition to YOUR host family and should live up to that expectation.

**ALSO EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!!! IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS OR CONFLICTS, NEVER MAKE ANY DECISIONS BY YOURSELF. FOR FAMILY ISSUES CONTACT MRS. FREEMAN, FOR SCHOOL ISSUES CONTACT MR. NUSS IMMEDIATELY!!! YOU ARE A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SCHOOL. YOUR ACTIONS HAVE A HUGE IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL'S REPUTATION, ON THE VIABILITY OF THE AV-PROGRAM, ON OUR ABILITY TO RECRUIT HOST FAMILIES AND ON GIVING FUTURE STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME AVS. IT IS NEVER ONLY ABOUT YOUR ISSUES. THE SCHOOL WILL ASSIST YOU WITH ANY PROBLEMS AND FIND SOLUTIONS. BUT WE NEED TO KNOW IMMEDIATELY TO BECOME ACTIVE. IF YOU TAKE ANY MAJOR ACTIONS ALL BY YOURSELF WITHOUT KEEPING THE SCHOOL INFORMED WE CONSIDER THAT A MAJOR OFFENSE TO OUR HOSPITALITY AND WILL CONSIDER YOUR REMOVAL FROM THE SCHOOL AND THE HOST FAMILY IMMEDIATELY AT YOUR OWN EXPENSES.**

## 4. Charlotte

### a. Location

Contrary to all other US cities, the Charlotte city center is called “Uptown” and not “Downtown.” That is the Charlotte business center with some of the major companies headquarters like “Bank of America” or “Duke Energy.” It is surrounded into all directions by neighborhoods, mall areas, parks, and golf courses. In general, the Southern wedge, the North, and properties closer to the lakes are wealthier. Other areas are not as safe and you should avoid going out at night if you don’t know the area.



#### **E. E. Waddell Language Academy (formerly Smith Academy)**

7030 Nations Ford Road  
Charlotte, NC 28217

PH: 980-343-5815

FX: 980-343-5854

Email:

[waddellacademy@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:waddellacademy@cms.k12.nc.us)

### b. Transportation

Many families live decentralized with limited access to public transportation. Most host families will still be willing to take you around, but are also limited by their daily schedule.

The public transportation system CATS (<http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cats/Pages/default.aspx>) has a limited amount of bus lines most of which go centralized into the uptown transportation center and back out again. There are relatively few circular or cross connections. Most busses run all night. <http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cats/Bus/maps/Documents/Riders%20Guide%20Charlotte%20Riders%20Guide.pdf>. It is quite a challenge to get around with public transportation and very time consuming.

The only light rail train line runs along South Boulevard into the city center and continues to the University.

### c. Things To Do

There are a number of fun things to do in Charlotte. Please check out these and other websites:

[http://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g49022-Activities-Charlotte\\_North\\_Carolina.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g49022-Activities-Charlotte_North_Carolina.html)

<http://charlotte.cbslocal.com/2012/06/12/50-free-things-to-do-in-and-around-charlotte>

<http://www.charlottesgotalot.com/101-fun-things-to-do-in-charlotte>

<http://travel.aol.com/travel-guide/united-states/north-carolina/charlotte-best-things-to-do>

## **5. South Academy of International Languages (SAIL)**

### **a. General Info**

**SAIL**, formerly known as E. E. Waddell Language Academy, formerly known as *Smith Academy of International Languages*, is a public K-8 magnet school (elementary and middle language immersion school combined) in Charlotte, North Carolina, United States and part of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School (CMS) District. Almost all K-5 instruction takes place in one of the following languages: German, French, Japanese, or Chinese. Chinese and Japanese has 45 minutes of English instruction per day, because of the alphabetization. From third through 5<sup>th</sup> grade all students have half of their Language Arts time (60 minutes) in English. All special area classes, like P.E./sports, music, art, technology, media/library, dance are taught in English. In Middle School, only Language Arts is taught in the foreign language. Spanish is offered as a third language. The school educates about 1,400 students in grades K-8. Part of the school staff are also the principal, two assistant principals, three counselors, a school psychologist, a speech therapist, four facilitators, three EC teachers, two ESL teachers, four English teachers, a talent development teacher, an elementary Science teacher, a nurse, a police officer, and assistants in Kindergarten and the first grade classes.

The school was awarded several national prizes for international education, such as the Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language Program by the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in 2012.

### **b. History**

The foreign language immersion programs in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools system were initiated in the 1990s by then superintendent Dr. John Murphy as part of district-wide magnet school offerings. The first immersion program was opened in the summer of 1992 at Bruns Avenue Elementary School. It was an early total immersion program. The language of instruction was German. The first students were admitted to Kindergarten and First Grade immersion classrooms; the program grew by one grade level per school year as these original students progressed to the next grade, so that by 1996 Bruns Avenue Elementary had a K-5 total immersion program in place, with a complementary late immersion component for students entering in 2nd and 3rd grade.

After the initial success of the Bruns Avenue program, immersion programs were set up at other schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district. An early immersion program in French was started at Reid Park Elementary in 1994. Then in 1995 a two-way Spanish immersion program was established at Collinswood Elementary and in 1996 a partial immersion program in Japanese was introduced at Sedgefield Elementary. In 1997 rising sixth grade immersion students transitioned to a partial immersion program at Smith Middle School.

By 2001 three of the early immersion programs had combined at one site. Bruns Avenue now housed the K-5 French, German, and Japanese Immersion programs. In 2002 these immersion programs moved to the site of Smith Middle School and combined with the existing 6-8 partial immersion programs to become the K-8 Academy of International Languages.

By 2011 the school moved to the former E.E.Waddell High school and assumed the name E.E. Waddell Language Academy. The school has been nationally recognized with the following awards: Magnet school of the year (2010), ACTFL Melba D. Woodruff Award for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language

Program (2011). The school bears the label of Global Readiness issued by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The school is a partner school (PASCH) of the German government, and recognized with the Label FrancÉducation. The school is collaborating with a multitude of private and public organizations, including consultes and embassies, private and public organizations, and universities world-wide.

In 2021 the school moved into a new school building and changed the name again to SAIL.

### **c. Program Design**

Waddell Language Academy offers students the unique opportunity to become fluent and literate in a second language through second language immersion instruction in Chinese, German, French, and Japanese. This means that Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies are almost entirely taught in the foreign language.

The instruction follows the regular Course of Study as any other North Carolina public school. That is

- i. the North Carolina Standards Course of Studies for Language Arts, Math Social Studies and Science,
- ii. Essential Standards (ES) of North Carolina for World Languages.

(Please contact Bernd Nuss for a pacing guide to know which objectives are being taught at what time in the school calendar.)

From the first days in Kindergarten, students are immersed in the foreign language for most of the day. As a result, students are proficient in a second language early on. Spanish heritage and a third foreign language are taught in Middle School.

The teachers are all native or near native speakers and represent a blend of nations from almost every continent.

The school maintains effective relationships with universities in the USA, Germany, and France, with the Confucius Institute, and other organizations. This provides the faculty with development opportunities and resources. Internationally accredited language tests are offered to the students on different levels and languages.

## d. School Calendar

### When is the best time to come as an Academic Volunteer?

holiday and teacher work day calendar. Click "Employee Calendar":

<https://www.cms.k12.nc.us/communications/calendars/Pages/Calendars.aspx>

<b>first two weeks</b> <i>(ca. Aug. 25 – Sept.10)</i>	<b>school breaks</b>	<b>beginning of May and on</b>	<b>last two weeks</b> <i>(ca. May 20 – June 10)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>It will be challenging to provide host families for the first two weeks of school</b>, since the families need to rearrange their routines after a long summer. The families are very hospitable and rather do not volunteer than appear as bad hosts.</li> <li>• However, the initial weeks at school are very interesting in terms of how classroom routines are established. You could opt for finding private accommodation, Airbnb, or a hotel room yourself, if you want to experience this phase of the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The US school system has only very limited number of school breaks. Families typically use those to visit family or take a short vacation. Any volunteer time that spans across any of the major vacation times might pose a problem. <b>Be prepared to make your own travel arrangements during extended weekends and holidays.</b></li> <li>• <b>Thanksgiving</b> (third or fourth week in November)</li> <li>• <b>Winter Break</b> ( ca. Dec. 20 – Jan. 2)</li> <li>• <b>Spring Break</b> (one week before or after Easter)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometime mid April or beginning of May generally no new curriculum is being taught anymore. That is in particular true for grade levels 3 and up that have to take state mandated End-of-Grade tests. The time until the test is used for review and test preparation. Academic volunteering is recommended only for second grade or lower during that time of the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The End-of-Grade tests consume practically all of the instructional time in the last 10 days of school. The tests are administered for all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students and up. They are very intense and lengthy.</li> <li>• <b>Academic volunteering is not recommended for that time of the year.</b> It also will be difficult to find host families, since they are already heavy in preparations for summer activities.</li> </ul>

## **e. Getting Around**

### **i. Getting To and From School**

#### **1. *Using the School Bus***

If your host family's children use the school bus, you will, too. On your first ride to school and back again, you will give the bus driver a bus pass. Please keep extra bus passes in case another driver takes over the route and doesn't know you. You can always get extra bus passes in the front office of our school. Buses might be crowded. It is a bumpy ride, but an experience. During the first two weeks of school the bus drivers still need to learn their routes and it might take some time to get home.

#### **2. *Going by Car***

If your host family takes their children to school by car, you have an easy ride. Just make sure that on your first day you enter the school building through the front office.



## **f. General Routines**

### **i. Arrival**

7.45: students may enter the school building and gather in waiting areas

8.00: students may proceed to their classroom; morning work starts

8.10: morning announcements and Pledge of Allegiance through school TV

8.15: regular classes commence

### **ii. Dismissal**

3.10 students pack up their stuff

3.15 car riders proceed to the cafeteria and sit down in assigned areas; car number announcements start at about 3.20.

ca. 3.25 upon announcement students walk to the bus lot; students whose buses aren't here yet wait in the gym.

### **iii. Drills (fire, lockdown, tornado)**

- **fire drill:** once a month; everyone in the building leaves swiftly the school building and waits around the school building by class
- **tornado drill:** twice per year; all students tuck down against the walls in the hallways facing the wall and covering their heads
- **“Lock Down” drill or intruder drill:** twice a year; everyone in the building has to be in a locked room, waiting silently and invisibly, away from windows and doors, all windows covered. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT NOT ONE SINGLE PERSON IS IN A HALLWAY, IN AN UNLOCKED ROOM, OR VISIBLE THROUGH ANY WINDOWS. When you hear the announcement “LOCK DOWN NOW” and you are not with your class, run to the next classroom before the doors are locked. If you are outside hide in the bushes. The whole school is audited every time upon compliance.**

### **iv. Daily Schedule (special, lunch, recess, English)**

Every class has a different schedule due to different Special Area classes, lunch shifts, recess, and English times. Typically Language Arts and Math are taught in large blocks in the morning hours. Social Studies, Science, and remediation classes are in the afternoon.

### **v. Lunch (cafeteria pay in cash, bring your own lunch and eat with teachers in classroom)**

You should bring your lunch from home (left-overs from the previous day) and eat together with your assigned teacher. There is no teacher lounge. So, typically a number of teachers gather in a classroom and have their lunch together. You can also purchase lunch in the cafeteria for less than \$4.00.

### **vi. Academic Volunteer Routines**

Upon arrival you have to sign in at the front office in the purple folder before proceeding to your classroom. **First Time Arrival only: sign in with the Lobby Guard. Office staff will help you.**

**Keep your badge visible at all times on school campus.**

### **g. Dress Code**

Professional formal dress code is in place. Be a good role model for the students.

- Don't wear anything torn or sheer tops. The body should be decently covered.
- Ladies! Short skirts (hem above stretched out finger tips) are not permitted. Spaghetti tops are also not acceptable. Visible underarm hair is being frowned upon.
- Guys! No baggy pants with visible underwear. Use a belt. No T-shirts. You should wear something with a collar.
- All undergarments must be completely covered.
- No prints on clothes that might be offensive, suggestive, political, religious, etc. in any way.
- Shoes must be closed at the heels; no flip-flops.
- Jeans are allowed only on Fridays and only if they meet the "appropriate and tasteful" criteria: not frayed or ripped or worn below waste line to show underwear.

## **6. ACADEMIC VOLUNTEER INFO**

### **a. General**

#### **i. Placement With A Host Family**

Our academic volunteer program has been increasing considerably in the past years. We now require that a host family is assigned to you first, before we can confirm you academic volunteering time with us. This is to ensure that you have an adequate place to stay. So, please wait with your travel arrangements until you have received final confirmation from your host family. Please inform us early on if you need to meet any deadlines with regard to scholarships, etc.

#### **ii. Assignment To A Teacher**

You will be assigned to one or two teacher only. But you are highly encouraged to explore the rest of the school: other grade levels, other languages, electives (band, hand bell orchestra, ...), special area classes, etc.

Most of our academic volunteers are placed with 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, because our K-1 teachers have assistants helping in their classes already and in Middle School the amount of foreign language instruction is limited to 90 minutes every other day. In general, all teachers are used to having visitors in their classrooms and are very willing to help you.

Most of our teachers have been away from their native countries for an extended time. They are also curious what is going on back there.

- Bring a book for the classroom library that you are assigned to.
- Check out the Science and Social Studies curriculum (<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/acre/standards/support-tools/>) for your assigned grade level and bring (online) information that might support the instruction (e.g. websites, learning programs, videos for children) or just information about good books. Do you know any good target language resources for teaching Math? Any cool chapter books that children currently love to read? You don't have to buy any of that. We appreciate the information.
- Bring any new teaching ideas that you think are worth sharing.

#### **iii. Teacher Contact Prior To Arrival**

We make every effort to assign you a teacher early on, so that you can start communicating and making any arrangements that will help you to prepare for your academic volunteering. Please contact Mr. Nuss ([bernd.nuss@cms.k12.nc.us](mailto:bernd.nuss@cms.k12.nc.us)) if time is closing in and you haven't been assigned to a teacher yet or the communication between you and your teacher is not working well.

## **b. Expectations**

### **i. General**

We want you to be aware that almost all of our interns are placed in 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. There is great value in learning in lower classes and be actively involved in everything that is going on in the classroom, even if you study for secondary level. We expect our academic volunteers to be as much engaged in the classroom as possible and to coordinate everything with the classroom teacher. That can be a prepared lesson or a project that you bring with you or create together with your assigned teacher. It might also involve regular small group differentiation that your teacher might ask you to help with. But also look out proactively, where you can help the teacher, which includes the instructional time, but also the planning time or recess. You are together with your assigned teacher all the time. The teachers rely on your help. Examples: offer to spread worksheets; assist students to get started with individual work; monitor a small group spontaneously. If you plan to observe other classes, coordinate that with other teachers. Take initiative to organize classroom observations with other teachers. Please, be respectful and do not talk, play with your phone or engage in any other activities that are highly distracting for the teacher and the students – especially when you are in the classroom and on the playground together with other volunteers.

Please, be also proactive in approaching your teacher if you want to teach lessons, units, etc. Don't wait for the teacher to ask you. Just say what you need and want to do to make arrangements.

If you have a problem, please address the issue in a cordial, constructive way to the teacher. You can always go to Bernd Nuss, the immersion facilitator, to ask for help with mediating a problem. Miscommunication or lack of communication can be easily resolved. We want both, our teachers and our AVs happy, to get the most out of your stay for everyone.

### **ii. Conduct with Parents and Children**

**Do not hug, lift up, or caress any children.** The most acceptable is a “side” hug, but only when children are initiating it. Do not initiate any physical contact with children. Do not use any profanities in front of the children, also if that is acceptable in your home culture. Do not talk about personal life with children. **Children in the USA grow up very sheltered and parents take great offense if that shelter is intruded by unthoughtful comments or statements. Limits are crossed very easily. A diplomatic approach with children and parents is required at all times.** **No religious topics** are to be touched or comments to be made at school. Public schools follow very strict secularity principles.

**No profanities** or conversations with any sexual content or connotations are acceptable.

**Political views do not belong into a professional environment.**

### iii. Confidentiality

You will be in a somewhat tricky situation. You share the school life in the classroom as you share the home life in the family. However, both are separate social circles and under any circumstances must stay that way. Any information about other students or teachers may not be carried home, as any information about the family may not be carried to school. There is an absolute separation line between the two. This is a very serious issue.

You are also not to discuss teacher performance with other staff members. That is just none of your business. We have administrators to evaluate staff members.

### iv. Photo Release

Ask teachers before you want to take pictures. Several students are not permitted to be in any pictures. You should never take pictures of individual students, but only of a group – excluding the ones without a photo or video permission. You may not post any visual material or names of students and teachers on the internet in any way. Thank you for respecting our students' and teachers' privacy.

### v. Observations

Teaching is an art. Looking at the same teaching through different lenses will open your eyes to what all is involved in teaching one single class. If your university/organization does not provide you with an obligatory catalogue of tasks, we encourage you to systematically observe your assigned teacher (and other teachers) with one major focus at one time. Suggested foci could be but are not limited to:

- organization/routines,
- classroom and individual disciplining,
- motivation,
- differentiation,
- feedback,
- transitions between tasks/social forms,
- methodology/lesson structure,
- curriculum compliance/cross curricular activities,
- language scaffolding/support/pre-teaching,
- content vs. language teaching.

### vi. Small Group Differentiation With/Without Teacher Guidance

Differentiation is an almost outdated term in education in the USA. The terms individualization, personalization, or customization are reflecting better the current trends. With large classes and wide ranges of academic and language skills this goal can be a challenge even to a very

experienced teacher. Your assigned teacher will ask you to take over small group instruction. It might be preplanned or even spontaneously as the flow of the class might require remediation for a group of students or supervision of task accomplishment for a larger group. The teacher will be with you in the same room or in a side room always visible and accessible.

**vii. Preparation And Delivery Of Small Lesson Projects With Teacher Support**

Most universities request lesson preparations and delivery as part of the academic volunteer program. If not, we still encourage you to challenge yourself to develop your teaching skills. There is no better way of learning than taking the responsibility for a number of lessons or even a short unit. Early communication with the classroom teacher will help you to determine the subject area and the lesson goals or unit goals. You could even bring material from home that might support your planning and instruction. The teacher will always assist you with planning out the lessons, choosing the activities, pacing and assessments.

**viii. Delivery Of Teacher Prepared Lessons**

Especially during testing season, some teachers have to administer one-on-one tests with every single student in the class. You might be asked to monitor activities all by yourself or even to teach a lesson that has been planned out by the teacher. The teacher will be always in the same room or visible and accessible in a side-room ready to jump in if it is necessary. In some cases, you might be asked to help out with other than your assigned teacher or to administer the tests after training.

**ix. Copy Work and Errands**

Your assigned teacher might ask you to run copies of worksheets or might send you to the office or another teacher if necessary.

**x. NO independent supervision**

As a volunteer you are not allowed to take full responsibility for a group without any trained staff present. For instance, your teacher should not ask you to take the students out for recess or leave the class as you are teaching a lesson.

**c. Resources:**

- i. **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools(district) - CMS**  
<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/Pages/default.aspx>
- ii. **SAIL Website**  
<https://schools.cms.k12.nc.us/sailMS/Pages/Default.aspx>
- iii. **North Carolina Standard Course of Studies (curriculum)**  
<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/>