



School District 8
Kootenay Lake

DRAFT
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Procedures and Guidelines

for Educator Exchange Programs

1.0 PROGRAMS OFFERED

1.1 Year Long Reciprocal Exchanges for Teachers

1.1.1 Full School Year Exchanges

Between School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake), Canada and Hamburg, Germany.

2.0 EXCHANGE TIMELINES

2.1 Year Long Exchanges

2.1.1 School Year Exchanges to Hamburg August 1 to July 15 inclusive. (format)

3.0 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Permanent Professional BC Teaching Certificate

3.2 Permanent teaching position

3.3 Commitment to the exchange

Withdrawing from the program after submission of an application can cause difficulties in the host country or province considering the BC applicant. Applicants may not apply for, nor the Employing Authority facilitate, any promotion or transfer to a position that must be taken up during the exchange period.

3.4 Personal characteristics

Other personal characteristics should be taken into consideration, such as flexibility, adaptability, personal and financial stability, communication skills, health, ability to cooperate with colleagues and other characteristics as deemed appropriate.

3.5 Past recipients

Previous EEP Exchange Participants may apply for a subsequent year-long exchange if: a. five years of service is accrued since the previous Exchange before being eligible to make application for a subsequent year-long Exchange, b. evidence is provided regarding the professional dissemination of learnings from, and impacts of, the previous Exchange, and c. Active involvement with exchange promotions can be demonstrated.

4.0 INTERVIEWS

4.1 Year Long Exchanges

Must attend an in-person interview or if distance is a factor, a Teams/ZOOM interview with the Exchange Liaison.

5.0 ORIENTATIONS

5.1 Year Long Exchanges

Must attend a full-day mandatory orientation on a date to be determined. Release time and substitution costs are to be covered by the School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) school authority for the BC exchange educator and the incoming exchange educator.

6.0 EMPLOYMENT (applies to year-long exchanges)

6.1 Salary

Participants will remain in the employment of their own school district and will continue to have their salaries remitted to them while on exchange. They will, therefore, continue to be subject to normal taxation, superannuation and social service contributions and will retain their rights and privileges as employees of their own educational authorities.

6.2 Benefits

Participants who are enrolled in the School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) Benefit Plan or other extended benefit plans, may continue to receive coverage, depending on their benefit plan regulations.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to understand their extended health benefits while on exchange.

6.3 Professionalism

Education exchanges are professional obligations. Service in the exchange school/district must be undertaken with the same commitment as service in an SD8 school. Any breach of this professional obligation has serious consequences.

6.4 Casual Sick Leave

In British Columbia, the host school board is responsible for substitute educators for the first twenty days of approved leave for personal illness of the visiting exchange educator, and for similar approved and excusable absences. The sponsoring school authority is liable for the substitute educator costs for:

- all additional days of illness of its exchange teacher more than twenty days and
- all days of unexcused or unapproved absences of its own educator.

In the foreign destination, casual sick leave will adhere to the casual sick leave policy in the host school

6.5 Professional Leave

In British Columbia, at least **five (5) days' leave** (with the host board covering the cost of substitute educators) should be allocated for professional development experience of the exchange educator, in addition to participation in all regular professional development activities provided by the host school system.

In foreign destinations, professional leave will adhere to the professional leave policy in the host school.

6.6 Personal Leave

Where personal leave is approved by the host system, the actual cost of the substitute educator may be recovered from the sponsoring board, which, in turn, may recover costs from the salary of the educator under the conditions of its collective agreement.

6.7 Strikes

Exchange educators shall not get involved in any strike action.

6.7.1 BC Exchange Educators

In the case of a strike in the host district, the exchange educator will continue to be paid by the home district and thus is required to continue employment with the host district.

In the event of a strike in the home district, the exchange educator is deemed not to be directly involved in the strike.

He/she will continue to receive a regular salary and shall continue employment with the host district.

6.7.2 Incoming Exchange Educators

In the case of a strike in the BC district, the exchange educator will continue to be paid by the home district and thus is required to continue employment with the BC district. The BC district shall assign the exchange educator duties as deemed appropriate. These duties shall not jeopardize the exchange educator's position in the school.

If a strike is imminent, the exchange educator shall notify the Educator Exchange Programs Educator Liaison immediately.

The exchange educator shall report to his or her BC superintendent (or designate) for advice on how to proceed.

6.7.3 Recovery Costs

Any invoicing about the cost of replacement educators in host districts must be channeled through participating Ministries of Education (i.e., board/ authority). In BC, all such issues should be discussed with the Educator Exchange Programs Educator Liaison.

7.0 PREPARING FOR THE EXCHANGE

7.1 Teaching Assignments

Written job descriptions are to be provided at the time of application. Subsequent changes, which may be to the disadvantage of the incoming exchange educator, should be avoided.

7.2 Teaching Buddy

A buddy should be assigned to orient the incoming exchange educator to ensure smooth integration into the BC school.

7.3 School leader Buddy

A school leader should be appointed to assist the incoming exchange educator.

7.4 Arrival at Host School

Exchange educators should check in with their host school at least five (5) days prior to the school opening to become familiar with the school and planning provisions (for yearlong exchanges).

8.0 EXPENSES

Participants will cover all expenses for themselves and their families, including travel to and from the host community. There is no financial assistance for this program.

9.0 ACCOMMODATION

Educators are obliged to provide adequate housing for their exchange partner. Participants often provide their own homes, but this is optional, as other arrangements can be made. If accommodation is exchanged, the responsibility for mortgage or rent in BC and the cost of insurance for the home and its contents must continue to be borne by the BC participants.

Exchange accommodation must be complete with furnishings, bedding, appliances and facilities ready for immediate use by the visiting exchange educators and families.

Exchange educators are expected to maintain the home in good order and condition and make good any damage incurred during their stay.

Accommodation exchanges are personal matters between the exchange educators. School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) will take NO responsibility for any disputes between the parties. Written agreements are strongly recommended.

10.0 VEHICLES / TRANSPORTATION

Vehicle exchanges are not recommended but may be negotiated privately. It is

important, however, that the visiting exchange educator be able to travel easily to and from school or home. Transportation options and costs must be determined and clearly outlined.

Vehicle exchanges are personal matters between exchange teachers. School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) will take no responsibility for any disputes between the parties. Written agreements are strongly recommended.

11.0 HEALTH CARE (applies to all in-person exchanges)

Participants are responsible for life and health care insurance for the duration of the exchange. **BC Medical Care will continue to cover BC participants while on exchange,** but may require notification that the educator and any accommodation family members will be away. It is recommended that participants investigate the benefits provided by their extended health care plan and notify them of the upcoming absence. It is the responsibility of the applicant to understand their extended health benefits while on exchange.

12.0 GUIDELINES IN THE EVENT OF EDUCATOR EXCHANGE BREAKDOWNS

- 12.1 If any exchange breaks down after commencement of the exchange term, the assignment of the exchange partner will be protected for the full exchange period, either by continuation of the original assignment or, if the exchange partner agrees, by relocation to another assignment in the host district.
- 12.2 When an exchange educator, with prior approval and for reasons acceptable to the authorities involved (local and government) returns prematurely, he/she should receive full benefits of regular employment.
- 12.3 When an exchange participant returns, because of personal reasons, without prior approval of the authorities involved, the employer and the authorities have no obligation to continue employment or benefits.
- 12.4 In cases 12.2 and 12.3, the sending authority will cover full or equivalent costs of a replacement educator for the remainder of the exchange term.
- 12.5 An educator whose exchange assignment is prematurely terminated as a consequence of external factors should have priority for a new exchange in the next program year.
- 12.6 All educators must sign a legally binding agreement of service during the exchange period.
- 12.7 In the event of an exchange breakdown, the BC educator must consult with his/her employers in BC. Termination of an exchange without proper approvals can jeopardize continued employment.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Information collected as part of the Educator Exchange Programs will be treated with due attention to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) legislation. The information provides the basis upon which the best possible match may be secured for participants. This information will be treated with respect for confidentiality and shared only with the exchange officials in possible destinations, and with the prospective district, school leader and partner when an exchange is proposed.

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DRAFT Selection Process & Timeline

1. Application Submission (Deadline: April 30, 2025)

- Applicants submit a **detailed application**, including:
 - Personal and professional background
 - Teaching experience and subject areas
 - Motivation for participating in the exchange
 - How they will bring back what they learn to SD8
 - Confirmation of willingness to complete a German language course (for Canadian applicants)
 - Any personal considerations (e.g., housing preferences, family needs)

2. Principal Endorsement & School Approval (Mid-May 2025)

- Applications must be supported by the teacher's **school principal** to ensure school-level approval.
- Principals confirm the teacher is a **full-time, permanently employed** member of staff.

3. Review Committee Evaluation (Late May 2025)

- A **Selection Committee** (including representatives from SD8 HR, instructional leadership, and possibly a former exchange participant) reviews applications based on:
 - Qualifications & teaching experience
 - Professional motivation & alignment with program goals
 - Ability to adapt to a new educational and cultural environment
 - Suitability for teaching English (Canadian applicants) or subject expertise (German applicants)

4. Interviews (Early June 2025)

- Shortlisted candidates participate in a **virtual interview** with SD8 leadership and the Hamburg education partners.
- This ensures a good fit and provides applicants with an opportunity to ask questions.

5. Final Selection & Matchmaking (Mid-June 2025)

- Selected candidates are matched with **German exchange partners** based on experience, subject areas, and personal considerations (e.g., housing).
- Hamburg officials finalize the placement of SD8 teachers in German schools.

6. Pre-Departure Preparation (July 2025 - August 2026)

- Canadian teachers begin a **mandatory German language course** (self-paced or structured).
- Orientation sessions are provided, covering:
 - Visa & work permit requirements
 - Cultural & educational system differences
 - Housing arrangements & financial planning
- Participants meet their exchange partner virtually before the exchange begins.

7. Final Approval & Contract Adjustments (during 2025-2026 school year)

- SD8 and Hamburg complete **final paperwork & employment confirmations** before teachers depart.