

Foreign Exchange Student

In order for a resident student to be counted for State subsidy, they must be “educated” at public expense at a public school or a private school approved for tuition – [20-A M.R.S.A. Section 15672, subsection 32](#).

Maine Student attending a school in another country:

Maine Students attending a school in a foreign country may only be counted for subsidy if tuition for “educational expenses” is paid to the host school. If the host school waives the tuition then the student may not be counted for State subsidy. A fee paid to a foreign exchange service is not an educational expense and therefore is not considered tuition for educational expenses.

- For students attending schools in a foreign country, if a Maine school does not accept the credits from the school in the foreign country, the student would not meet Maine Learning Results requirements – this could prevent these students from receiving a “Maine Learning Results” diploma.
- If the foreign school is a private school, in order to be approved for tuition purposes, the host school must comply with the reporting requirements of 20-A M.R.S.A. Chapter 117, sub-chapter 2.

Foreign Student attending a school in Maine:

If the superintendent approves the acceptance of the foreign exchange student under [20-A M.R.S.A. Section 5205, sub-section 2](#) and assumes financial responsibility for this student, then a foreign exchange student is considered a Maine resident student of the school unit where the student physically resides during the duration of the exchange, and is counted for enrollment and subsidy purposes in that unit. Please Note: View an explanation of the [differences between Foreign Exchange Students and Foreign Tuition Students](#).

If a superintendent’s approved foreign exchange student resides in a school unit where students are sent to another school unit or to a private school, a receiving school unit/private school may let the student come for no tuition, or may charge tuition for the student at the same rate charged for other residents of that sending school unit. This is at the discretion of the receiving school unit or the private school. (Note: The sending unit may only count the foreign exchange student as a resident student for subsidy purposes if the sending unit pays the tuition cost for the foreign exchange student. If there is no charge for the student then the student may not be counted for subsidy purposes.)

However, since a superintendent’s approved foreign exchange student is considered a Maine resident student of the school unit they reside in for the duration of their stay,

another option is a transfer for the student from the school unit where the student resides to a potential receiving school unit.

This transfer can be accomplished via a Superintendent's Agreement, a formal agreement where the superintendent of the school unit where the student resides and the superintendent of the potential receiving school unit agree on the transfer of the student from one school unit to the other.

A Superintendent's Agreement would allow a receiving school unit to count a foreign exchange student as a resident of that unit for enrollment and cost purposes. Under a Superintendents Agreement, the state subsidy "follows" the student. Therefore, the receiving school unit would receive the state subsidy for that student. This helps to defray some of the costs associated with accepting the student at no tuition charge. This option is only possible between two public school units, because a private school does not have "residents", and does not receive state subsidy.