



# THE NOVA SCOTIA ADVANTAGE



Since 1997, the Nova Scotia International Student Program (NSISP) has hosted more than 10,000 international students from over thirty countries in every part of the province. A big part of the success of the NSISP can be attributed to the communities and their schools who welcome these students and make them feel special.

Since its inception, the NSISP has been an innovator in the public sector K-12 market in Canada. The organization was founded on the belief the program would create global citizens by promoting the growth of intercultural understanding and increased international educational opportunities for Nova Scotian students and students from around the world. The NSISP created the three innovative student programs outlined below to further these goals.

## Nova Scotia Student Ambassadors Program

The NSISP believes the key to student success is full integration into local schools, families, and communities. To this end, the NSISP annually trains more than 100 Nova Scotian students to become student ambassadors. The primary role of the ambassadors is to help international students become familiar with their school and community after they arrive and create deeper relationships with the students around them. The ambassadors also work with the international student staff liaisons to make their school a more internationalized and welcoming environment. The NSISP believes the interaction between student ambassadors and international students helps both groups develop cross-cultural skills and become better global citizens.

### Some key activities the Student Ambassadors participate in are as follows:

- Provide school tours and welcome new international students and international visitors
- Work with the school staff liaisons and homestay coordinators to organize regular activities for international students in the school and community
- Work with school administration to acknowledge and celebrate the international students in their schools
- Encourage international students to use and complete their NSISP Passports
- Help their schools work towards or maintain 'NSISP Welcoming School' status





## NSISP Student Passport

Created by student ambassadors, the Student Passport is an innovative tool to help encourage local engagement between international students, host parents, student ambassadors, and homestay coordinators. The passport showcases different seasonal activities the students can participate in and places of interest the students can visit during their time in Nova Scotia. Every NSISP student receives a passport at orientation and the student ambassadors are trained in its effective use.

The passport is divided into 10 monthly sections showcasing beautiful and unique places in the province, as well as a monthly calendar which highlight holidays, activities, and dates of interest. Students are given different monthly photo challenges that incorporate different seasonal and cultural events and activities. Students are encouraged to complete all of these tasks and there are monthly photo contests on the NSISP Facebook and Instagram pages.

# International Welcoming Schools Initiative

Schools form an important social and cultural hub for international students while they are in Nova Scotia. Students make new friends, participate in extra-curricular activities, and learn about Canadian culture in school. The NSISP created the 'Welcoming Schools Program' in 2012 to clearly identify a set of criteria to ensure schools would follow established best practices.

In order to be designated an 'International Welcoming School', a committee is formed within the school to complete a process of self-evaluation in five major areas:

- International student welcome
- International student integration
- International student activities
- Effect on local students
- End of the year activities

Upon successful completion of this process and creation of goals for three years, the school receives an International Welcoming School plaque for their front entrance and an honorarium from the NSISP to put toward the school climate goals.

To find more information on all of these programs please visit the NSISP Website [www.nsisp.ca](http://www.nsisp.ca)



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