



ASSIST Representatives Manual

Boarding Schools

Guidance, expectations, and best practices for ASSIST Representatives working with boarding schools.

Updated: September 2025

The ASSIST Mission

ASSIST creates life-changing opportunities for outstanding international scholars to learn from and contribute to the finest American independent secondary schools. Since 1969, over 6,000 students from 52 countries have studied in the U.S., fostering cross-cultural friendships and promoting global understanding. Supported by scholarships from our partner schools, this collaboration lays a strong foundation for student success.

About This Manual

This manual compiles essential information for ASSIST Representatives, drawing on 55 years of experience, student feedback, U.S. State Department regulations, and CSIET standards. Use it alongside two key resources:

- Guiding Our Partnership
- The ASSIST Scholars Handbook

Key Responsibilities of ASSIST Representatives

- Register annually as an ASSIST Representative and complete the required criminal background check.
- Read, reference, and align with Guiding Our Partnership and The ASSIST Scholars Handbook.
- Meet monthly with each assigned student and submit a brief report to ASSIST.
- Maintain regular contact with the residential life team (house parents/dorm staff), advisor, and health center as appropriate.
- Email ****quarterly grade reports**** to ASSIST (send to **Kerri@assistscholars.org**) as they are issued.
- Escalate safeguarding, health, or conduct concerns to ASSIST immediately—do not wait for the monthly report.

School Enrollment & Membership

ASSIST Member Schools renew membership each fall. Schools must offer at least one full scholarship each year and may identify preferred countries for that scholar. Schools may also specify requirements (e.g., gender, class placement). In almost all cases, the student presented by ASSIST is accepted; if a match feels off, the school returns the file promptly and ASSIST presents an alternate candidate.

Each student file includes:

- An introductory write-up summarizing strengths and interview feedback.
- The ASSIST application form.
- Official transcripts (with translation guides where needed).

- Teacher and/or administrator recommendations.
- DuoLingo English test results for most non-native speakers.

Upon acceptance, the school informs ASSIST. ASSIST then notifies the candidate of the admission decision and the full or partial scholarship award. The school also sends an official letter of acceptance along with the following:

- An I-20 form and instructions on how to apply for the F-1 visa.
- Materials describing the school for the student and family.
- Information on personal expenses for which the student is responsible.
- A student handbook and any other materials to support a smooth transition.

Visa Process

The school issues the I-20 form and provides F-1 visa guidance. Representatives should stay in touch with the school's DSO (Designated School Official) to ensure the student receives all paperwork in time to complete the visa appointment and travel.

Student Acculturation & Support

We select students who will adjust well and contribute meaningfully; still, every student needs support adjusting to a new culture, language, educational system, and climate. Residential life teams typically provide robust onboarding and supervision for international students.

Encourage immediate participation beyond classes:

- Join a sport or fitness activity in the first term.
- Participate in a club, ensemble, student government, robotics/debate, theater, or service group.
- Attend school events to build peer connections and a sense of belonging.

Academic Monitoring & School Coordination

- Confirm appropriate course placement (English, math, science sequencing).
- Identify tutoring, study hall, ELL support (when needed), or teacher office hours.
- Coordinate with advisor/counselor on progress checks, especially in the first grading period.
- Encourage use of learning platforms (e.g., LMS portals) and time-management supports.
- Collect and email quarterly grade reports to ASSIST (Kerri@assistscholars.org).

Safety, Conduct, and Escalation

- Contact ASSIST immediately for health/safety concerns, allegations of bullying/harassment, or host-family issues.
- For medical emergencies, call 911 first; then notify ASSIST.
- Document incidents succinctly (who/what/when/where) and share with ASSIST within 24 hours.

Student Selection Overview

With membership commitments set in November, ASSIST interviews finalists across our partner countries. We select scholars based on academic excellence, English proficiency, character, talents that enrich school communities, and leadership potential. Per CSIET standards, ASSIST does not place students to fulfill special athletic requests; students are scholars first.

Placement Timeline

Interviews conclude by late January; by early March, most offers are accepted. Student placement runs from March through April. ASSIST places students individually to align their abilities and interests with the school's strengths and specific requests.

Our Partnership

The exchange year works best when the student, school (and host family, for day schools), and ASSIST collaborate closely. Please reach out whenever we can be helpful. We are available during office hours and can be reached after hours for urgent situations.

CSIET Standards

ASSIST is an authorized student exchange organization and a member of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET). Review the standards here: <https://www.csiet.org/>