



ASSIST Representatives Manual

Day Schools

Guidance, expectations, and best practices for ASSIST Representatives working with day schools and host families.

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 gathers essential information for ASSIST Representatives, based 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 host family and relevant school personnel (advisor, counselor, international student coordinator).
- 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 their membership each fall. Schools are required to offer at least one full scholarship annually and may specify preferred countries for that scholar. They can also set requirements, such as gender or grade level. In almost all cases, the student presented by ASSIST is accepted; if a match seems unsuitable, the school promptly returns the file, and ASSIST provides an alternative 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 F-1 visa instructions (if the school sponsors the visa), or notification that ASSIST will issue a DS-2019 for a J-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

For F-1 students, the school issues the I-20 and provides guidance on obtaining a visa. For J-1 students, ASSIST issues the DS-2019. Representatives should stay in touch with the school's DSO (for F-1) or ASSIST (for J-1) to ensure the student receives all paperwork in time to complete the visa appointment and travel.

Host Family Placement & Support

Day-school placements include a vetted host family. Representatives collaborate with ASSIST and the school to ensure a safe and welcoming home environment, as well as clear expectations.

Key host-family considerations:

- Background checks and references completed prior to arrival; emergency contact information on file.
- Orientation to household expectations (curfew, devices, chores, transportation, meals).
- Transportation plans for school, activities, and appointments.
- Medical consent, insurance cards, and school health forms are accessible to host parents.
- Coverage plans for school breaks/holidays; communicate early to avoid last-minute housing gaps.
- Regular check-ins with the student and host family address small issues early.

Student Acculturation & Support

We select students who will adjust well and contribute meaningfully; however, every student still needs support in adapting to a new culture, language, educational system, and climate. Upon arrival, prioritize smaller, intentional interactions over large welcome parties so students can acculturate comfortably.

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 wrap up in late January; most offers are accepted by early March. Student placement occurs from March through April. ASSIST assigns students individually to match their abilities and interests with school 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/>