

Hello!

Please share these helpful tips with the lead education coordinator on your team. The information below was shared with us by teachers and staff in the field of education,

1) Private sponsors are welcome to attend registration, parents night, school events, but they must understand they are not legal guardians. They do not have access to any of student's information like attendance, achievement, behaviour, etc. If they call or show up at school, no information should or will be provided to them. If they are accompanying parents/guardians, then they can help ask questions to support parent/guardian request for information and/or understanding.

2) If sponsors want to know more about the programming provided for the students, they should attend registration, parents night, grade 8 night, etc. They may call and ask questions about program but if time is short (often) they cannot expect someone to spend a lot of time with them as they are not a parent or guardian of any student in the program.

3) If sponsors attend school events with parents, it is most valuable when they act as support people. It is not desirable when they monopolize conversation and do not appear to be helping newcomer family to understand, or feel heard. Sometimes, well-meaning sponsors act as if family cannot understand any of the conversation regardless of language barrier, so they talk for, or over, the newcomer family. As school staff, we try always to talk TO the family, even when they know they will need translation. We are forging a connection with the newcomer family to help them feel welcome and empowered to seek information independently at any time in the future, when sponsors may not be available.

4) Choose one 'point person' for sponsor to help with academic transition. I sometimes get phone calls or emails from individuals other than the named sponsor in our records. They say please take my number/email address if you need anything. If I already have an indicated contact, I will not add a second one because I do not need more than one, and I do not have consent from the family.

5) Finally, sponsors should please let school staff explain ESL/ELD program, timetable, graduation requirements, etc. Things have changed considerably since sponsors went to school so when they try to explain based on their experience, it is not always helpful.

Thank you, sponsors for your ongoing support of newcomers!