



Dear Future AFSer/Applicant,

Please find enclosed general instructions on obtaining a **Type X Study Visa** for China. **AFS will obtain this visa for you.** As you will note, obtaining a visa is a detailed and time consuming process, and for this reason, visa information is sent not only to students who are guaranteed, but also to students whose applications are still in review. **It is important that you begin preparing for this process immediately.**

### **Obtaining a Passport**

If you still do not have a passport, you must apply for one **immediately!** You cannot obtain any other type of travel document without a valid passport and it takes about 4 - 6 weeks to obtain one. If you delay in obtaining your passport, you will need to request that your passport application be “expedited” (rushed) at an additional cost.

### **Additional Support Documents**

In order for AFS to obtain your visa for China, along with the completed visa application and other documents required by the Chinese authorities, we will also need additional support documents and approvals which are provided by AFS-China and the Chinese Government. **AFS-China will prepare these documents and forward them to the AFS USA office in New York as soon as your placement has been confirmed. AFS USA will then immediately apply for your visa.**

The process of obtaining the necessary approvals and documentation for this process can take time and in some cases, possible delays may result. If your documentation does not arrive within adequate time to obtain a visa, you may have to travel later than originally scheduled. Staff in the National Offices of both AFS-USA and AFS in China will continue to monitor the situation closely in the up coming months. Be assured that AFS-China is doing everything possible to have all placements confirmed as early as possible. In addition to this, visa and immigration regulations are constantly changing. Participants who we feel may not be able to travel as scheduled will be notified approximately two weeks prior to the original departure date.

## **Domestic Travel**

Regarding your domestic travel to the gateway orientation site, please do not book any tickets until you receive what we call the *Travel Notification Packet* in the mail from the AFS USA Travel and Logistics Department. This packet will give you important detailed information about travel and logistics for your trip. AFS always recommends that participants book domestic tickets that are both refundable and changeable. This is due in part to the possibility of changes in international flights students will be taking to return home, but also due to the fact that complications may arise in obtaining visas and these complications can at times delay a student's departure. **Please note that participants will be responsible for paying any penalties incurred for changes they may need to make in their domestic travel in the event that they are not able to obtain their visa in time for their scheduled departure.**

## **Taking Trips before the Start of your Program**

You should not plan any excursions outside of the United States prior to your program. As mentioned before, obtaining a visa takes time and your passport will be required. Should you choose to travel before the start of your program and not allow enough time for AFS to procure your visa, you will run the risk of not being able to participate on this program.

## **Getting Started**

We have included here some additional information concerning the visa application process for China. AFS will obtain this visa for you. It is very important, however, that you follow the accompanying instructions very carefully and comply with all the requirements.

Should you have any questions or require assistance, do not hesitate to contact your **Admissions Advisor at 800-237-4636.**

Sincerely,

AFS Visa Team



## VISA INFORMATION

### CHINA YEAR PROGRAM 2008-09

A **type X Study Visa** is required for your entry and stay in China. **AFS will obtain this visa for you.** To do so, we must receive the following items from you **as soon as possible** or **no later than July 12th**. As you will note obtaining a visa is a detailed and time consuming process. It is important that you begin preparing for this process immediately. Please follow instructions carefully as any errors or omissions will cause delays, which can jeopardize your travel arrangements.

#### **The following documents are required in order to apply for your visa:**

##### **1. UNITED STATES PASSPORT**

*Yes, you must send AFS your passport since the visa is a stamp that the consulate will affix to one of its free pages.*

- Your passport must be **\*signed\*** and valid for at least six months beyond your intended stay. (An unsigned passport is not considered valid.)
- You must have at least 2 blank pages in your passport for the visa stamp.

If you hold a passport from a country other than the US, please call your Admissions Advisor **IMMEDIATELY** at 1-800-237-4636. Additional documents may be required. If you do not yet have your U.S. passport, you must apply **RIGHT AWAY**. You can not apply for a visa without a valid passport. In some cases, you may have to expedite (a rush service) your passport application at an additional cost. Normal processing time may take 4-6 weeks excluding peak seasons. You can inquire at your local post office or check the State Department website at <http://travel.state.gov/> about how and where you can apply.

##### **2. PARENTAL CONSENT FORM** (enclosed)

- Both parents must sign this document except in the case of death, where this fact must be documented with a certificate or affidavit.
- In the case of divorce, legal guardianship must be documented.
- Both natural parents must sign the parental consent form if either one has visitation rights. Please submit a photocopy of documentation if either of these conditions apply.
- Please refer to the enclosed Parental Consent Form Fact Sheet for further inquiries.

##### **3. PHYSICAL EXAMINATION FOR FOREIGNER FORM** (enclosed)

- This form is required both by the Ministry of Education and local authorities in China to issue your residence permit and to allow you to attend school.
- This form must be completed in full as indicated by a medical physician at a hospital or public clinic.
- All test results must be listed and attached to this form, especially the results of an HIV and Tuberculosis test.
- You must also be vaccinated against Hepatitis B. Please attach your complete immunization record (showing the Hepatitis B vaccination) to this form.
- The hospital or clinic should affix its seal or stamp to the form.

4. **VISA APPLICATION** (enclosed)

5. **ONE (1) 2x2 PASSPORT-TYPE COLOR PHOTOGRAPH**

- Snapshots, digital prints or graduation photos are not acceptable.
- Write your name on the back of each photo
- Full frontal face view, do not wear a hat.
- Please affix the photo to the application form.

6. **VISA FEE**

- **Money Order** in the amount of **\$160.00** made payable to the Consulate of China.
- Personal checks will not be accepted.

7. **COPY OF YOUR ORIGINAL BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

8. **COPIES OF THE INFOPAGES OF BOTH YOUR PARENTS' PASSPORTS**

Please send all the listed items to the AFS-USA International Documents Section. We must receive them as soon as possible or **no later than July 12<sup>th</sup>**. We recommend that you send your items via some kind of traceable mail such as **Federal Express, UPS or DHL** to:

**AFS-USA, Inc,  
International Documents/ CHN YPNH08  
One Whitehall St., 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10004**

*Remember to keep the tracking number to your package in a safe place. Do not use regular mail!*

**NOTE:** Please do not call AFS to check if your documents were received. AFS will contact you in case something is missing or if documents are not received in time. You can also check with your carrier to see if the package was delivered.

**YOUR PASSPORT AND VISA WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU AT  
YOUR GATEWAY ORIENTATION.**

**Before sending your passport, remember to retain a copy for your records. Please check with your airline carrier for an alternative form of identification for domestic travel.**

AFS will apply for your visa. Visa requirements, issuance regulations and fees are established by government authorities and/ or consular officials, who reserve the right to make changes at any time. Please note that AFS cannot intercede to revoke decisions made by these authorities. Therefore AFS is not responsible for any changes in requirements or fees that occur after we have provided you with these instructions.

If you have questions regarding the instructions, please do not hesitate to contact your **Admissions Advisor at 800-237-4636.**



## **AFS PARENTAL CONSENT FORM (PCF) FACT SHEET**

Many consulates/ foreign governments require proof that the legal parents have given their permission for their minor child to travel abroad without them. This is done in order to avoid problems with runaways, international custody battles and other lawsuits. Generally, both natural parents must sign the PCF. Both signatures must be notarized by a Notary Public.

### **Students Over 18**

Students who will be over 18 one month before departure need not submit a PCF, except for countries where the legal age is higher (in Argentina, Japan and Chile, the legal age is 21).

### **Divorced Parents**

Both parents must sign if they were granted rights of visitation. If visitation rights were not granted and a photocopy of the divorce papers are submitted as proof of this fact, then only the custodial parent need sign the PCF. Copies of the parental consent form may be made to be signed and notarized by each custodial parent separately.

If the parent has full custody and the absent parent needs written permission to visit the child then the signature of the non-custodial parent is not required. Legal proof of this situation must be presented to the Consulate.

The divorce decree must be reviewed to assure that the visitation situation is clearly spelled out. If the non-custodial parent has not taken advantage of the visitation rights, and has no contact with the child, a statement from a lawyer must be presented (see AWOL section in this document).

### **Name Differences**

When parents use a different last name from the child, consulates often feel insecure about whether the signer is in fact the parent of the child. Name difference may occur because:

- Mother has remarried.
- Mother is using her maiden name.
- Child never took father's name.

- Child is using stepparent's name.
- etc.

The most common document to submit in such a case is a photocopy of the divorce decree but in some cases the child's birth certificate showing parents names, name change paper (copy of marriage license) or adoption papers will suffice. In selecting a document, remember that the purpose is to establish that the signer is the natural parent of the child.

### **Living in Different Cities**

If one parent does not live at home photocopy the Parental Consent Form and send a copy or copies to the absent parent. If AFS is obtaining the visa the form can be sent to AFS directly. If the student is obtaining the visa through the Consulate of Jurisdiction the form must accompany all other documents. It is acceptable for a parent to draw up a facsimile form. The facsimile must include a statement to the same effect as that on the AFS form, and it must be notarized.

### **One Parent Deceased**

The surviving parent must sign the PCF and attach a photocopy of the death certificate.

### **Both Parents Deceased**

The legal guardian(s) of the child must sign the PCF and attach proof of legal Guardianship. Copies of the death certificates may be required.

### **Stepparents**

Unless they are legal guardians of the child through adoption or custody agreement, Stepparents must not sign the PCF. Legal guardianship must be documented.

### **AWOL**

If one parent is missing or completely out of touch, a recent notarized affidavit from a lawyer should be submitted to the effect that the absent parent has been out of touch for a significant period of time. Even with this documentation, it is uncertain that the consulate will issue a visa in this situation.

If there are any questions about any of these issues please contact AFS at 1-800-237-4636.



## PARENTAL CONSENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we the parent(s) of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of student)

grant my/our permission for my/our \_\_\_\_\_  
(Son/daughter)

to travel between the USA and **CHINA** under the auspices of AFS Intercultural Programs.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name

Sworn before me on this day of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Notary Public

My commission expires on \_\_\_\_\_  
Date