



## High School Exchange Program Guide

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### Preamble:

The Whistler Waldorf School offers an exchange program that is designed to meet the needs of our students by providing an opportunity for students to explore new cultures and learning environments. Students at this age are looking for truth in the world, meaning in what they are studying and in their cultural identities. It is the first step on the path to becoming truly global citizens. Living abroad with another family and attending another school requires students to take on new responsibilities, engage with new cultures and develop new friendships.

### Timeline

It is very important to begin research early in order to ensure a successful placement and to have enough time to complete any visa and travel arrangements. Students in some countries require several months to prepare documentation for their travel to Canada. Students will need to have their acceptance determined by the visiting school before pursuing travel and other arrangements.

Students in grade 9 or 10 who are interested in an exchange in the subsequent school year should begin their research early in the year. We recommend that applications be submitted to the High School Faculty Chair no later than April 30th of the previous school year. Once approved by the High School Chair the application to the school of choice should be in by March 31st.

Students will be eligible for student exchange travel from September – Easter of their Grade 10 year.

### Necessary Steps

#### *Obtaining Permission*

Before an exchange can be pursued, a student must first secure permission from their Class Guardian and High School Chair. Students will have a good attendance record and good standing in all classes, and will have demonstrated independence and initiative in school in order to be granted permission to go on exchange. The final decision will be made by the High School. Parents may appeal the decision to the Pedagogical Administrator.

### *Research*

The High School has a copy of every request letter that is written by a foreign student looking for an exchange partner. Our students have access to these letters and are encouraged to read through them. Parents can access them through the Exchange Coordinator.

Students should look at finding a good match in both the student and family. Students are expected to correspond directly with students from schools of choice to find a good match. If there is a particular school that your child is interested in attending, they should contact that school directly by email to get more information and to determine if there are any students interested in going on exchange to Whistler. Although parents may also wish to correspond with potential exchange families, we recommend that the students take the initiative in choosing a placement.

There is a website that caters to Waldorf students looking for exchanges: [www.waldorfwide.com](http://www.waldorfwide.com)  
You can also research locations of Waldorf schools throughout the world at the Association of North American Waldorf Schools website: [http://www.whywaldorfworks.org/05\\_FindASchool/](http://www.whywaldorfworks.org/05_FindASchool/)

### *Submitting applications and supporting documents*

Different schools may have different requirements for acceptance, but most schools will require the following:

- a completed application form
- a copy of student's most recent report card
- a copy of student's birth certificate and/or passport.
- a letter of recommendation from a language teacher

It is necessary to inquire with each potential school as to their specific application process. Some schools may wish to conduct a telephone or web interview.

### **Other Relevant Information**

#### *Tuition*

We offer two ways for students to attend

- Direct Exchange

In a *Direct Exchange* between two students from two schools, families pay tuition for a full year at their home school and therefore do not pay tuition fees at the exchange school. The same process is reversed when the exchange partner visits our school.

- Homestay Visit

In an Exchange Visit there is no exchange partner. Tuition fee arrangements are on a case by case basis with the host school. Whistler Waldorf School does not offer partial tuition for our own students who are on exchange. Visiting students will pay normal tuition fees for the time of their stay.

### *Home Teacher Contact list*

Main Lesson Teachers

Math Teacher

English Teacher

Social Studies Teacher

French Teacher

Class Guardian

Advisor

### *Other costs*

- Travel
- Medical Insurance
- Fees: Some schools may have extra fees that are not covered by the exchange. This may be for such things as school trips, sports events, language tutoring, etc. It is important to ask each school about other potential fees and expenses
- Visa fees

### *Passport*

All students will require a passport to travel. Applications can be made in person at a local passport office.

### *Medical Insurance*

Students must ensure that they have adequate medical coverage while they are away. We recommend that families have a thorough understanding of their insurance policy before the student leaves.

### *Exchange Program and Course Credits*

Students participating in Exchange are encouraged to participate fully in the curriculum at their host school. The ideal is that these students would participate with no extra work required from WWS. However, on occasion it may be necessary that students will have work with them required for completion for WWS. WWS Teachers will communicate with students remotely to monitor progress and

address questions. Parents will be copied into this correspondence. Math and Chemistry are the main courses to be considered for completion while away. Students may require extra tutoring in these areas upon their return.

While away, students are required to complete a journal. Upon their return they will also give a presentation outlining their travels and experiences to the High School.

Every effort should be made to ensure the student is not traveling during core main lessons.

### *Suggested Lengths of High School Exchanges*

It is recommended that exchanges are not too short as cultural immersion does not occur in just a few weeks. Length of exchange is a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 4 months. Any stay that is shorter or longer requires special approval from the High School Faculty/Exchange Coordinator and the Pedagogical Administrator.

### *Exchange Requirements during your stay and upon return*

- Journal
- Write-up for Newsletter
- PowerPoint or written presentation

## **Types of Exchanges**

### *Direct Exchange*

In a direct exchange the students attend school and live together in one country and then the following term or the next year they go and stay in the other student's home. The homestay family includes the exchange student as part of their family and does not charge money for room and board.

### *Homestay Visit*

In a homestay visit, students stay with homestay families within the school community and pay a monthly fee for room and board. Students may also stay with friends or family in the area.

### *Custodian /guardianship*

Some countries require that each student has a notarized document stating who the guardian/custodian is for that student while they are staying in another country. This person would be the parent(s) in the homestay family.

### *Student Visa/Study Permit*

Families need to inquire at the local consulate of the exchange country to determine whether a Student Visa/Study Permit is required. Some countries do not require a study permit if students are visiting for a period of six months or less. If a study permit is required, you will need to allow adequate time in order to have it processed. There is usually a fee involved and it must be obtained outside of the country you are wishing to visit.