

Bloomington/Normal/Asahikawa

Exchange Program Agreement

Bloomington/Normal Sister City, Mayor of City of Bloomington, Mayor of Town of Normal, City of Bloomington Aldermen and Town of Normal Council members, officers, and representatives and the undersigned parents/guardian, students understand and agree to the terms and conditions as stated in the program agreement relating to the students participation in the Bloomington/Normal Sister city Senior High School exchange program.

- A. Admission to the program – The Bloomington/Normal Sister City committee considers many criteria in admitting a student to the program, including but not limited to, a Student’s Application Packet, academic background, high school transcript, age, education level, physical and mental health, references, essay, personal interview in front of committee members, observation in social settings with other applicants and Japanese exchange students.
- B. Placement - The selection committee and members of the committee in general will have sole discretion to determine who will be admitted to the program. One student will be selected as the ambassador and another student is selected as an alternate.
- C. Living expenses – The student will receive a monthly stipend from the Asahikawa Sister City Committee. It will equal about \$100 per month. However this is at the discretion of the host committee and can change at any time. There may be delay in getting the stipend at first so the student should have personal money with them. It is the student’s responsibility to pick up the stipend at the beginning of every month. A portion of the money is for bus travel to and from school. The rest is for daily expenses. The parents should be aware that other money may be required for the student and should be prepared to send extra, up to \$100 per month. Students are expected to reimburse the host family for any extraordinary expenses.
- D. Dissimilarities or differences – In addition to learning the language the student is expected to make every effort to adapt to the customs and life style in Asahikawa. There may be significant cultural, economic, lifestyle, educational system, criminal justice, civil liberties, custom, and value, differences between the USA and Japan. The student should learn to accept these differences.
- E. Diversity – The Committee expects the student to adjust to the family they are placed in. There is no PERFECT HOST FAMILY. Do not spend hours or money calling or complaining about the host. Learn and adapt. In case of conflicts, the student should consult with one or two local committee members.

F. The following rules must be followed.

1. The committee provides language and culture classes for the students who are selected. These classes generally begin right after the selections are made. It is IMPERATIVE that each student attends all classes and completes all assignments. While the committee understands that conflicts arise, it is the STUDENT'S responsibility to inform the instructor well in advance and to arrange make up classes and assignments that are missed.
2. Host Family – Students must obey the rules of the host family including curfew, household chores, dating, use of the home computer and phone privileges (including personal laptops and cell phones). Dialups can be very expensive or unavailable altogether and students may have to rely on regular mail. This will vary from host to host. Students are responsible for expenses incurred in internet dial ups and all long distance calls. Students may not have overnight guest in the host's home without the consent of the host family and under their supervision. You must let your family know where you will be at all times.
3. Academic and cultural Life – This is a cultural and academic program. Students must accept and obey the school policies of the Japanese High School they attend. It is the student's responsibility to get an English translation of these policies. Students should try to learn Japanese language and participate in cultural activities. If, for any reason the student is asked by the principal of his or her high school to not return to the high school, they will be brought back to Bloomington/Normal as soon as a ticket can be secured at the parent's or guardian's expenses. The Bloomington/Normal/Asahikawa Sister Cities committees do not guarantee the student will be placed in a class level corresponding with the grade level in the USA. There is no guarantee the student will participate in class trips or activities involving extra monetary payment, even if the student agrees to pay.
4. During good weather the student is expected to commute by bicycle or bus to and from school. School may be located far from the student's host home. You are expected to be a good ambassador at all times, making speeches, attending public events, and becoming involved in Japanese life. You are expected to remain in contact with the Bloomington/Normal Sister Cities Committee Chairman or your parents via e-mail or regular mail, on a monthly basis.
5. National and city laws – Students are under the authority of the laws of Japan and must obey all national, prefecture and city laws and regulations. Exchange students are not exempt from prosecution. Bloomington/Normal exchange students agree to hold blameless the Bloomington/Normal Sister city and Sister City International and all groups connected with the program for any and all consequences they may result from the student breaking the law of the land. Students who break the law can be dismissed from the program and returned to their US home at the expense of the parents or guardian.

6. Drugs – The use or possession of non-prescription drug is illegal. The students may use only over the counter drugs available in the country of those prescribed by their doctor or a doctor in the host country. Use of illegal drugs will result in an immediate return to the student's home at the expense of the parent or guardian following any adjudication of the offense by the legal authorities of the host country, Japan, including mandatory fines and or imprisonment. Any expenses for legal defense are the parent's or guardian's
7. Driving – You may not drive while in Japan. Since most people get a drivers license in Japan after they are 21, riding with adult driver is permitted.
8. Travel – Students may not hitchhike, or travel independently. They should travel with host family members or other committee members only. Students may not travel outside of Japan. The exceptions are made for the school trip. If the student's USA family comes for a visit they may travel with them, providing they have notified both Bloomington/Normal and Asahikawa Sister Cities Committees of their plans.
9. Life Changing Decisions – Students may not initiate any life changing decisions while participating in the program, such as pregnancy or marriage. Students are expected to refrain from sexual activity while on the exchange. Students can be dismissed from the program if they suffer from a life changing medical disorder like depression or an eating disorder. Students may not get tattoos or piercing while in Japan even with parental consent.
10. Family visit – Visits by the immediate family are discouraged by both committees until after the mid March. Extended family and friends must wait until the year is nearly complete.
11. Returning home – Students will return home sometime in May or June, ten months from the date of departure from B/N.

Participants and parents or guardians understand that each student's situation will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the host committee and the Bloomington/Normal committee.

ANY INFRACTION of the above rules and/or unacceptable behavior by the student may be grounds for dismissal from the Bloomington/Normal/Asahikawa Sr. High School exchange program. The Chairman and selection committee members will have the sole and final decision on the student's dismissal. The student will be immediately returned to the USA at the student's and parent's/guardian's expense. Any outstanding expenses incurred by the student will be reimbursed to the respective committees.

- G. Insurance – All students are required to have health insurance in effect for the duration of the program covering sickness and accidents to the standard established by the U.S. Department of State.

- H. Health care-Bloomington-Normal Sister City Committee will normally consult with the parents before authorizing any medical care for the student. However, a situation requiring immediate attention could conceivably occur. In such case, the participants consent and authorize Bloomington-Normal Sister City Committee or adult host family member to obtain, without obligation, and at their discretion, any necessary medical, dental, surgical, psychological, psychiatric, or hospital care, prescribed by a health care authority for the immediate, dental, surgical, psychological, psychiatric, or hospital care, prescribed by a health care authority for the immediate welfare of the student. The parents authorize the health care provider to release the student to the adult host family member and to release the health care records relating to the student to the Bloomington-Normal Sister City Committee.
- I. General release and harmless provisions – As a condition of the student’s participation in the Bloomington-Normal Sister City exchange program, the students agree to release and hold blameless both Sister City Committees for any damages, injuries, expense or loss of life resulting from acts of God, crimes of violence, act of war, or government actions.
- J. Indemnification – As a further condition of the students participation in the program, the families of the students agree to indemnify and hold both Sister Cities Committees, the cities and their representative harmless from any liability or expenses, including court costs, attorney fees resulting from any injury, loss or any other damage or expense caused by the student during his or her participation in the program.
- K. Ratification of contract – In the event that the student is under age 18 at the time of the execution of this agreement, and the student attains 18 years of age while participating in the exchange program, the student agrees to continue participation in the program after he or she becomes 18 and is held accountable for all terms in this agreement.
- L. Modification – The agreement cannot be modified except by a writing that is executed by all parties here to.
- M. Severability - In any event any clause, sentence, term or provision of this agreement shall be held by any court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal, invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining portions of this agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

Signatures: We have read and fully understand the program materials and agree to adhere to the Sister City rules for students and the Sister City program agreement and consent agreements.

Sister City Representative

Student, full name

Title and date

Signature and date

Mother/guardian, full name

Father/guardian, full name