

# Culver City Sister City Committee

## Student Exchange Guidelines/Rules and Information

### Introduction

The Culver City Sister City Committee Inc. (CCSCC) was formed in 1962 to link Culver City to Sister Cities International which fosters international and intercultural understanding through cultural exchanges. Our international parent organization, Sister Cities International, has a lot of background information related to student exchanges on their website <http://www.sister-cities.org/>

CCSCC is engaged in a number of adult and student exchanges with our sister cities in Uruapan, Mexico (1964; Kaizuka, Japan (1965); Iksan City, South Korea (1983) and Lethbridge, Canada (1989).

### Student Exchange Overview

CCSCC has successfully engaged in student exchanges with students from Kaizuka and Iksan City for a number of years. Those eligible to apply for the Iksan City, South Korea traveling programs are 8th through 10th graders at the time the application is submitted. Those eligible to apply for the Kaizuka, Japan traveling programs are students in the 8th to 11th graders at the time the application is submitted. The success of an exchange program depends upon the commitment and motivation of the student and parent(s)/guardians. For an effective exchange, all family members must enthusiastically accept the exchange student in their home. CCSCC has developed a number of policies that must be followed by a student participating in an exchange program. Failure of a student to adhere to these policies may result in termination of the student's participation.

### Student Eligibility

1. Character: Should be well behaved, have excellent citizenship and be willing to follow the directions of chaperones; eager to learn about another culture, tolerant of differences and enjoy meeting and sharing experiences with others; willing to participate in all activities both during the exchange abroad and when hosting in Culver City. Students need to be flexible in engaging in new experiences; be polite, courteous and eager to represent a positive image of America.
2. Must maintain a "C" average or better in academic grades.
3. Cannot have any unsatisfactory or "needs improvement" grades on their report card in work habits and/or citizenship.
4. Three confidential references from current teachers, instructors, coaches and a personal reference from a long-time acquaintance must be mailed or emailed to the Culver City Sister City Committee at PO Box 1072, Culver City, CA 90232 or sent to [info@culvercitysistercity.org](mailto:info@culvercitysistercity.org) and **will not be accepted if attached to the application.**

5. The complete application must be turned in by the posted deadline. Late applications will not be considered.
6. Applicants must not have medical needs that require attention beyond the expertise of the chaperones or host families.

## **Selection Process**

The selection process is discretionary with the CCSCC. If more students apply and qualify, the following criteria will be used to select the number of students invited by the host country to participate in the exchange.

1. Students and parents will be requested to complete an application and other related forms in a timely manner accessed from the CCSCC website. <http://www.culvercitysistercitycommittee.org/>
2. A waiting list will be kept if more students apply and qualify than openings.
3. Students will be given priority if their family has hosted a Sister City student during a previous official exchange or other CCSCC international program or if the family has participated in the exchange activities.
4. Older students may be given priority.
5. Students who attend Culver City schools, live in Culver City or whose parents work in Culver City and reside within 5 miles of Culver City, will be given priority.
6. Confidential teacher recommendations, grade point averages, and citizenship/work habit grades will be considered in establishing priority.
7. Student essays will weigh heavily in the decision-making process.
8. CCSCC reserves the right to communicate with the school in order to verify information about student behavior.
9. CCSCC has the right to conduct student/family interviews to determine the best qualified participants.
10. Students who are selected will be required to attend all pre-trip and pre-host meetings.
11. Background checks will be administered free of charge. Final selections are contingent upon parents and anyone over the age of 18 living in the household during the hosting period of clearing a background check.
12. Proof of Covid vaccinations (2) are required to participate.

## **Parent Responsibility**

The nature of CCSCC student exchange programs require Culver City host parent/guardians to:

1. Assume temporary responsibility for the exchange student in their home for the entire duration of the hosting period
2. Ensure that at least one parent/guardian is always available during the exchange period
3. The host family must provide or arrange transportation for the exchange student to all CCSCC exchange events
4. Ensure that the host family in the city of the exchange will have adequate authority to exercise responsibility of their child

## Medical Treatment

Host families agree to treat the exchange student as their own child for the purposes of seeking any required medical treatment. Families of students traveling to sister cities are required to have medical insurance that covers medical care for their child. **Prior to any medical/dental care, the host family MUST contact/inform the chaperone of record on the exchange. The chaperone has a copy of the Medical Authorization Form in their possession.** The costs of medical treatment are paid either by the student or host family at the time of the treatment. Should a student not be able to pay, the student's family is obligated to reimburse the host family any and all outstanding medical costs, and then recover from their own insurance carrier if possible.

## General Information

1. Parents must pay for round-trip airfare, host family gifts, passport (must be valid for at least six months post travel time), and spending money. Parents may want to consider buying travel insurance.
2. Students are expected to attend all pre-trip activities. Failure to do so can result in students not being able to participate in the exchange.
3. If students display inappropriate or unacceptable behavior during the pre-trip activities, CCSCC can and may withdraw the students from participating. The parents will be responsible for any costs already incurred by CCSCC. CCSCC will not reimburse any monies spent by the family.
4. Once in the host city, students will be expected to treat their host families, chaperones and all other students and adults with courtesy and respect and to display the highest standards of good conduct. \*Failure to do so may result in the student being sent home, un-chaperoned, with any additional expenses to be incurred by the parents.
5. While in the host city, students will be expected to dress in a manner in keeping with a young representative of Culver City and the United States. Clothing should be neat, clean, modest and presentable as well as void of any impolite jargon/slogan or symbols.
6. It is ideal, but not mandatory that families agree to reciprocate and host Sister City students that visit Culver City.
7. Students will keep a Journal of activities, write a follow-up essay and prepare a presentation to City Council.
8. Electronics (anything with an on/off switch) may be brought for use during the flight to and from the sister cities (depending on the airline regulations). Cell phones may be used if that is the primary camera, but no other electronics may be used during touring and on bus trips. Any loss of electronics is the sole responsibility of the student and his/her family. Chaperones have the discretion to collect said items during daytime hours.
9. Exchanges are considered two-year commitments. Each participant of this exchange shall be a member of the Culver City Sister City Committee during both years.
10. Parents will be required to complete and sign all forms supplied for the benefit of the CCSCC.
11. Partial Scholarship consideration given to students with financial need. Parents should contact chairperson to discuss.

### **\*Termination of Student Participation**

Should the student or parents fail to comply with any of the above-stated policies, CCSCC reserves the right to terminate the student exchange and may also require the student or the student's parents or guardians to pay additional costs associated with the student's return.

### **Waiver**

CCSCC assumes no legal responsibility for the actions, debts, expenses, safety, or health of the students participating in the exchange beyond the normal precautions that will be taken. (*See Release of Liability form*).