



The Waldorf School of Garden City

Student Exchange Program Information for Students Living Outside the U.S.

Student Exchange Coordinator

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The Waldorf School of Garden City has had a successful student exchange program for French-, German-, and Spanish-speaking students for several decades. **In the Student Exchange Program, you will find a compatible Waldorf School of Garden City (WSGC) student, and both will attend each other's school together for a minimum of six weeks in each location. However, we recommend a two- to three-month exchange.**

How to Apply to the Student Exchange Program

Complete the student exchange on-line application. A completed application package should include:

- Application
- Letter of introduction (in English), including your interests and why you want to do an exchange
- Photograph of yourself, your family, home, city, and any other photos you would like to add
- Copy of academic record for the past year

Once all the paperwork is received, the application will be reviewed by the Student Exchange Coordinator. If accepted, the foreign language teachers will show your application to several WSGC students interested in doing an exchange. Contact is then established between you and a WSGC student. Either family may initiate this contact and together both families determine if they are compatible partners.

Note that once you and your family have determined your exchange partner, the WSGC must have a copy of your immunization records. We cannot proceed any further without those documents being submitted to the Student Exchange Coordinator. Please use the following link as a reference: <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2370.pdf>.

Once your immunization records are reviewed, your family and the exchange family will propose the dates of the exchange. For reference, a WSGC student goes on an exchange in their 10th grade year at the end of the second semester.

A student visa is required to attend school in the U.S. The WSGC will issue you an I-20 after the dates of the exchange have been approved. This document will be emailed to you. You are then responsible for making an appointment with the nearest US embassy or consulate to apply for your F-1 Visa. Keep in mind that there may be long waiting periods for appointments or to acquire your visa. Plan accordingly!

You should consider the following topics when determining a compatible exchange partner:

- *Cultural Norms:* Since the degree of student autonomy varies from country to country, discuss standards/expectations with exchange family.
- *Money:* Discuss in detail extra expenses associated with family vacations while hosting an exchange student or while your child is abroad.
- *Food:* Allergies, dietary restrictions (vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free), and school cafeteria account, if applicable.
- *Health:* Medications (over the counter, homeopathic), student health insurance, New York State physical examination requirement, other health needs.
- *Transportation:*
 - a) To and from school
 - b) Recreational: Moving around the city/town with and without the family
- *Travel arrangements:* Airport pick-up and drop-off
- *School trips during the exchange (if applicable):* Supplies & money needed
- *Academic Expectations:* Exchange students are expected to complete all classwork to the best of their ability and be active participants in class.
- *School rules:* See below for link to WSGC handbook.
- *Family rules:* Chores, curfews, religious practices, etc.

Please don't book a flight until you have obtained your student visa. Once you have the visa and have made flight arrangements, inform the Student Exchange Coordinator.

Requirements:

- a. **Guardianship Form**: You must bring this *notarized* document with you. Upon arrival in the U.S. your host family will sign and notarize their part of the form.
- b. **Student health insurance**: Prior to your arrival in the United States, you must show proof of the student health insurance policy that you have purchased. The insurance policy must cover your child for the duration of your stay in the United States.
- c. **Health**: You must visit a New York State physician when you arrive in the U.S. Your host family will schedule the appointment for you. Please note that a physical examination will cost approximately \$100-\$150 dollars. You are responsible for providing the money needed to cover that cost.
- d. **Parent Medical Form**: must be completed by your parent and brought with you.

- e. Please read school policies in the [WSGC handbook](#). Students must adhere to the school rules as outlined in the handbook, including but not limited to:
- No smoking, alcohol, or drugs on school grounds
 - No skipping classes or leaving school grounds without permission
 - No chewing gum or eating in class, using foul language, or defacing school property
 - No cell phone usage

Note: Visiting students should also be aware that United States' law might be more restrictive than that of the home country. In the United States the legal age for smoking and alcohol consumption is 21. Students are expected to always abide by these laws.

Financial Responsibilities

- Tuition: No tuition is required if the exchange is roughly the same length of time in both locales.
- Expenses: Your child's airfare and travel expenses are your family's responsibility. You will also need to provide your child with spending money for personal expenses while abroad. We recommend \$500-\$1,000 (debit card, credit card, Apple pay, etc.).

List of Expenses to Consider

- Airfare
- Incidentals/Personal expenses
- School lunch account
- Pre-paid phone card
- Student health insurance
- Physical exam
- Visa and I-901 fee
- Vacations of host family, if applicable

Travel Documents and Health Insurance

- Students must have a valid passport and a student visa.
- You must purchase international health insurance that covers expenses in the case of illness and other emergencies.

Student Life

Each grade has two class advisors, who will assist you in understanding the daily schedule and any issues regarding the workload or class dynamics. All students are expected to work to their capacity. While there is some leniency for language difficulties, it must be understood that this is not a holiday. If you are having academic difficulties at any time, you should seek assistance from the teacher of the subject or from the class advisors.

If you are not completing satisfactory work or are repeatedly late with homework assignments, you will receive a warning. Your parents and the host parents will be informed. Misbehavior at school or at the host home, failure to follow school rules, or unsatisfactory academic performance may result in you being sent home at your families' expense.

Parent Expectations

- Accept the role and responsibility of parenting the student for the duration of the visit.
- Provide a clean bedroom (student must be notified if the room will be shared).
- Provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily.
- Include your exchange student in family outings, trips, and vacations. Discuss costs and payments for these trips with the exchange student's family.
- Always know the exchange student's whereabouts.

Termination Policy

If an exchange student returns home voluntarily or is sent home at The Waldorf School of Garden City's behest, WSGC is not responsible for any associated costs, including any costs of the trip home.

