



2024

OBIHIRO, JAPAN

**STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM
APPLICATION**



2024 Sister City Student Exchange Program Application

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Since 1968 Seward has had a Sister City relationship with Obihiro Japan. Obihiro is located on the northernmost island of Japan, called Hokkaido. Seward and Obihiro have exchanged students since 1973. Students are flown to Tokyo then on to the Obihiro Airport where they meet with their homestay hosts. They stay in homes of Japanese citizens in the community. They share stories, learn their cultural ways, experience the food culture, and other activities. Below is a list of information and requirements:

Exact dates TBA by end of April. Typically, the exchange is during the timeframe of mid-July to mid-August and is approximately 5-7 days not including travel days.

- All Sophomores, Juniors and graduating Seniors in Spring of 2024 who are attending Seward High School and Connections(homeschool) in the Seward/Moose Pass area are eligible to apply as an exchange student and participate in the local exchange program activities.
- Up to **four** students may be selected.
- Applicants will be interviewed by the Sister City Coordinator or City Clerk Staff, and students will be notified of their acceptance within two weeks of the interviews.
- The Seward's Sister City Coordinator will travel with the students and participate with the students and their planned activities. The coordinator will stay at a hotel.
- The Sister City Coordinator is available to answer any questions or concerns about the program: Jodi Kurtz, Deputy City Clerk jkurtz@cityofseward.net or (907) 224-4046.
- After selection is made, the Sister City Coordinator will hold a mandatory student/parent orientation to start planning for this exciting adventure.
- Financial responsibilities of Parents/Guardians and Student
 - Student obtains a passport prior to travel to Japan.
 - The Sister City Coordinator is responsible for coordinating travel. Travel will be discussed in orientation after the selections have been made.
 - Airline tickets will be purchased by the city, to ensure the entire group travels together. The estimated cost of the airfare is \$2400. The actual cost will need to be reimbursed to the city prior to travel.
 - It is a kind gesture to provide small gifts to the host family from the student to show appreciation for hosting them. Simple, inexpensive and something that normally wouldn't be available in Japan. This will be discussed in the parent/student orientation meeting.
 - Funds for spending money for personal expenses. Note – most meals are provided by the host family.
- As this is an exchange program, the Seward family will be asked to host one of the Japanese exchange students when they travel to Seward. This is not a requirement to participate in the program.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE SISTER CITY COORDINATOR IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

The deadline for applying will be Monday, April 1, 2024, by 5pm

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STUDENT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Completed Application(attached)
2. Signed Student Agreement & Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement & Consent
3. Two letters of reference: one from a teacher, and one from an adult (not a family member)

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I am interested in applying for the student exchange program between Seward, Alaska and Obihiro, Japan. I understand that the exact dates of the exchange of both Japanese and Seward Exchange students will not be known until approximately April 2024, and that the general timeframe for the program is mid-July through mid-August. I will be available for participation in the program during this timeframe.

If selected as an exchange student, I agree to:

Pre-Trip Requirements:

- Attend the mandatory orientation session, and failure to attend could result in loss of my position as an exchange student.
- Provide Insurance Waiver Signature and copy of Insurance Cards
- Fill out a profile sheet with information about yourself to help decide the best homestay fit. The form will include medical information, allergies, diet restrictions and other preferences. This profile sheet will be issued later after selections have been finalized.

Post Trip Requirements:

- Provide the Sister City Coordinator with at least five (5) photographs of my experiences in Japan or the Seward area, labeled with names and events, within two weeks of my return.
- Present at least one (1) oral report after my return at the time and place to be announced.
- Write a joint article with the other exchange students for publication within one month of my return.
- Participate in future activities to promote the exchange program.

Student's Printed Name	Signature	Date

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGMENT & CONSENT

I am the parents/guardians, and I am aware that my child has applied for the 2024 student exchange program with Obihiro, Japan. I acknowledge that I/we acknowledge that I/we are responsible for reimbursement of my student's airfare to the City of Seward prior to the trip.

I understand that the exact dates of the exchange of both Japanese and Seward Exchange students will not be known until approximately April 2024, and that the general timeframe for the program is mid-July through mid-August. I also agree to assist the Sister City Coordinator in their efforts to chaperone activities and homestays.

Parent/Guardian's Printed Name	Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian's Printed Name	Signature	Date



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City of Seward, City Clerk's Office
 PO Box 167, Seward, AK 99664 907-224-4046 email: clerk@cityofseward.net

Name:			
Grade Level for Spring 2024:			
Mailing address:			
Physical Address:			
Phone Number:		2 nd Phone Number:	
Email Address:			
1 st Parent/Guardian Name:		Phone Number:	
2 nd Parent/Guardian Name:		Phone Number:	
Special Interests:			
Extracurricular Activities:			
Honors & Awards Received:			
Community Activity Involvement:			
Previous Exchange Programs:			

Attach a short narrative (250-500 words, typed, double spaced) explaining why you would like to participate in the program. Tell us something about yourself and why you feel that you should be selected to represent your community as an exchange student. Explain how you would promote Seward, Alaska to the Japanese people.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Application Received On:		Is Application Complete:	Yes	No
Interview Scheduled On:		Review Score:		
Applicant Selected?	Yes	No	Information Sheet Received on:	
Airline Ticket Cost to be reimbursed:		Date Reimbursement Payment Completed:		
Post Trip Photos Received:		Post Report Received:		