



**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE**

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING  
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02445

PHONE: 617-730-2432  
FAX: 617-264-6451

ANDREW BOTT  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

NICOLE GITENS  
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT FOR  
TEACHING AND LEARNING

International Field Trip Application  
Brookline High School Costa Rica Trip  
February 15-24, 2018

For review and consideration by the  
Brookline School Committee

| Approval Route:     | Approved  | Denied | *Returned |
|---------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Copies to:          |           |        |           |
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| SUPERINTENDENT      | _____     | _____  | _____     |
| SCHOOL COMMITTEE    | _____     | _____  | _____     |
| MEETING DATE        | _____     | _____  | _____     |
| *REASON RETURNED:   | _____     |        |           |

# Brookline High School Costa Rica Trip

2018

## Application to the School Committee

Submitted: September 2017

### TRIP LOGISTICS:

1. Name of Field Trip: **Brookline High School Costa Rica Trip**
2. Educators Requesting Field Trip Approval: **Elizabeth Gorman and Kristina Tobey, BHS Teachers**
3. School: **Brookline High School**
4. Have you reviewed the *School Committee Policy I 3 a. for School Sponsored Field Trips*? **Yes**
5. Have you reviewed the document "*Administrative Procedures for School Sponsored Field Trips*"? **Yes**
6. What is your destination? **Destinations in Costa Rica include:**
  - **Centro Panamericano de Idiomas (CPI): Spanish language and culture school**  
<http://www.cpi-edu.com/campus-flamingo>
  - **La Paz Community School** <http://www.lapazschool.org/>

### **Other visits:**

- **Excursions in and around Guanacaste, Costa Rica**

### **6. a How was the school selected?**

Kristina lived in Costa Rica and worked in the office as a student coordinator at CPI for 2 years, helping to pilot the Flamingo Beach location in Guanacaste. Kristina loves this place and wants to share it with students, cultivating their love for Spanish language and Costa Rican culture. CPI is a top-notch language school with 26 years of experience providing students from around the world with a high-quality study-abroad experience. The well-trained, university-educated teachers are dedicated and truly care about creating a rich linguistic and cultural experience for students. The student to teacher ratio is 4:1, making the school an ideal choice for intensive language study. The school's curriculum is guided by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

(ACTFL) proficiency standards, which are the same standards that Brookline uses to measure student proficiency in language learning. Additionally, the administrators and staff have years of experience working with students from around the world, most frequently from North America, and are highly skilled.

Intrigued by the intentionality and success of the La Paz school, Abby Erdmann (a retired BHS SWS English teacher) spent a year volunteering at the school. She felt that the two schools had much to learn from one another, and so encouraged Keira Flynn-Carson and Liz Gorman to visit to explore possibilities of partnership. Keira and Liz visited in June 2017, and were deeply impressed by many aspects of the school.

Liz and Kristina are now partnering to launch this trip. It's possible that some of the La Paz students will visit BHS in the future, but we are not at that stage of planning this year, and would make that a separate proposal.

Here is the mission statement for the La Paz school:

*"Our mission is to educate the culturally diverse youth of Guanacaste through bilingual experiential learning and enrichment that integrates the local community and ecology, while preparing students to become thoughtful, creative, and active stewards of their environment and future leaders of the world. "*

We were particularly impressed by

- the success of the dual-language immersion program and its impact on building cross-cultural understanding,
- the high level of student engagement and the centrality of relevant, experiential, project based learning directed at understanding and becoming caring, responsible citizens.
- the strong sense of community present on campus.

Additionally, CPI and La Paz, which are just over a mile from of one another, are set along beautiful coastlines near some of the world's most diverse forests in terms of wildlife and plant species. Costa Rica is an extremely popular tourism destination in part for these reasons. It is also a peaceful, safe country that has a growing economy, and has made a strong commitment to provide social services and protect its environment, in a region where few other places have managed to do the same. As such it provides an interesting model for students.

7. What is the date and time you are leaving school? **Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018 2:45 PM**
8. What is the date and time you are returning to school? **Saturday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018**
9. Do the dates of the trip conflict with any religious holidays or observances? **No.**
10. How many days will students miss from school? **2 days**

10. b. How will students catch up with a missed day of school?

**Students will talk to their teachers for each class before departing and will be responsible for any missed work for the two days they will miss.**

11. How are students being transported (school bus, chartered bus, plane, rail, etc)?

1. Boston – Liberia (Costa Rica), airline to be determined
2. Transportation from Liberia airport to Playa Flamingo: Charter Bus/ Minibus (Contracted by CPI)
3. Excursions and local transport- mini-bus chartered by CPI
4. Transportation to the airport in Liberia: Charter Bus (Contracted by CPI)
  
5. Liberia (Costa Rica) - Boston (plane)

12. How many students will be participating in the field trip? **20 students**

13. What members of the student body are eligible for the trip? **Juniors and Seniors in Spanish 2 or above who are currently enrolled in Spanish at BHS.**

14. How are students selected to participate in this field trip? **Students will be selected for the trip based on the application and interview process. Selection criteria are:**

- Successful completion of one year or more of Spanish
- Good character and citizenship, as defined by the deans and their designees
- Good Academic Record, as reflected through study habits, participation, desire and initiative to learn.
- Interest in learning Spanish and Costan Rican culture
- Ability to serve as an ambassador from Brookline and the United States
- Sensitivity to other people and cultures
- Successful completion of the application, including an essay that outlines understanding of program, expectations, and a desire to participate in cultural activities.
- Students will need to maintain good attendance and homework completion throughout the school year.
- Students need to demonstrate ability to handle stress and adapt to changing situations.

If there are more highly qualified students than spaces available, students will be selected by lottery.

15. Where will students be staying?

Students will be staying with Costa Rican host families in one of the following communities, Potrero, Brasilito, Huacas, or Lajas, arranged by CPI. The school has carefully selected the families and has worked with them for years. Two students will stay per family. All of the homes are near one another, within a 12 minute walking distance from a common meeting point. The chaperones will also be in a host family, within the same distance.

16. What are the names and cell phone numbers of the primary staff chaperones on the trip?

**Liz Gorman, BHS Spanish Teacher (617-922-6073)**

**Kristina Tobey, BHS Spanish Teacher (857-719-4134)**

**While in Costa Rica, the teacher-chaperones will obtain international cell phone plans.**

17. Other than those listed in #16 above, what are the names and roles (teacher, parent, etc) of other adult chaperones who will be on the trip?

In addition to the chaperones from BHS, the host school will provide us with additional chaperones on excursions.

**EDUCATIONAL RELEVANCE:**

18. What is the purpose of the trip and how does it relate to Brookline's Learning Expectations (K-8) or BHS Course Syllabi?

Purpose of trip:

1. To develop greater Spanish fluency
2. To promote intercultural communication and develop adaptation skills in an immersion setting
3. To facilitate understanding of and exposure to another culture
4. To explore living in a rural Costa Rican community
5. To experience Costa Rican family life
6. To build relationships with students at the La Paz school who are also working to become global and local leaders

There are several main components to the trip, which work together to offer a powerful learning opportunity.

1) Intensive language study at Centro Panamericano (CPI) Students will attend language classes for 4 hrs / day in small groups based on proficiency levels. Teacher: student ratio 4:1.

2) La Paz school partnership - La Paz is a unique dual-language K-12 school with a mission that feels particularly relevant for our goal of developing global citizens. As a group we would like to learn about, visit, and discuss La Paz's model for building cross-cultural understanding and promoting peace. The partnership with La Paz offers one of the special and unique aspects of this trip is the opportunity to build authentic relationships with young people living in Costa Rica.

There are multiple important components to their program. Here are a few described. Each student on our trip will research some aspect of the school before arriving, and then try to observe and investigate more while at the school by shadowing students and asking questions.

- a) Dual language immersion - 50% of the students speak Spanish as a first language, and 50% are international students that speak English or other languages. Half of the classes are in English and half are in Spanish. The bilingual aspect of the curriculum is a priority. It is expected that students will graduate with the ability to read, write, and effectively communicate in at least Spanish and English.
  
- b) Theme based Curriculum - focused on 8 themes, which are very intentionally chosen to develop young people who will grow up to be prepared to care for the earth, care for others, work together and problem solve, build peace.
  
- c) Place-Based and Project Based Learning  
**Place-based education:** *“Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. **Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences**, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties to their community, enhances students’ appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens.”*
  
- d) Strong community building and strong community engagement

3) Homestay family - By living with a Costa Rican family, students have the opportunity to apply the language skills learned in the classroom as well as gain first-hand insight into the culture and daily rhythms of life in Costa Rica.

Host families are patient and extend themselves to help our students learn Spanish. Family units are diverse - young couples without children, couples with children (of all age groups), and older couples with grown children who are no longer at home.

4) Excursions and activities- Excursions are designed to be fun and educational, getting our students to appreciate the natural world of Guanacaste - its wildlife, forests, beaches. Costa Rica is also known for its adventure opportunities, which offer our young people personal challenge/ growth. Excursions and activities foster friendships and group bonding. Note that all adventure activities will be challenge by choice (participation is not mandatory), and require special explicit written permission from parents for each activity.

The Brookline High School Costa Rica Trip directly responds to the third goal of the Strategic Plan of the Public Schools of Brookline, which commits us to equipping students with the intellectual and social skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly complex and diverse global society. In accordance with strategy 3.1, we will “develop opportunities to enhance the global awareness of every student.” This trip will extend and enrich our BHS Spanish curriculum directly.

19. Describe activities planned before the trip to prepare students:

Students and chaperones will meet regularly during X blocks to prepare for the trip. There will be several parents meetings, and fundraising/ community events as well. These meetings will include the following topics.

- Students will select individual topics of interest to investigate while in Costa Rica, based on the themes and curriculum of the La Paz school. Before leaving, students will begin their research, and formulate questions for investigation.
- Spanish Language study
- Fundraising events and meetings to build group cohesion
- Student and parent meetings to review logistics and expectations, and to prepare students to be ambassadors of Brookline.

20. Describe activities planned after the trip for students to wrap-up/reflect:

- Formal Presentations for classes, parents, and the World Language Classes (slide/ PPT presentations, photo collages, personal narratives)
- Continued correspondence (in Spanish) with the La Paz students and host families
- Written evaluations

### **ACCESSIBILITY AND STUDENT SAFETY:**

21. To what extent does the field trip group reflect the diversity of the school population? What efforts will be undertaken to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the participants in this field trip reflect the diversity of the school population?

The teachers-chaperons will make every effort to attract a diverse group of students to participate in this study-abroad trip. This trip will be open to all 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students of Spanish at BHS. The exchange will be widely advertised in class by teachers of Spanish, as well as through programs such as Steps to Success, METCO and African-American/Latino Scholars. In announcing the trip, the teachers will be sure that students know about available scholarships (see #28) so that they understand that the cost of the trip should not stop them from applying to participate. Once the School Committee has approved the trip, the teachers will make a concerted effort to encourage participation from a broad spectrum of BHS students so that the group reflects the

makeup of the larger student body. They will make every effort to accommodate any special needs that students may have.

22. What measures are planned to ensure student safety on the trip, including chaperone coverage, student behavior contracts, etc.

Two BHS teachers from the World Language Department will be chaperoning the trip. Both have experience with international travel and know the students well. Liz has led BHS international trips before (Mexico 4x, China exchange for a semester (2001), and Spain (2017.) Kristina lived in the community, and worked at the school we will attend, supporting international students. These chaperones will be available to the students 24-hours a day.

The teachers/chaperones will meet with parents and students during the planning portion of the trip to outline their expectations for appropriate behavior, and all students who participate will sign contracts pledging to behave appropriately.

CPI takes student safety very seriously, and has a very high standard for host family oversight as well as partners for the excursions. They will provide BHS students and the host families with a thorough safety orientation, and require that students sign an additional safety contract (attached.)

23. What is the name and location of the medical facility closest to your destination?

**Beachside Clinic Huacas (nearest clinic, 20 minutes car distance),** 200 Meters Oeste de Cruz Brasilito, Camino Matapalo, Huacas, Costa Rica Phone: 2653-9911

**Hospital San Rafael Arcangel (1 hour away, car distance),** 100 East 25 South of Escuela Ascención Esquivel, Street 3, Liberia, Costa Rica Phone: 2666-1717

24. Will students be swimming? (please note: if swimming is planned, parents must give explicit written permission for their child to swim; students who do not have this express written permission will not be allowed to swim)

Students with explicit written permission from their parents will have the opportunity to swim in the small pool at the school as well as in the ocean. Students will only be allowed to swim at designated times in clearly designated areas, after reviewing clear and cautious water safety guidelines. We would like to offer a surf lesson as part of an afternoon excursion.

25. If traveling outside of the United States, please attach the appropriate Department of State Advisory Review and Notification and a copy of Consular statement.



***There are not travel warnings for Costa Rica from U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE Bureau of Consular Affairs. The State Department website will be regularly checked as we plan for the trip. Here is the link to the full report:***

<https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/costa-rica.html>

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

**Brookline High School**

Agnès Albérola, World Language Curriculum Coordinator

617.713.5094

agnes\_alberola@brookline.k12.ma.us

**Centro Panamericano (CPI)**

Jonle Sedar

jonle\_sedar@cpi-edu.com

506-2265-6306

Centro Panamericano, Playa Flamingo

Frente a la Marina, 180, Provincia de Guanacaste, Playa Flamingo, 50308, Costa Rica

**U.S. Embassy**

|   |
|---|
| U.S. Embassy, San José                            |
| Calle 98, Via 104                                 |
| Pavas   |
| San José, Costa Rica                              |
| Telephone: +(506) 2519-2000                       |
| Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +(506) 2220-3127 |

Fax: +(506) 2220-2455

acssanjose@state.gov

**FUNDING:**

26. What is the total cost of the trip? Please detail the major components of the trip below and provide a total (*add/edit headings as necessary*).

Estimated costs follow. The trip's chaperones will make every effort possible to lower this cost as flights and other matters are considered.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| CPI: Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Lodging and 3 meals/ day with host family for 10 days</li><li>o Intensive Spanish classes and workshops</li><li>o Excursions (In country travel, admissions, guides)</li><li>o Administrative costs/ registration</li></ul> | \$ 1200                                |
| Travel (airfare and ground transport in Costa Rica)  | \$1350*<br>(hoping to bring this down) |
| Chaperone Expenses and other Administrative costs (phone calls, taxis, arrangements, emergency funds, guidebooks, faxes, postage, etc.)  | \$ 200                                 |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>  | <b>\$ 2750</b>                         |

27. How will the field trip be funded?

BHS students and their families will be responsible for the cost of the trip. Scholarships will be available.

28. What accommodations are made for students who cannot afford the expenses of this trip? Are partial and/or full scholarships available?

Yes, scholarships will be available for students in need. In addition, funds will be raised by the entire group through a variety of activities and CPI is offering scholarships that cover the tuition for two students.

29. If fundraisers are planned to help lower the cost of the trip for all students, please describe those plans here:

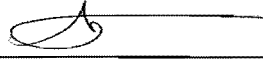
A committee of parents, students, and chaperones will be formed to assist in fundraising efforts. Fundraising activities may include: An international dinner night, a movie screening, a Latin-themed dance, raffles, yard and bake sales.

**Signatures: Check box to give support to this application.**

Educator Requesting Field Trip Approval:

Liz Gorman, Spanish Teacher, BHS  Date: September 10, 2017

Kristina Tobey, Spanish Teacher, BHS  Date: September 10, 2017

Agnès Albérola, WL Curriculum Coordinator,  Date: 9/25/17

Anthony Meyer, Headmaster, BHS  Date: 9/25/2017

~ **SAMPLE ITINERARY** ~

**Costa Rica Trip**

| <b>Date</b>           | <b>Time</b>    | <b>Activity</b>  |
|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| Thursday (02/15/2015) |                | Students and BHS teachers travel from Boston to Liberia, Costa Rica. CPI provides transportation from airport in Liberia to Playa Flamingo. Students meet their host families and get settled. |
| Friday (02/16)        | 10 am- 12pm    | Breakfast with Host families, Orientation, Costa Rican cooking class   |
|                       | 1-5            | Spanish classes at CPI   |
|                       | 6 PM           | Dinner and evening with host families  |
| Saturday (02/17)      |                | Full-Day excursion to Rincon de La Vieja Volcano National Park   |
|                       | 8-11:30        | Guided Nature Hike, followed by lunch  |
|                       | 1 PM           | Canopy Zip-Line Adventure at the Hacienda Guachipelin Adventure Center   |
| Sunday (02/18)        | AM             | El Viejo guided nature boat tour through estuary   |
|                       | PM             | Visit to the swimming beach, community-building activities   |
| Monday (02/19)        | 8am - 12 pm    | Volunteer at local NGO   |
|                       | 1:00 – 5:00pm  | Spanish classes at CPI   |
| Tuesday (02/20)       | 8 am – 3:30 pm | Full Day Visit to La Paz school<br>(Attend Community meeting, Advisories, student led tour, conversations with La Paz students in classes)   |
|                       | 4 PM           | afternoon and evening with host families   |
| Wednesday (02/21)     | 8 am – 11:30pm | Morning Excursion to Tamarindo<br>-optional surf lesson, visit beach<br>-shopping/ souvenirs/ visit cafes  |
|                       | 1-5            | Spanish classes at CPI   |
| Thursday (02/22)      | 8-12:00        | Visit La Paz school, shadow students<br>Share observations   |

|                 |             |   |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
|                 | 12:00- 3:00 | Lunch, Swimming at the beach, community-building activities |
|                 | 3-5         | Spanish class at CPI  |
| Friday (2/23)   | 8-11:45     | Catamaran cruise, followed by lunch                         |
|                 | 1-5         | Spanish classes at CPI, graduation ceremony                 |
| Saturday (2/24) |             | Return to Boston  |