



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS 02445

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

LINUS J. GUILLORY JR., PHD
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

JODI L. FORTUNA, ED.D
INTERIM DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Brookline High School
International Field Trip Application
Spanish Trip to Costa Rica
February 18-29, 2024

For review and consideration by the
Brookline School Committee

Approval Route:	Approved	Denied	*Returned
Copies to:			
TEACHING & LEARNING	<i>JLF</i>	_____	_____
SUPERINTENDENT	_____	_____	_____
SCHOOL COMMITTEE	_____	_____	_____
MEETING DATE	_____	_____	_____
*REASON RETURNED:	_____		

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**School Committee Proposal
February 2024**

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Statement of Purpose

**Spanish Trip to Costa Rica
February 18th - February 29th, 2024
Brookline High School**

The goal of this trip is closely aligned with goal 3 of the Brookline Schools' strategic plan- *To prepare students with the intellectual, interpersonal and reflective skills needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and diverse global society.*

This trip is a continuation of the relationship between Brookline High School and CPI Spanish School in Playa Flamingo, Costa Rica. Students and teachers from BHS have traveled to CPI during February vacations in 2020 & 2018 to great success.

Specifically, our trip will give students the opportunity to learn about Costa Rican culture and history, sustainable farming and eco-tourism systems while practicing Spanish through an average of 5 hours per day of small group (2-4 students per teacher) language classes at CPI Spanish School and a homestay experience with Costa Rican families. This trip will also give students a first-hand experience with Costa Rican family life through significant time spent with host families in the town of Playa Flamingo.

Trip highlights include:

- 40 total hours of small group language classes at CPI Spanish School
- 8 nights of homestay with Costa Rican families in Playa Flamingo
- 3 afternoons of volunteership in the local community
- A visit to one of Costa Rica's largest volcanos
- Visits and lessons on sustainable agriculture with a particular lens towards the coffee industry
- Salsa dance classes and cooking lessons
- Zip-lining in the jungle
- A catamaran boat cruise
- A river rafting excursion
- Optional Surf lessons

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APPLICATION FOR ALL OUT-OF-STATE, OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS

Before the trip is announced to students, please submit this form to the Superintendent of Schools:

(a) three (3) months in advance if the trip is within the United States, or

(b) six (6) months in advance if the trip is out-of-the country.

For clarity, all forms are to be word-processed, NOT handwritten. To maintain the formatting, delete the lines.

TRIP LOGISTICS:

1. Name of Field Trip: **BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL COSTA RICA**
2. Educator Requesting Field Trip Approval: **BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS**
Kevin Whitehead, Marta Fuertes-Rodriguez & Elena Cruz-Lopez
3. School: BROOKLINE HIGH SCHOOL Grade Level: **9-12**
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:

- **Playa Flamingo**
- **Monteverde**
- **Liberia**
- **Rincón de la vieja National Park**
- **Santa Elena**

7. What is the date and time you are leaving school? **2/18/2024**
8. What is the date and time you are returning to school? **2/29/2024**
9. Do the dates of the trip conflict with any religious holidays or observances?
 - **February 28th - 29th = Lent**
 - **We are committed to working with the students and families and with the Costa Rican school and host families to make any accommodations necessary for students observing Lent.**
10. How many days will students miss from school? **4 days. Monday-Thursday, 2/26-2/29**
11. How are students being transported (school bus, chartered bus, plane, rail, etc)?

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- Each family will be responsible for transporting their student to the airport (flight details will be provided in advance)
- Plane: Logan Airport, Boston to Liberia, Costa Rica
- Chartered Bus: All travel arrangements within Costa Rica
- Plane: Liberia Airport, Costa Rica to Boston Logan Airport

If students are traveling via bus, please complete the Requirements for Field Trip Transportation via Bus form.

12. How many students will be participating in the field trip? ~25
13. What members of the student body are eligible for the trip? All current Spanish students in grades 11 and 12. If more than 24 students apply and are selected, a lottery will be held.
14. How are students selected to participate in this field trip?
- Must be a current Junior or Senior
 - Currently enrolled in a BHS Spanish course
 - Good character and citizenship, as defined by the deans and their designees
 - Good academic record
 - Ability to serve as an ambassador of Brookline and the United States of America
 - Interest in the Spanish Language and a demonstrated sensitivity to other peoples and cultures
 - Successful completion of the application, including an essay that outlines understanding of program, expectations, and a desire to learn Spanish and Costa Rican culture/history
15. Where will students be staying?
- The majority of the trip (8 nights) will be spent in homestays arranged by CPI Spanish School in Playa Flamingo. The chaperones of previous BHS trips were extremely impressed with the professionalism, reliability and kindness shown by the homestay families towards our students.
 - 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.
 - Three nights (Friday, Saturday & Sunday, February 23-25th) will be spent in a hotel in Monteverde, Costa Rica
16. What are the names and cell phone numbers of the primary staff chaperones on the trip?
- Kevin Whitehead - BHS Spanish teacher [REDACTED]
 - Marta Fuertes Rodriguez - BHS Spanish teacher [REDACTED]
 - Elena Cruz-Lopez - BHS Spanish teacher ([REDACTED])
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?

NONE

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?

The purpose of the trip is to develop students' understanding of the different lifestyles and culture that exist in Costa Rica. This trip will expose students to the different ways of living of the host families, the variant of Spanish from Costa Rica, and the sustainability policies within the environment that make Costa Rica an example in these times of universal concerns related to global warming.

Beyond acquiring more linguistic skills with their immersion program structured in attending a language school (5 hours of small group Spanish classes) and living with host families, students will travel to the areas where they will learn about how this country is focusing efforts and attention in:

- **Working on the preservation of their ecological biodiversity and environment: Monteverde National Park**
- **Sustainability of local economic production, commerce and preservation of the land via a visit to a locally owned and operated coffee farm**
- **Community development: Voluntary work with schools in the area of Playa Flamingo working on composting, education and community garden**
- **Promotion of cultural elements: dance and cooking lessons, adventure sports**

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

- **Students will learn about Costa Rican culture and history before the trip**
- **We will do an introduction to manners and cultural etiquette in preparation for the homestays.**
- **Community building activities so that participants of the trip know each other better.**
- **Informational and logistical meetings with families to share information about the trip.**

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

- **Share experiences from the trip with other students in Spanish classes.**
- **Create slide presentations with pictures from the trip and videos made by students to show other Brookline high students and teachers in the World Language Department.**
- **Closure meeting with students sharing experiences, feedback to trip chaperones and organizers**

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?

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We will make every effort to make sure that the participants in this trip represent the diversity of students in Brookline High School. The trip will prioritize Junior and Senior Spanish students at BHS, who are currently taking Spanish, many of which identify as students of color and/or heritage Spanish speakers. We will also inform students who might be hesitant to apply for financial reasons of financial scholarships that students might receive. Junior and Senior students will have preference in this selection process, and acceptance on the trip will be need-blind and financial assistance will be decided by the PSB's Admin & Finance team. Once participants are chosen, Ms. Cruz López, Mr. Whitehead and Ms. Fuertes will work closely with each family to assist in the procurement of necessary travel documents. Similarly, we will advertise the travel opportunity through Steps to Success, METCO, ACE, SWS, ExCEL and the African American and Latino Scholars program.

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

Mr. Whitehead has taught Spanish at BHS for four years, has extensive experience traveling in Latin America, speaks fluent Spanish, and chaperoned a student trip to London at his former school, and to Italy with BHS in 2023. Ms. Cruz Lopez has taught at BHS for over 5 years and has led international trips to Perú and Spain with the Commonwealth School, where she previously worked before becoming a teacher in BHS. Ms. Fuertes, during her eleven years teaching at BHS, has led three trips to Spain in 2015, 2017 & 2019 and chaperoned the Mexico trip in 2016 and Italy in 2023, has traveled extensively throughout Latin America, and Spanish is her native language.

Students will be expected to abide by all US & Costa Rican laws, as well as all Brookline High School rules throughout the duration of the trip. Students will be informed of these expectations in advance, sign a behavioral contract, and will meet with a Dean of Students reviewing all rules and expectations of the trip as well as consequences for breaking said contract.

CPI (the language school) 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?

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

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designated times in clearly designated areas, after reviewing clear and cautious water safety guidelines. We would like to offer an optional 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 the Consular statement.

We have reviewed the State Department summaries for Costa Rica. We are aware of the location of the nearest embassy, in the event of an emergency. We will enroll in the State Department's STEP program to keep updated on any changes concerning travel to Costa Rica. The full country report prepared by the State Department is attached. There are currently no travel warnings for Costa Rica.

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/CostaRica.html>

FUNDING

26. What is the total cost of the trip? Please detail the major components of the trip below and provide a total.

Program in Cost (Homestays, schooling, excursions, activities)	\$2,600
Administrative fees (phone plans, first aid kit, emergency spending)	\$250
Flights	\$1,275
Mandatory Trip Insurance (\$16/day)	\$300
TOTAL:	\$4,425

27. How will the field trip be funded?

The trip will be funded by families of participating students. Traveling scholarships will be available. We will raise additional funds through fundraising, bake sales, etc. and all students will be expected to participate actively in all fundraising activities.

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

Partial and full scholarships will be available.

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

A number of fundraising opportunities will take place, including bake sales, t-shirt sales and other events (movie nights, latino dinners, etc). Families will have the option of contributing financially to a travel financial aid fund. We will also solicit corporate/private donations from local businesses and US companies. A committee of students and parents will be formed to assist in fundraising efforts. All students involved are expected to participate actively in all fundraising activities.

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SIGNATURES:

Educators Requesting Field Trip Approval

Elena Cruz-López _____ *Elena Cruz López* _____

~~*Marta*~~

Marta Fuertes _____

Kevin Whitehead

Kevin Whitehead _____

World Language Department Head:

Rachel Eio _____ *R Eio* _____

Anthony Meyer

Head of School:
Anthony Meyer _____

MINOR CONTRACT, HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM at CPI STUDENT AGREEMENT

I understand as a minor traveling without parent supervision and as an active participant of the Brookline High School PROGRAM at CPI that I am subject to program rules and requirements.

I understand that the purpose of this program is immersion and am fully committed to the goal of experiencing the Costa Rican way of life and learning the Spanish language. As a result, I understand the necessity to obey the following policies and rules:

Cultural Norms

I agree to make a concerted effort to adapt to and participate in the Costa Rican lifestyle, diet and daily schedule. Specifically:

- a. A 7:00 p.m. curfew for homestays, unless accompanied by a Brookline High School or CPI chaperone, or discussed explicitly ahead of time with the chaperones and families.
- b. No overnight guests under any circumstance.
- c. Students must dine with their host family.
- d. No smoking, drinking, drugs, public displays of affection or sexual activity* at any point.
- e. No getting tattoos or body piercing of any kind.
- f. No use of IPODs or similar electronic devices while walking on the streets or during organized cultural activities and excursions.
- g. Respect both host parents and the Brookline High School and CPI assigned chaperones. Respect includes, but is not limited to, following the rules (including those of the host family), utilizing appropriate language and polite behavior.
- h. While in the homestay, should the host family leave the house (go to the supermarket or a family activity) it is necessary to accompany them.
- i. Should difficulties or personality conflicts between students arise make a concerted effort to solve any problems with my chaperones and cooperate fully with them.

* It is against the law in Costa Rica for minors to smoke, partake in sexual relations and enter bars and clubs which serve alcohol (regardless of consumption).

Academic Expectations

I understand that Spanish language classes and cultural activities are an important element and agree to:

- a. Be punctual to Spanish class
- b. Speak only Spanish during class
- c. Fully participate in all classroom activities
- d. Complete Spanish classwork assignments
- e. During the cultural and tour activities be an active and listening participant
- f. Treat my teacher, fellow students and professional guides with respect

General safety

I agree to the following safety issues:

To not deviate from the itinerary and remain with my assigned group at all times

No driving in a motorized vehicle outside of the host family vehicle or planned CPI activities

No swimming in either a pool or the ocean without the presence of a chaperone; follow the logic of water safety.

Signed _____ Date _____

Student Name _____