

36th Battle Creek - Takasaki Exchange



INTERESTED IN TRAVELING TO JAPAN?

- **Host** a Japanese teacher in your home for 10 days. Hosting lets you share your day-to-day life with your new friend to experience our culture.
- **Travel** with a group of students as a chaperone from Battle Creek. Stay for a 10-day visit with a host family in Japan. Learn how a Japanese teacher lives day-to-day.
- Visit **Takasaki**, Japan, Battle Creek's Sister City since 1981. This is a unique opportunity to visit a mid-region Japanese City *off the tourist track*.
- **Represent** Battle Creek at a prestigious ceremony with Takasaki's Mayor.
- Enjoy the **world famous** Japanese **fireworks** show at the Takasaki Summer Festival.
- Sister City exchanges such as this one encourage broader understanding of the world beyond our borders.

TEACHER/CHAPERONE APPLICATION

To travel is to learn. Stepping outside of your routine, your community or your culture for even a short time can refresh, energize and educate you in a way few other experiences offer. Teachers and administrators at all grade levels are welcome to apply. The High School exchange offers a 10-day hosting of a Japanese teacher in your own home followed by a 10-day stay in the home of a Japanese teacher -- this is a **20-day commitment**. You will chaperone a carefully selected delegation of four high school students, who participate in their own exchanges. Orientation sessions scheduled as a group give the students and chaperones the chance to work as a team and to prepare for their shared experience. During the stay in Takasaki, chaperones have few logistical responsibilities, as all touring and travel arrangements within Japan are handed by Takasaki City staff, which include fluent English speakers. The BC Area International Relations Committee (program organizer) welcomes questions from any teacher or administrator who would like to know if the program is right for them.

Application Checklist

Due: SOON

Accepted Till Spot is Filled

- ___ Completed application form with attached question responses
- ___ Completed Teacher Profile with attached message to host
- ___ A recommendation letter from a direct supervisor

DECIDING TO APPLY: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHEN DOES THE EXCHANGE TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG IS IT?

This year's travel dates have been determined. Hosting dates for Takasaki delegates will be: July 21—July 31. Time in Japan: Aug 1—Aug 11. The schedule allows the delegation to attend the HUGE Takasaki Summer Festival, a day-long festival featuring ceremonies, a parade, and ending with a fireworks display.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

A general estimate is \$500 to cover passport fees, gifts, and hosting expenses. Chaperones stay with a host family. There are no lodging or food expenses while you are in Japan. The City of Takasaki arranges for transportation to and from Narita Airport (Tokyo) and various site seeing trips at no expense to the delegation. The Battle Creek Area International Relations Committee covers the cost of airfare for the chaperone. Expenses not covered include a passport fee (passport valid min. 6 months past return), pocket money for souvenirs and the two travel days (to and from Japan), inexpensive gifts for the host family as well as optional activities. While hosting, you will be asked to cover the food and inexpensive entertainment expenses for your guest - just as yours were covered in Japan. BCAIRC members work with the exchange participants to establish a flexible and affordable hosting schedule. There are a few required activities, including a Mayor's Dinner. For adults this may be the most affordable experience available. We are happy to answer any questions on this topic.

ARE THERE OTHER, NONFINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS?

Prior to leaving, chaperones must attend orientation sessions that will prepare them to be good guests in a Japanese home and to represent our community in the best manner. While in Japan, chaperones must participate in all exchange activities, and be responsible for the delegation on travel days. Travel is typically a direct flight to Tokyo's Narita airport from Detroit. Experience with international customs procedures is helpful but not required.

WILL MY JAPANESE FAMILY SPEAK ENGLISH?

Japanese is the primary language in Japan. Typically, teachers who participate in the exchange are English teachers. This does not necessarily mean that they have extensive experience with American English or native speaking, Midwestern accents. We have seen a range of English ability with adult guests from Takasaki, with the majority being very proficient. Most days in Japan, the delegation spends time together with representatives from the Takasaki International Relations Department. The department includes Japanese staff fluent in English, as well as a native English speaker who speaks Japanese. Group activities in Japan always include an adult who speaks English fluently. Battle Creek chaperones are asked to be available to assist with communication needs, especially emergencies, while in Takasaki.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES WHILE I AM TRAVELING?

You have responsibility for the group on travel days. Once in Takasaki, your primary responsibility is to assist Takasaki International Relations Department staff with communication issues and emergencies. You are responsible for helping students with homesickness and problem solving. You are also responsible for addressing any behavioral issues that may occur. The BCAIRC carefully selects students. We seek students with a cooperative nature, who are recommended to be good travel companions. As with all children, the delegation may need occasional reminders about minding their manners. Chaperones are expected to set an example by keeping an appreciative mind and open heart while in a foreign situation.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES WHILE HOSTING?

Just as your host covers your food and entertainment costs while in Japan, you are expected to do so when hosting here at home. Some group activities are supported by the BCAIRC. You will be actively involved in planning host and group activities prior to your guest arriving. More information is covered in the interview and orientation process.

Selection Process

Step One: Send complete application (see checklist on first page) to:

Jacob Schacht
Battle Creek Area International Relations Committee
c/o City Manager's Office
PO Box 1717, Battle Creek, MI 49014

Step Two: Applications are reviewed. Selected applicants are invited to interview with BCAIRC volunteers.

Step Three: Following interviews, a delegation is determined and notified by phone and by mail.

Step Four: Orientation meetings are scheduled with the entire delegation.

TEACHER/CHAPERONE APPLICATION FORM



For administrative use

Exchange year: _____

This application is for teachers or administrators interested in traveling to Takasaki, Japan and also hosting a Japanese guest in their home. Any teacher or administrator who works in Battle Creek area schools may apply; however, preference is given to applicants living in the City. A delegation of four students and one chaperone will be selected. After an application review, selected candidates will be invited for an interview before the final delegation is announced. Applications should be mailed to: Jacob Schacht c/o City Manager's Office, PO Box 1717, Battle Creek, MI 49014 or delivered to City Hall, Suite 206. DUE: *accepted till spot filled.*

Print your first, middle and last name as it appears on your passport: (Passport must be valid at least 6 months past return of travel)

Current teaching/administrative position:

School District:

Contact Information:

Personal email: _____

Work email: _____

Telephone (work): _____ (cell): _____

ON A SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER, BRIEFLY ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS: (PLEASE TYPE)

1. Write a description of yourself including such information as hobbies, interests, and work experience. What sparked your interest to apply for this exchange?
2. Please describe any foreign travel experience you have had.
3. What experience have you had supervising or traveling with students outside of the classroom situation? What challenges arose and how did you overcome them? What was rewarding?
4. What do you hope to learn from your homestay in Takasaki, Japan? What do you hope to learn from hosting a Japanese teacher?
5. How do you hope this trip will impact your teaching?
6. Please ask a direct supervisor (current or former) to write a letter recommending you to represent the City of Battle Creek as a student chaperone for this exchange. The letter may be brief but should state a rationale for the recommendation and include how the supervisor knows you. This letter may be attached or provided in a separate envelope.

TEACHER PROFILE

This information will be used to match you with your host. This form will then be given to your host family. Therefore, please write detailed responses (*use additional sheet of paper if needed*).

FOOD LIKES/DISLIKES: (Host families have asked us to provide specifics regarding food preferences)

Are you particular about what foods you eat? Yes Somewhat No

What non-dessert foods do you **dislike** and prefer not to eat? Beef Chicken Pork Vegetables
Cooked fish Raw fish Egg Dairy products Beans Shellfish

Specific foods: _____

Any foods you absolutely will not eat? Specific foods: _____

What non-dessert foods do you **like**? Beef Chicken Pork Vegetables
Cooked fish Raw fish Egg Dairy products Beans Shellfish

Do you normally eat breakfast? Yes No

To what extent do you agree with the following statements: (circle one)

I look forward to experiencing an entirely authentic Japanese breakfast.
Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree

I would be comforted to have some familiar American foods along with Japanese at breakfast .
Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree

If strongly agree, specify American breakfast foods: _____

OTHER:

Have you studied Japanese? Yes No If yes, for how long?

What interests you about Japanese culture? (Circle all that apply)

Language People History Religion Arts/Crafts Karaoke
Martial Arts Architecture Anime/Manga Fashion Food Other _____

Please elaborate on your interests in the space below:

Please write a short message to your host teacher.

TEACHER PROFILE

This information will be used to match you with your host. This form will then be given to your host family. Therefore please write detailed responses.

PLEASE ATTACHED A RECENT PHOTO OF YOURSELF AND A PHOTO WITH FAMILY/FRIENDS. These photos will be given to your host family. Important note: Please write the name(s) of people pictured, in order left to right, on the back of both photos AND on this page.

One recent photo of yourself

Photo Description (Left):

Photo Description (Below):

One photo with your family, friends, pets, etc.