



# Gresham-Ebetsu Sister City Association

## Host family guidelines

Dear Host Student Applicant and Family:

Thank you for your interest in hosting a high school exchange student from our sister city Ebetsu in Hokkaido, Japan. This is a long-standing exchange student program, with Ebetsu sending students to the Gresham area in January every year, and our students traveling to Ebetsu when school is out in June. Expect the student to live with you for approximately four weeks, from early January until early February.

To help make the matches between the Japanese students and their American hosts, we need the "Host Family Application" filled out and returned by early October to your Japanese language teacher. This information is also required by the selection committee in Ebetsu. Additionally, because of the need to be concerned about the well-being of our visitors, we request names and contact information of two non-family character references for you and your family. Criminal background checks will be performed on all adults living in the home.

Hosting a Japanese student is a wonderful way for the applicant to improve Japanese language skill and for the whole family to learn more about another culture. Also, for a Gresham area student interested in traveling to Ebetsu as an exchange student, having been a host is a plus in the selection process, though not a guarantee. If you have any questions about the process, do not hesitate to email Barry Busse at [gesca.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:gesca.treasurer@gmail.com) or Byerly Woodward at [byerlyca@gmail.com](mailto:byerlyca@gmail.com).

### **What is expected of a host family?**

Each student that comes will be staying with a host family for the duration of the visit and attending school with the host brother or sister. A host family should be prepared to take care of the student's essential needs. You will have the responsibilities of one more child in your household. Students are expected to participate in the host family's activities the same as the other children. You can give them light chores to do and rules to follow.

You will need to be willing to provide a safe and friendly environment for the student to live in. Make sure that the student feels welcome and part of the family with the same privileges and obligations of other family members. Think of how you would like your own child to be treated on an exchange, and use these ideas in your home.

Host families must provide the student with a separate bed to sleep in. If the student needs to share a room with another child, that is fine, as long as they are of the same sex and approximate age. It is best to have the student experience a normal family routine. Most students will expect to be treated as an equal and not as an honored guest. Please introduce them to family outside the home, to friends, neighbors and groups the family regularly interacts with.

Host families should explain their rules to their student upon arrival to make sure there will be no

problems in understanding and following the rules. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the sister city association if the student is having behavioral issues, extreme homesickness, illness or difficulty adapting to home life or school.

Help the student explore as much of our culture as you see fit. Also, encourage your student to share his/her culture with your family. You might even suggest, if the student is comfortable with this idea, to help cook a meal.

## **Are host families paid?**

We do not have the funds to pay host families, but we may offer a small stipend. This is a great cultural opportunity for your family. The students will be bringing money with them for activities outside the home. You may pay for these or have the student pay. They are prepared for either way.

## **What rules are exchange students expected to follow?**

Students are expected to:

- Learn and follow the host family's rules.
- Follow local laws.
- Follow school rules and attend school on all regular school days.
- Not use illegal drugs or consume alcohol (even if they feel it is culturally acceptable).
- Not drive a motorized vehicle.

## **What is my role with the exchange student's school?**

Exchange students will be attending school with their host brother/sister, therefore it is the host family's responsibility to make sure the proper arrangements are made for the student to get to and from school. Be prepared to answer questions the student might have about school life in America as it is different than in Japan. The student will have lunch money if needed.

## **What challenges might the student experience during the exchange?**

- Homesickness
- Language difficulty
- Difficulty interpreting culture-specific social cues
- Host-family conflicts
- Different rules and expectations from their home
- Various emotional difficulties

If you experience any of these problems and are unable to resolve them on your own, a member of Gresham-Ebetsu Sister City Association will be happy to help.

Updated August 25, 2017.



Gresham-Ebetsu Sister City Association  
Host Family Application  
Ebetsu, Japan

**Student's Contact Information**

First name:	Last name:	Preferred name:
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Mailing address if different from above:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:	(Please circle one) Home   Work   Cell	Email:

**Student's Personal Information**

Date of birth:	Age:	Sex:
What are your favorite hobbies and interests?		
In a few words, why do you wish to host a student?		
Current High School:		Grade Level:
Favorite subjects:	School activities, including sports:	

**Family Information**

Mother or female guardian

Name:	Age:	Occupation:
Phone:	(Please Circle one) Home   Work   Cell	Email:

Father or male guardian

Name:	Age:	Occupation:
Phone:	(Please Circle one) Home   Work   Cell	Email:

Brother/Sister (please circle one)

Name:	Age:	Grade:
-------	------	--------

Brother/Sister (please circle one)

Name:	Age:	Grade:
-------	------	--------

Brother/Sister (please circle one)

Name:	Age:	Grade:
-------	------	--------

Please list additional siblings and others living in the home on the back of this form or separate page.

--	--	--

Does anyone in the family smoke? Yes/ No	Who?	Inside or outside the home?
--	------	-----------------------------

Favorite Family Activities:

Family Pets:

Please provide 2 non-family character references and telephone numbers.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ family has completed the application honestly and to the best of our ability and has read the information provided and agrees that hosting a student is within our abilities.

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Father/Male Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mother/Female Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_