OAKLAND FUKUOKA SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 13022, Oakland, California 94661-3022
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OFSCA is a nonprofit organization
Tax ID 94-258130

51st OAKLAND FUKUOKA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Tentative Dates: Approx. Early to Mid July 2025

The annual Oakland Fukuoka High School Student Exchange Program is a **10-12 day Program in Fukuoka, Japan**, Oakland's Sister City. We are accepting applications for this Program and space will be **limited to 6 students**. The estimated **Program Cost is $3,000.00** that includes airfare, room & board (home-stays), organized activities while in Fukuoka. Students will be responsible for any personal expenses not included in the estimate (purchases, gifts, snacks, etc.). Students attending high school during the 2024-2025 academic years are eligible.

The students will be under adult supervision. A representative or representatives from the Oakland Fukuoka Sister City Association will chaperon the students during the trip. The City of Fukuoka, through the Fukuoka International Association in partnership with the Fukuoka – Oakland Friendship Association, will organize the homestay for each student with a host family and daily activities for the group during their stay in Fukuoka, Japan. The homestay and cultural exchange are the highlights of the program. The parent/guardian and student will be required to sign a Release Form. The student or their family will be required to join the Oakland Fukuoka Sister City Association. We strongly encourage each family to homestay a student from Japan the preceding and/or following summer as this is an exchange program. If your family is unable to host a student from Japan in the year after the program participation, please sign up to recruit a family in your stead. This will ensure student exchange programs between our cities will thrive and be available for students in the future.

If you have any questions regarding the Program, please email **youthexchange@oakland-fukuoka.org**

PRIORITY APPLICATIONS ARE DUE OCTOBER 15, 2024. WE WILL STILL ACCEPT ROLLING APPLICATIONS UNTIL OTHERWISE STATED ON THE OFSCA WEBSITE. INTERVIEWS WITH THE SELECTION COMMITTEE WILL BE SCHEDULED ON A ROLLING BASIS & IN THE WEEKS FOLLOWING THE APPLICATION DEADLINE.

Mail completed application (with attachments), membership dues, and photo to:
Oakland Fukuoka Sister City Association
High School Student Exchange Program
P.O. Box 13022

Oakland Fukuoka Sister City High School Student Exchange Program Application

Oakland, CA 94661-3022

Student Full Legal Name _____ ATTACH PHOTO

Nick Name (If applicable) _____

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are responsible for obtaining all necessary travel permits and documents.

★ Are you a U.S. citizen? **YES / NO**

If no, are you a Refugee, Aslyee, or Permanent Resident? _____

If yes, you will need to obtain permission from INS to travel outside the U.S. (*Form I-131*)

PLEASE NOTE: *The process may take up to three months to complete.*

★ Do you have a valid U.S. Passport? **YES / NO**

If no, you may apply for a U.S. Passport by mail through your local post office or through the INS Passport Office in San Francisco.

If yes, Name EXACTLY as printed on Passport: _____

Expiration Date: _____

PLEASE NOTE: The process may take up to three months to complete. Start early to have your passport by Jan 31, 2025.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

★ Japan currently does not require COVID restrictions such as proof of vaccination for visitors from the US prior to entry. This program will follow local Alameda County Public Health Department guidance and Japan Governmental requirements. Prior to departure, we will plan to perform a health check to ensure that all participants will be healthy for travel.

For the homestay component of the program, please indicate the applicant's COVID vaccination status. Health information will be kept confidential and only shared on a need-to-know basis. By completing this section, you agree to share vaccination status information between the official program organizer (OFSCA High School Exchange Program Leads) and the Japanese City Government organizers if requested.

Choose one:

- ☐ I have/will have received a COVID vaccination within the past year leading up to July 2025
- ☐ I have received a COVID vaccination more than a year ago from July 2025
- ☐ I have not and do not anticipate being vaccinated with the COVID vaccine
- ☐ I do not wish to answer

Please use the attached link for the most up to date information on Japan's entry requirements.
https://jp.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/

Also note that Japanese laws differ from those in the US. Please review these differences via the link below and confirm that you are able to comply, specifically the **Local Laws and Special Circumstances** section, especially related to Prescription Drugs and Other Medications.

U.S. State Department Travel to Japan website:
https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Japan.html

★ Please confirm that you have reviewed the Local Laws and Special Circumstances. **YES / NO**

Oakland Fukuoka Sister City High School Student Exchange Program Application

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Student Full Legal Name _____

Home Address _____

Email Address _____

Home Telephone _____

Cellular phone_____

Date of Birth _____ Age _____ Gender _____

High School _____ Current Grade _____

Favorite Subjects _____

Honor/Awards _____

Hobbies/Interests _____

Do you speak Japanese? **YES / NO**

If yes, please indicate your level of proficiency. (*1 = Beginner, 10 = Native Speaker*)

1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 - 10

Have you been to Japan before? **YES / NO** (If yes, when and where?)

_____

Have you traveled outside the U.S. before? **YES / NO** (If yes, when and where?)

_____

Has your family ever hosted an exchange student before? **YES / NO**

If yes, please indicate the month/year and the name, age, city and country of the student.

_____

What foods do you like? _____

What foods do you dislike? _____

Are there foods that you cannot eat? Please specify foods and reasons (e.g. vegetarian, religious, allergy, etc.)

_____

_____

Do you have allergies? Please provide details (allergy, type of reaction, usual treatment)

_____

_____

Please rate the following situation *(1= Strongly oppose, 10 = Not an issue)*

Host parent SMOKES in home 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

Host Family has a DOG/CAT 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10

Medication(s) currently taking

_____

_____

(***NOTES***: 1. Not all medications common in the U.S. are legal in Japan. Please review the U.S. State Department travel to Japan website listed above for more details 2. OFSCA officers, members, chaperones, representatives will **NOT** be able to dispense or provide any type of prescribed or over-the-counter medication to students.*)*

PARENT(s), GUARDIAN(s) EMERGENCY/CONTACT INFORMATION

Parent/ Legal Guardian #1 _____

Relationship to applicant _____

Other Family Members (*names and ages*) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Cell _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Parent/ Legal Guardian #2 _____

Relationship to applicant _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Cell _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Alternate Emergency Contact (*name, phone number, relationship to student*)

1. _____

2._____

Oakland Fukuoka Sister City High School Student Exchange Program Application

APPLICATION REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

1. **REQUIRED ESSAY**: In one page (or more if needed), introduce yourself and explain why you are interested in going to Japan and participating in this High School Student Exchange Program to Fukuoka, Japan. Include what you hope to gain from the experience and how you might contribute to cultural exchange while in Japan with your host family, Japanese citizens, and with fellow program participants.
   (Attach a separate sheet).

2. **REQUIRED LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION: Using the recommendation template provided on the next page, at least one letter of recommendation** from an adult (NOT family members) who can provide recommendation to include student applicant's **(1)** Readiness: preparedness for an short international exchange program such as any relevant comments on academic aptitude, adaptability, and ability to thrive in a different cultural environment, **(2)** Temperament such as maturity, interpersonal skills, and capacity to handle the complexities of an international experience, and **(3)** Fit for the Program: such as how the student aligns with the goals and values of the exchange program. This involves evaluating their enthusiasm for cultural exchange, ability to engage with diverse perspectives, and potential to contribute positively to the host family and community. The individual writing the recommendation is instructed to send it to OFSCA, PO Box 13022, Oakland, CA 94661-3022.

Oakland Fukuoka Sister City High School Student Exchange Program Application

RECOMMENDATION: Page 1

Student's name:_____ **Phone No. ( )**_____

Address: _____

Instructions to Student: Please complete the information above and ask an adult (for example, a teacher or extracurricular coach/leader) who knows you well to complete this form. DEADLINE to submit evaluation: October 15, 2024. However, we will still accept rolling applications until our OFSCA website is updated so please forward as soon as possible.

Instructions to Teacher/Coach/Leader: OFSCA will appreciate and accept as confidential your frank evaluation of this student's personal readiness for responsible participation in an international conference program. Please complete, sign and return this form as soon as possible to OFSCA, Summer High School Exchange Program, P.O. Box 13022, Oakland, CA 94661-3022. Please keep a copy of the evaluation for your own records. Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

1. Readiness: preparedness for an short international exchange program such as any relevant comments on academic aptitude, adaptability, and ability to thrive in a different cultural environment

2. Temperament such as maturity, interpersonal skills (for example, respect to authority, group activities, peer relationships) and capacity to handle the complexities of an international experience.

3. Fit for the Program: such as how the student aligns with the goals and values of the exchange program. This involves evaluating their enthusiasm for cultural exchange, ability to engage with diverse perspectives, and potential to contribute positively to the host family and community

RECOMMENDATION: Page 2

4. Research indicates that the factors listed below are important for successful intercultural adjustments.

Curiosity	**Open-mindedness**
Self-motivation	**Ability to tolerate failures**
Sense of humor	**Ability to communicate**

Please assess the student's strengths and weaknesses with respect to these factors. When possible, please give specific examples.

5. In what context and for what length of time have you known this student?

Check one of the following:

- ☐ **I strongly recommend this student.**
- ☐ **I recommend this student.**
- ☐ **I have some reservations. (Please describe on a separate sheet of paper.)**
- ☐ **I do not recommend this student.**

(All remarks will be kept confidential)

Signature (handwritten):_____ **Date:**_____

Print Name :_____ **Title:** _____

School or Organization:_____

Telephone _____ **E-mail** _____

School, Organization, or Home Address:

_____

_____

Oakland Fukuoka Sister City High School Student Exchange Program Application

APPLICANT & LEGAL GUARDIAN(s) REQUIRED AGREEMENTS:

By signing below, family and student certifies that:

- **The information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge. We understand that this information will be kept in strict confidence and will not be provided to other programs, agencies or individuals.**

  AND

- **The student must join the Oakland Fukuoka Sister City Association. Student memberships are $10/year. We encourage family memberships at $50/year if you choose to join as a family. *Make your check payable to Oakland Fukuoka Sister City Association (OFSCA) and enclose it with this application.***

Homestay Statements by Parent or Legal Guardian (Check the statement that applies to you):

☐ **Yes, we are willing to be a homestay family for a student from Japan in the 2026 exchange as needed. We understand that the number of homestay families in 2026 is unknown and things may change.**

OR

☐ **No, we are unable to provide homestay accommodations for a student from Japan in 2026 per reason(s) below. However, we will join recruitment efforts to recruit a homestay family in our place/as a substitute.**

Explanation: _____

SIGN BELOW:

_____

Student Name ***Student Signature*** ***Date***

_____

Parent or Legal Guardian Name ***Parent or Legal Guardian Signature*** ***Date***

If applicable:

_____

2nd Parent or Legal Guardian Name ***Parent or Legal Guardian Signature*** ***Date***

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

OAKLAND FUKUOKA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

A limited number of partial scholarships (50% of the final Program Cost) are available. Selection will be based upon *need* and *merit*. The selection committee will be comprised of Oakland Fukuoka Sister City Association representatives. If you desire to be considered for one of these scholarships, then please provide the following:

❑ Copy of one of the following documents:

- Parent(s) or Guardian(s) most recent Federal Tax Return
- Verification of Medi-Cal Benefits, Subsidized Housing, TANF/Cal WORKS

❑ Essay by the student (any length) stating why he/she wishes to be considered for the scholarship.

ALL FINANCIAL INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

OFSCA NEXT GENERATION PROGRAM

aka OFSCA Next Gen Program

Applicants may also participate in the OFSCA Next Gen Program. This program enables the student to earn points toward the final program cost through volunteering for OFSCA events or projects based on OFSCA needs as determined by the designated OFSCA Director(s). Points have no cash value and are not exchangeable for cash. The accumulation of points does not entitle the Next Gen OFSCA Program participant to any vested rights, and OFSCA does not guarantee the High School Student Exchange program as it is dependent on the Fukuoka City Government.

Please inform the OFSCA contact person if you are interested.