



**Board Meeting:** December 2, 2024

**Title:** Malta 6/11/2026 - International Travel Request - Lindsey Smaka - Edina High School - Science

**Type:** Discussion

**Presenters:** Jody De St. Hubert, Director of Teaching and Learning; Jenn Carter, Edina High School Assistant Principal; and Lindsey Smaka, EHS Science Teacher

**Background:** In accordance with Policy 538, the following international student travel experience for up to 24 Edina High School students for eleven days in June 2026 has received support from the school's administration. Participating students will not miss school days for this travel experience. This experience is coordinated by marine biologists and dive masters Misha Richards and Jackson Dando of Dive Wise Malta in collaboration with Lindsey Smaka.

**Summary of Travel Experience:** This experience will focus on Marine Biology & Conservation Efforts in the context of Malta. These program goals will be delivered through student engagement in scuba diving. Diving is the best way to understand and connect with the marine environment around them, while learning about critical species and conservation efforts. Students will either earn their certification while on site or come on the trip certified and take part in content specific lectures and scientific dives including fish identification, coral, invertebrates, navigation and wreck diving. Students will also explore the people of Malta, by interacting with the cultural, intercultural exchanges and experience with local Maltese people and take part in a functional Maltese language course. By learning about shipwrecks both above and below water, students will also understand the place and its historical context. Additionally, students will explore areas of importance on the island and take part in community service work.

**Cost:** The anticipated inclusive cost of this experience is approximately \$4,900 per student. This price includes all transportation, accommodations, travel & medical insurance, meals, and transfers. Students will be responsible for all costs. There will be need-based scholarships and other scholarships offered. There will also be extensive fundraising opportunities as detailed in the attached fundraising plan.

**Transportation:** All students and chaperones will travel as a group from Minneapolis to St. Julian, Malta, and return via a major U.S. international airline or partner.

**Accommodations:** Students and chaperones will be housed in dormitories at Dive Wise scuba center in Malta.

**Supervision:** Staff members traveling with the group are Lindsey Smaka, EHS science teacher, and two additional licensed staff, one of which will be a licensed school administrator.

**Recommendation:** Review the international travel experience for discussion. An additional discussion will occur at the Board Meeting on 12.2.24 and action will occur at the 1.6.25 Board Meeting.

**Desired Outcomes for the Board:** Review the background information provided and come prepared with your initial reactions (comments and questions) on the student travel experience.

**Attachments:**

1. Appendix III Board Policy 538 , [Extended Field Trip and Travel Application Preliminary Approval](#)
2. [Fundraising](#)
3. [Itinerary](#)
4. [Insurance](#)