



DEFINING EXCELLENCE

Board Meeting Date: January 12, 2026

Title: Japan 2027 - International Travel Request - Christopher Griggs - Edina High School - Social Studies

Type: Action

Presenters: Jody De St. Hubert, Director of Teaching and Learning; Jenn Carter, Edina High School Assistant Principal; and Christopher Griggs, EHS Social Studies Teacher

Background: In accordance with Policy 538, the following international student travel experience for up to 40 Edina High School students from approximately June 10-20, 2027 has received support from the school's administration. Participating students will not miss any school days for this summer travel experience.

This expedition, coordinated by EF Tours, utilizes Social Studies standards in addition to Edina Public Schools educational competencies. Among other experiences, students will tour historical grounds and cities, experience Japanese culture through arts, dance, music and through one-on-one interaction with local citizens. This experience will be a for-credit high school class; students will be required to keep a journal of their experiences. This will be supported with daily writing prompts as well as teacher-led discussions about their reflections and experiences.

Summary of the Travel Experience: A Social Studies travel-based learning experience to Japan in the summer of 2027. A link to the itinerary can be found [here](#).

Overview of Standards that will be taught on the Travel Experience:

2022 Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies (Commissioner Approved Draft)

Geography	History	Ethnic Studies
Places and Regions: Describe places and regions, explaining how they are influenced by power structures.	Change, Continuity and Context: Ask historical questions about change, continuity and context in order to identify and analyze dominant and nondominant narratives about the past.	Identity: Analyze the ways power and language construct the social identities of race, religion, geography, ethnicity and gender.

<p>Human Systems: Analyze patterns of movement and interconnectedness within and between cultural, economic and political systems from a local to global scale.</p> <p>Culture: Investigate how sense of place is impacted by different cultural perspectives.</p>	<p>Historical Perspectives: Identify diverse points of view and describe how one's frame of reference influences historical perspective.</p> <p>Historical Sources and Evidence: Investigate a variety of historical sources by: a) analyzing primary and secondary sources, b) identifying perspectives and narratives that are absent from the available sources and c) interpreting the historical context, intended audience, purpose and author's point of view of these sources.</p> <p>Connecting Past and Present: Use historical methods and sources to identify and analyze the roots of a contemporary issue</p>	<p>Apply these understandings to one's own social identities and other groups living in Minnesota, centering those whose stories and histories have been marginalized, erased or ignored.</p>
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Cost: The anticipated inclusive cost of this experience is \$5,689 per student. This price is inclusive of all transportation, accommodations, meals, transfers, and insurance. Students will be responsible for any other out of pocket costs or incidentals. Need-based scholarships and fundraising opportunities are available. EF and Edina Public Schools have established a program designed to empower sustainable and impactful travel-based learning programs for the school community that increases equity and access to the global classroom and opportunities like this one. EPS and EF have created a scholarship program aligned with EPS' commitment to equity, and students who participated in past tours have accessed these funds.

Transportation: All students and chaperones will travel as a group from Minneapolis to Osaka, Japan and return via Tokyo, Japan on a major US international airline or partner.

Accommodations: Students and chaperones will be housed in 3 to 4 star rated hotels.

Supervision: Staff members traveling with the group are lead teacher Christopher Griggs, EHS Social Studies teacher, and up to 5 additional licensed staff, one of which is a licensed school administrator. The licensed administrator is expected to be Jennifer Carter.

Recommendation: Review the international travel request.

Desired Outcomes from the Board: Review the international travel request for approval.

Attachments:

1. [Appendix III Board Policy 538, Extended Field Trip and Travel Application Preliminary Approval](#)