



SUNNYVALE-IIZUKA
2023
STUDENT
EXCHANGE
PROGRAM



SUNNYVALE
SISTER CITY
ASSOCIATION

STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Since 2014, the Student Exchange Program has successfully enabled Sunnyvale and Iizuka students to experience life in a different culture. The Program has 2 parts. In Part 1 (Iizuka to Sunnyvale, I2S), your family will host a student from Iizuka in March. These Iizuka students will experience school life in Sunnyvale schools and home life in your home.

In Part 2 (Sunnyvale to Iizuka, S2I), you will visit Japan in June after the Sunnyvale school year. In Iizuka, you will experience school and home life with Japanese students your age and make life-long friends in Japan.

For more information on the SSCA Student Exchange Program, please contact:

s2i@sunnyvalesistercity.org

IIZUKA, JAPAN

Nestled amongst the foothills of central Fukuoka Prefecture on the island of Kyushu lies the city of Iizuka. Home to rich history and tradition, Iizuka is also a major center for education and a rapidly expanding IT economy.

Region:	Kyushu
Prefecture:	Fukuoka
Population:	132,208
Area:	82.68 sq mi





PROGRAM DETAILS

ELIGIBILITY

The Student Exchange Program is open to the following applicants:

- Current 7th and 8th grade middle school students
- Current high school students

Families of successful applicants will be expected to host a student from Iizuka in the spring.

FEES

The 2023 Program fees are \$2,998.

While in Iizuka, students will stay with host families who will cover the student's daily expenses. Fees are based on costs calculated with current exchange rate and are subject to adjustment as a result of exchange rate fluctuation and other factors including airline fuel surcharges. Fees can be refunded for applicants not accepted into the program. For accepted students, all fees are non-refundable.

Please make checks payable to:

Sunnyvale Sister City Association

and mail checks to:

Plug and Play Tech Center

Sunnyvale Sister City Association (MS197)

Attention: S2I 2023

440 North Wolfe Road

Sunnyvale, CA 94085

The fees are to be paid in **two payments** by check:

- a **\$700** deposit by **September 30, 2023**
- a **\$2,298** payment by **February 1, 2023**

Additional Notes

- Cashiers checks will not be accepted
- Checks dropped off at this address will not be accepted

PROGRAM DETAILS CONT.

The program fees cover:

- Scheduled transportation (including surcharges and taxes) for the duration of the trip:
All international airfare, Japanese domestic airfare, and scheduled trains
- English bus tour in Tokyo
- Hotel accommodation for two nights in Tokyo (including breakfast)
- Background check costs for adult(s) in applicant's family
- SSCA administrative costs

The program fees do not cover:

- Transportation costs during free time
- Personal lunches and dinners in Iizuka and Tokyo
- Travel insurance with Covid-19 contingency provisions
- Medical insurance

Financial assistance

Financial assistance is available for a limited number of students of Sunnyvale residence on a need basis. Qualifying students will have the second payment waived. To be eligible for financial assistance, please submit one of the following forms electronically or via mail with your \$700 deposit:

- Approval of Aid from Sunnyvale Community Services
- Approval of Second Harvest Food Bank aid
- WIC, SNAP AFDC approval
- CalFresh, CalWORKs, KIN-GAP, and FDPIR BENEFITS
- Most current income tax return. Please ensure to black out all SSN's before submitting

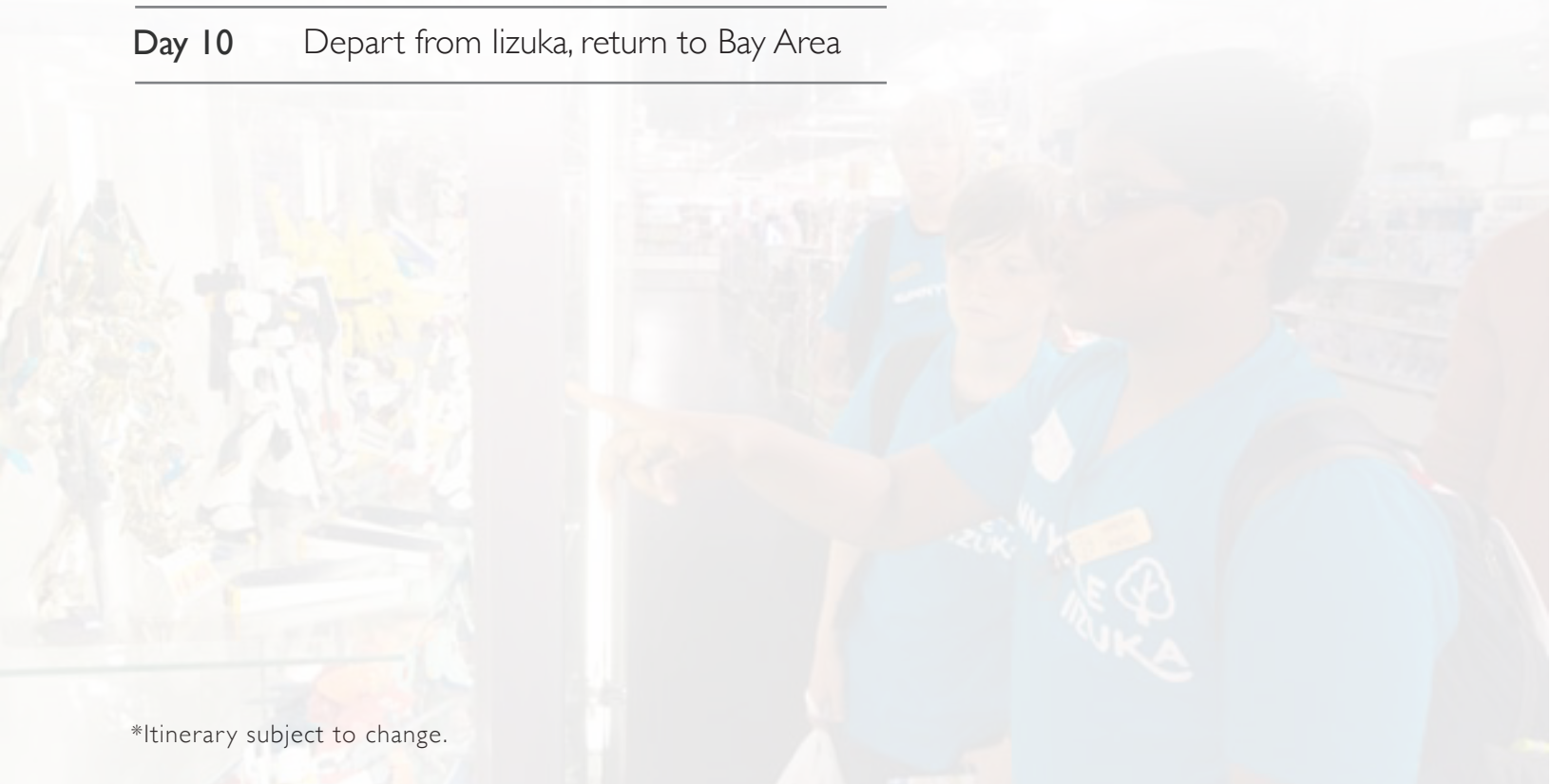
PROGRAM DETAILS CONT.

Information sessions will be held in the fall. Dates will be announced at schools.

TENTATIVE S2I SCHEDULE

Day 1	Departure from Bay Area
Day 2	Arrive in Tokyo, hotel
Day 3	Tokyo guided sightseeing, hotel
Day 4	Travel to Iizuka, homestay
Day 5	Free time with host family
Day 6	Free time with host family
Day 7	Iizuka school visit, homestay
Day 8	Iizuka school visit, homestay
Day 9	Iizuka school visit, homestay
Day 10	Depart from Iizuka, return to Bay Area

*Itinerary subject to change.



APPLICATION & EVENTS TIMELINE

September 20, 2022

General Information Session

7:00 pm at the Washington Park Building, (840 W. Washington Ave.)

September 30, 2022

Application Deadline

A completed application requires these 3 items:

1. Submission of completed online application including:

- Personal information
- Contact information for a school teacher reference
- URL for a self-introduction video

2. Receipt of an emailed Letter of Recommendation from your school teacher reference

3. Receipt of a mailed deposit (\$700) payable to:

Plug and Play Tech Center

Sunnyvale Sister City Association (MSI97)

Attn: S2I 2023

440 North Wolfe Road

Sunnyvale, CA 94085

Mid October 2022

Application Interviews

Early November 2022

Applicant Results Announced

November 2022

S2I Group Meetings

February 1, 2023

Final Payment Deadline

March 24-30, 2023

Host for I2S Student Exchange Trip

June 13 to 22, 2023

S2I Student Exchange Trip

Application and more details can be found on the SSCA website



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How many students from Sunnyvale will be going to Iizuka?

A minimum of 8 students and a maximum of 20 students from Sunnyvale will be going to Iizuka.

2. Is there a quota for middle school students and high school students or gender?

There are no quotas placed on student participants. SSCA selects participants solely based upon the quality of the applicant.

3. What is the student to adult ratio for the S2I trip?

The student to adult ratio varies depending on the number of student participants

- 8-10 students will be accompanied by 2 chaperones and 1 SSCA staff
- 11-15 students will be accompanied by 3 chaperones and 1 SSCA staff
- 16-20 students will be accompanied by 4 chaperones and 1 SSCA staff

4. Who are the chaperones?

Teachers from participating schools can apply to be chaperones.

5. Why are candidates interviewed?

Interviews are very important in evaluating the interest level, maturity and personality of an applicant. Interviews are especially important when there are more applicants than available spots in the program.

6. What does SSCA look for in a successful candidate?

Successful candidates have several defining characteristics:

Be an Ambassador – Sharing cultures is a pillar of SSCA's Student Exchange programs. Successful candidates will be excited to represent the best of our City, State and Nation in speech and behavior. In particular, we are looking for candidates to be eager to share about themselves, while also being mindful of social and cultural differences.

Curious and Adventurous – Compared to the US, Japan is a very different and potentially confusing place. Successful candidates do not see this as a drawback. Successful candidates will be excited to immerse themselves in this new environment and to learn from the experience.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONT.

Friendly – S2I participants will travel to Iizuka with students who they may not know. They will go to an unfamiliar Japanese school and stay with a Japanese host family. Successful candidates will be excited to go the extra mile to reach out and make lasting friendships with people they meet on the trip.

7. What is the budget for incidental expenses for the S2I students in Japan?

Around \$100 - \$300US is recommended. Cash in multiple denominations is recommended as credit cards and traveler's checks are not commonly accepted in Japan.

8. Where can we exchange US Dollars for Japanese Yen?

Many banks in Sunnyvale offer foreign currency exchange service to their customers. Consult your bank to find out the details.

9. Is Japan safe?

In general, Japan is a very safe place for travel. Iizuka is in the countryside and is even safer than Tokyo. Host families in Iizuka are carefully selected by Iizuka City and their Board of Education.

10. What locations will S2I students visit in Tokyo?

A tour bus may be chartered depending on the number of visiting students, and on previous trips students have visited: Tsukiji, Sky Tree, the Imperial Palace, and Asakusa.

11. Do S2I students need to know Japanese?

No. Successful applicants will need to attend orientation sessions before the trip, where they will learn about topics such as Japanese language, culture, and customs to prepare them for their experience in Japan.

12. Do Iizuka to Sunnyvale (I2S) students speak English?

While most students in Japan do study English, their skill level is very limited, but they will be prepped in a similar way as our students before they come to the States.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONT.

13. How can the students communicate if they don't speak the same language?

Students can be very creative in communicating without being fluent in a common language.

14. Do families of S2I students have to host I2S students before visiting Japan?

Yes, families of successful S2I applicants are obligated to host I2S students prior to the applicant travelling to Japan.

15. Can other families become host families for I2S students?

Yes, any families who are interested in becoming host families can email SSCA (s2i@sunnyvalesistercity.org).

My favorite memory or experience was meeting my host family and learning how to adapt and communicate with them. I learned a lot of Japanese and created many friends.

- 2015 Program Participant

16. What do host families need to know to make a pleasant stay for the I2S students?

SSCA Student Exchange Programs aim to provide exciting experiences by immersing students in a new and different culture. Towards this end, we highly encourage you to immerse your exchange student in your everyday family life. You can bring your student to extra-curricular activities (ie. Little League, AYSO, Scouting, Band). You may need to talk to your coaches/leaders before bringing guests. Even including your student in mundane family activities such as grocery shopping, helping in the kitchen and daily chores may make them feel like they are a member of the family instead of just a guest.

CONTACT INFORMATION



Additional Information or Questions

If you have any questions regarding the Sunnyvale -
Iizuka Student Exchange Program, please contact:

s2i@sunnyvalesistercity.org

Sunnyvale Sister City Association

For more information on the SSCA please visit the
website

www.sunnyvalesistercity.org

REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY FOR THE 2023 S2I PROGRAM

- Applied Student (“Student”) must have their full vaccinations completed a minimum of two weeks before their departure (or plan to do by the end of January 2023) and must provide proof of their vaccination.
- The family of the Student must agree to be a host family to a 2023 I2S student in March 2023.
- All family members of the Student must have their full vaccinations completed a minimum of two weeks before receiving an I2S student from Iizuka (or plan to do by the end of January 2023).
- If one or more family members are unable to receive their vaccination (such as due to a medical exemption), that person must provide proof of a negative result of a PCR covid test within 72 hours of I2S student arrival.
- Family members younger than 12 who are unable to receive a vaccination must provide proof of a negative result of a PCR covid test within 72 hours of I2S student arrival.
- SSCA is committed to ensuring the safety of Students and participants in the S2I and I2S exchange and will abide by the guidelines provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (“CDC”), Sunnyvale School District, National Institute of Infectious Disease (Japanese equivalent of CDC), Japanese Foreign Ministry, and relevant guidance provided by the airlines but SSCA will follow the more stricter guideline where there is a conflict or difference.
- If necessary, potential cancellations may occur until December 2022 for I2S & April 2023 for S2I.
- I2S students will need to be fully vaccinated (and provide proof of vaccination) & follow CDC guidelines.
- I2S students will also need to follow guidelines from their local schools (need to ask facilitators when time approaches).
- ISSCA will update its program participation policies in line with CDC and other governmental guidance including vaccination, booster shot and masking guidelines.