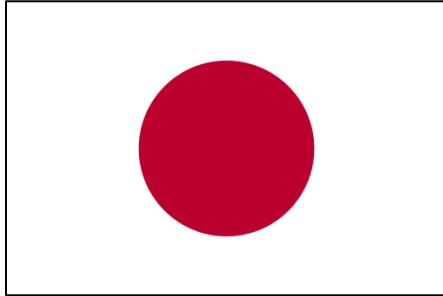


# Lexington Sister Cities Student Exchange Program



# Shinhidaka Japan

## 2018 Student Exchange Application

Click to attach a photo of yourself. Make sure it is a close-up, like the one you would have for a driver's license. An informal photo is okay.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Age by June 2018: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Must be 14 by June 1, 2018)*



Lexington Sister Cities  
Deauville, County Kildare, Shinhidaka, Newmarket

Lexington Sister Cities  
200 East Main Street  
Lexington, KY 40507  
859-258-3137

# Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program

## Parent Information Letter

Dear Parents:

We are excited your student is interested in participating in the 2018 Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange. The purpose of this exchange program is to provide a genuine cultural and family experience in another country for middle and high school students of Lexington, Kentucky and those of Shinhidaka, Japan.

As parents/guardians, you must be willing and able to receive a Japanese student in your home as part of the program. Students from Japan will visit Lexington in March, while students from Lexington will visit Japan in July. The Shinhidaka and Lexington students will be together for both parts of the exchange program.

To be selected for our program, students should exhibit maturity, flexibility, an interest in the Japanese culture, and qualities that would make them a good ambassador for Lexington, Kentucky, and the United States.

Students must turn 14 by June 1, 2018 to participate in the program. **Please note that students over the age of 18 before August 1, 2018 will not be considered for this program.**

**Applications are due to the Lexington Sister Cities office by Friday, November 3, 2017.**

Applications can be emailed to [smartin@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:smartin@lexingtonky.gov), mailed, or dropped off to:

**Lexington Sister Cities  
ATTN: Sarah Martin  
200 East Main Street  
Lexington, KY 40507.**

Applications should include the following items:

- Completed Lexington-County Kildare Student Exchange Application
- \$25 Application Fee
- Current Photo
- Two recommendation letters:
  - One letter should be from a teacher or counselor.
  - The second letter can be from a teacher, counselor or personal reference.
  - There is a recommendation form attached to the application that student's should give to those they wish to write a recommendation.
  - An online recommendation form is available for teacher this year on the Lexington Sister Cities website. [www.lexingtonky.gov/sistercities](http://www.lexingtonky.gov/sistercities)
  - Recommendation letters may be turned in separate from the application if the teacher wishes to send it in separately. Letters should be received by the scheduled interview time for the student.

After the application deadline, an interview date will be set up. Our main means of communication is through email, so please ensure all email addresses are listed on your son or daughter's application.

Upon acceptance into this program, orientations will be held to prepare your student for the trip. These orientations are mandatory for participation.

You will find on the next page a list of "Frequently Asked Questions" about our exchange program to Shinhidaka. Please read through this sheet prior to your scheduled interview.

**Please sign and date the end of this application to indicate your consent for your son or daughter to submit an application.**

Thanks for your interest in our program. We look forward to meeting you and your student at the interview.

Lexington-Shinhidaka Committee

# Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program

## Frequently Asked Questions:

1. How long is the exchange?
  - a. Shinhidaka students visit Lexington for 5-6 days; Lexington students travel to Shinhidaka for 10-12 days.
2. What are the dates for the exchange?
  - a. While we don't have exact dates for the 2018 exchange, we can give some approximate time frames. Shinhidaka students visit Lexington near the end of March, usually around March 25-31. Lexington students will travel to Shinhidaka in July.
3. Does my student have to be taking Japanese to participate in the Shinhidaka Exchange?
  - a. Students do not have to be taking Japanese to participate in the exchange.
4. Can my student apply for two Sister Cities programs?
  - a. No – students should only submit one application to Sister Cities. Students will not be considered for multiple programs.
5. Is there a chaperone for the students?
  - a. Yes. The chaperone is usually a teacher or member of Lexington Sister Cities. They will be available at orientations for parents and students to meet and get to know.
6. Who will my student stay with during the exchange?
  - a. Your student will be matched with a student from Shinhidaka that they will host in Lexington. It is possible they will also be staying with that student's family in Shinhidaka; however, it could be a different host family.
7. How are the host families in Shinhidaka selected?
  - a. The Sister Cities Committee in Shinhidaka selects their host families in a similar process to ours. Because Shinhidaka is a much smaller town, the committee members usually know the families really well even before selection.
8. How much does the exchange cost?
  - a. Other than the \$25 application fee, the cost will be between \$2,000 and \$2,200, depending on current airline prices. Upon acceptance, a \$200 non-refundable deposit is due to Sister Cities. Once the airfare is found and held by the travel agent, payment will be due to Sister Cities. If necessary, payment plans can be arranged. However, the full amount of the airline ticket will be due at least 90 days from departure. Scholarships are available for financial need – the scholarship application can be found on the website.
9. What are some other costs we may incur?
  - a. Other costs include spending money for gifts, souvenirs, et cetera; as well as obtaining a passport if they do not have one already.
10. When are the interviews for the exchange?
  - a. Interviews will be scheduled either mid-November or early December. Interviews will last about 30 minutes per family. If possible, both parents/guardians should attend the interview.
11. What happens after my student gets selected?
  - a. The Lexington-Shinhidaka Committee will inform the student and their parents at the interview when the acceptances will be emailed out to the students. Once the student receives their acceptance email, they will be given a date to accept their spot in the program by – this date is usually 24-48 hours after the acceptance email is sent.
  - b. Once students have accepted their spot in the program, a \$200 non-refundable deposit should be sent to Lexington Sister Cities. This will be applied towards your airfare.
  - c. Orientations will start in February. Orientations are MANDATORY for participation in the program. At least one parent should attend each meeting with their student.
12. What is provided to my student while they are in Japan?
  - a. While your student is in Japan, accommodation and meals will be provided by the host family. Exceptions may include if the students are out together and they get ice cream/coffee/etc. This would be something your student would use spending money for.
13. What are we expected to provide for the Shinhidaka student while they are in Lexington?
  - a. While the Shinhidaka student is in Lexington, you are expected to provide meals and accommodations. Treat them as an additional child in your family – anything you would pay for your own child, you should pay for the Shinhidaka student as well.

## Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program

14. What if my student gets sick while in Japan?
  - a. Just as you would care for a sick child in your home, so will your student's host family. We ask that you check with your insurance company before your child departs to make sure you are covered for international expenses.
15. Are there group activities planned by Sister Cities?
  - a. Yes – both in Japan and in Lexington the committees plan groups activities and dinners.
16. Can my child drive while in Japan?
  - a. No.
17. Can my child drive their Shinhidaka student while in Lexington?
  - a. Yes, if they have a valid driver's license that permits them to drive others in his/her car.
18. Can I call/email/text my child while they are in Japan?
  - a. Yes – BUT we prefer that this is done only occasionally. The students are in Japan to immerse themselves in culture and family life – this cannot be done if they are on their cell phones too much. This will be discussed during our orientations.
19. How does the committee decide how to match the students?
  - a. We gather information from both applications and the Lexington student's interview to try and match based on: common interests, age & gender (if you have specified you cannot host a student of the opposite gender, you will not be expected to), and other specifications such as pet allergies.
20. My child is hoping their counterpart will end up being their best friend. Is this the case?
  - a. While many great, lasting friendships have been made on our exchange programs, not every match is perfect. Both committees do their best to match the students, but sometimes the students do not end up being best friends. However, they are both still provided with a great opportunity to have a cultural experience that they should take advantage of, regardless of their similarities to their counterpart.

For other questions about our exchange programs, you can contact Lexington Sister Cities at:

Sarah Martin  
[smartin@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:smartin@lexingtonky.gov)  
859-258-3137

Lexington Sister Cities Commission  
200 E. Main Street  
Lexington, KY 40507  
Fax – 859-425-2053

Facebook – [www.facebook.com/lexingtonsistercities](http://www.facebook.com/lexingtonsistercities)  
Instagram - @lexingtonsistercities  
Twitter - @lexsistercities  
Blog – [lexingtonsistercities.blogspot.com](http://lexingtonsistercities.blogspot.com)



# Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program

## 2017 Student Exchange Application

### NOTE TO APPLICANTS:

When matching you with an Irish student, your application is the main resource the committee uses. Please be thorough, specific and include as many interests or matching qualities as possible.

Email completed application to [smartin@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:smartin@lexingtonky.gov); or fill out in **PEN** and **paperclip** together for mailing.

Please include the following materials with your application:

- A current photo
- \$25 application fee
- Two letters of recommendation. (Include attached form with recommendation.)

### **Student Information:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

(List your *FULL NAME* as it does or will appear on your passport.)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Do you attend Locust Trace AgriScience School?  Yes  No

### **Your Home:**

**Mother/Father/Parent's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if different than yours) \_\_\_\_\_

Place of employment \_\_\_\_\_ Job title \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Mother/Father/Parent's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Address (if different than yours) \_\_\_\_\_

Place of employment \_\_\_\_\_ Job title \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### **Siblings:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

With whom do you live? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to host a student of the opposite gender?  Yes  No

What will the student's sleeping arrangements be during their stay in Lexington?

- Share a bedroom with counterpart
- Share a bedroom with sibling of same gender
- Have a private bedroom

Do you have any pets? If so, please list. \_\_\_\_\_

## Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program

### **About you:**

Do you take Japanese?  Yes  No

What are your favorite subjects in school?

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What are your least favorite subjects in school?

---

What are your interests outside of school?

---

Do you play any sports or are you involved in any clubs/organizations? Please list:

---

Describe your personality.

---

Why do you want to participate in the Lexington – Shinhidaka Student Exchange?

---

Why do you think you would be a good candidate for the Lexington – Shinhidaka Student Exchange?

---

What are your plans for hosting your student?

---

Have you ever hosted an exchange student before?  Yes  No

If yes, describe your experience?

---

Have you ever traveled without your family?  Yes  No

If yes, to where and how long?

---

## Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program

Are you applying for Governor's Scholar Program or Governor's School for the Arts this year?  Yes  No  
(NOTE: GSP and GSA directly coincide with this program – you will not be able to do both.)

Are you participating in any summer programs?  Yes  No  
If yes, explain what programs and dates:

---

Do you have any allergies or medical conditions?  Yes  No  
If yes, please list:

---

### **For Parents:**

What do you think your responsibilities to this student will be?

---

Describe your family rules.

---

Do you give permission for your child to be photographed, either individually or as a group, during their exchange experience?  Yes  No

### **Parent/Guardian Permission:**

I/We, \_\_\_\_\_, parent/guardian to \_\_\_\_\_, hereby give permission for my/our child to submit the enclosed application for the 2018 Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange Program Guidelines for Letter of Recommendation

An online recommendation form is available this year.

Please visit [www.lexingtonky.gov/sistercities](http://www.lexingtonky.gov/sistercities) to access this form and submit your recommendation letter.

---

Student Name (First, Middle, Last)

## To the Recommender:

This student is applying for the Lexington-Shinhidaka Student Exchange for 2018. If chosen, the student will travel to Shinhidaka, Japan for 10 days to experience Japanese culture and everyday life. In addition, the student will host their Japanese counterpart in Lexington for 5-6 days. Your candid appraisal of the student's propensity for a successful experience abroad is an important part of their application. We ask that you be honest and specific about your recommendation for this student.

Students are evaluated based on:

- Their motivation for travel and participation in our program
- Flexibility in handling new or difficult situations
- Hosting and family support
- Ability to be a good ambassador for Lexington, Kentucky, America, and their school.
- Character
- Leadership; Community & School Involvement
- Maturity
- Interest in cultural diversity

*Please attach this form to your letter.*

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Taught: \_\_\_\_\_

Years you have known this student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Letters of Recommendation are due by November 3, 2017.**

Send or email to:

Sarah Martin  
[smartin@lexingtonky.gov](mailto:smartin@lexingtonky.gov)

Lexington Sister Cities Commission  
200 East Main Street  
Lexington, KY 40507

Thank you for your insights and support of the program.  
Your assistance helps us create a wonderful experience for the Shinhidaka and Lexington students.



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