

**“Our Dreams Take Flight”**  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade Cultural Exchange Trip to Japan 2022  
Sponsored by Oya No Kai, Inc.

*Portland Public Schools (also known as the “District”) does not fund, sponsor, or endorse this travel study program. The District is not responsible for conducting or supervising this trip. Portland Public School employees who participate in travel study programs are not acting in their capacity as District employees and do so at their own risk. Students participating in travel study programs do so at their own risk.*

**Is My Student and Family “Ready”**  
for the  
**5th Grade Cultural Exchange to Japan?**

The 5th Grade Japan Cultural Exchange is designed for those students who are eager to go to Japan and are socially and emotionally ready to travel overseas without their parents/guardians. This exchange is physically, socially and emotionally more demanding than anything most children experience at this age. **Some students will not be emotionally or behaviorally prepared to participate in this exchange, and it is okay for them to wait until they are ready to participate in eighth grade or later.**

This exchange is designed to be a cultural experience, only. It has no bearing whatsoever on a student's success in the JDLI program, and participation in the trip is 100% voluntary. Nothing experienced on the exchange will be referenced in the classroom - before or after - other than anecdotally. Each year many families choose not to send their 5th graders, for a variety of reasons. Additionally, ONK is under no obligation to send every student. It is ultimately every parent/guardian's responsibility to realistically determine whether their child is ready to participate.

**Going abroad at this time poses new and different challenges, especially with the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Students and parents should carefully evaluate their willingness and ability to comply with evolving requirements for program participation.** This document is a tool for you to assess whether or not your family is a good fit for the 5th Grade Cultural Exchange to Japan. “Readiness” has been divided into five categories:

- **Travel Ready**
- **Academic Ready**
- **Homestay Ready**
- **Socially and Emotionally Ready**
- **Family Ready**

Please, take the information you read here seriously. Be thoughtful and honest in your answers about whether or not your child/family can handle the situations described. If you or your student has concerns, take the time to talk to a trip leader to learn everything you need to know in order to make a decision that will ensure your student's long-term joy, safety and success.

**Please respond to each statement by checking “yes”, “no” or “unsure”.** Any unanswered questions or unsigned pages will be returned to parents/guardians to complete in full.

### Travel Ready

“It’s really hard to know who will do well—in a few cases, kids that one wouldn’t expect much homesickness [from] absolutely lost it for a couple days. Conversely, a few different kids rose to the challenge like they’ve never done in a classroom.”

**“Travel Ready” means your student:**

1. Can function adequately on less than 8 hours of sleep, and/or on an irregular sleep schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
2. Does not require a regular daily schedule to be followed – including mealtimes and bedtimes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
3. Handles last minute schedule changes without anxiety.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
4. Has a flexible diet – can reasonably work with a family to eat what is served without requiring too much modification and can make certain they are eating enough.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
5. Is willing to enjoy different food from what they are used to eating, including healthy food	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
6. Does not typically suffer from homesickness	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
7. Has been away from their parents and other family members overnight successfully, ideally for more than one night.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
8. When upset or homesick, can be comforted by adults other than relatives or close friends	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
9. Has a solid level of physical stamina for sightseeing, including long walks and bus rides.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
10. Can handle heat and humidity.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
11. Does not have any issues with traveling by plane, train, bus or automobile not easily managed by medication or non-professional adult support.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure

**I/We have carefully considered and answered every “Travel Ready” question honestly.**

- Yes, my/our child is “Travel Ready”**
- No, my/our child is not “Travel Ready”**
- I/We am/are unsure if my/our child is “Travel Ready”. Please contact me/us to discuss.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian

**Academic Ready**

“Had a student that rocked the classroom. In 4th grade she began feeling very stressed, stomach aches, etc. Family figured out that it was the trip on her mind that was causing real anxiety. Family pulled kid and she bounced right back — no regrets. Still in JMP.”

**“Academic Ready” means your student:**

1. Is comfortable listening and interacting in Japanese, even if they do not understand all that is being said.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
2. Readily tries to use Japanese to the best of their ability.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
3. Gets along well, interacts with and respects all of their classmates, not just their friends.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
4. Behaves properly in the classroom and is not disruptive.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
5. Handles conflicts with peers appropriately, is willing and able to ask for help when needed, and requires no professional assistance with behavior management.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
6. Is able to easily follow instructions from adults readily (teachers and volunteers) - in Japanese and English.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
7. Understands that they will be expected to attend school in Japan, and has a positive attitude about this.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
8. Respects and is courteous to adults who are tasked with student supervision/leadership, whether they be teachers, chaperones, or other community adults.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure

**I/We have carefully considered and answered every “Academic Ready” question honestly.**

- Yes, my/our child is “Academically Ready”**
- No, my/our child is not “Academically Ready”**
- I/We am/are unsure if my/our child is “Academically Ready”. Please contact me/us to discuss.**

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*Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian*

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## Homestay Ready

“A couple kids ate only white rice for 10 days...no energy at all, lead to bad choices and kids were miserable. Homestay families and chaperones were very concerned—added quite a bit of stress to that trip.”

### “Homestay Ready” means your student:

1. Has proper table manners – can use a fork, knife and/or chopsticks appropriately and knows to not use their hands to eat or serve themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
2. Can sit at a table respectfully for a meal for at least 20-30 minutes (dinner especially is a time for conversation time in Japan, often for 30-45 minutes).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
3. Can manage their own hygiene independently and without making a mess – bathing, toilet use, tooth brushing.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
4. Can go to sleep with no lights or minimal lights on, and does not require a very particular sleeping environment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
5. Has a flexible diet – can work with a family to eat what is served without requiring too much modification and/or can communicate when they need something different or are hungry.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
6. Is willing to try different food from what they are used to eating, including healthy food.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
7. Does not typically suffer from homesickness.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
8. Can be comforted by adults other than close friends or family, when distressed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure

**I/We have carefully considered and answered every “Homestay Ready” question honestly.**

- Yes, my/our child is “Homestay Ready”**
- No, my/our child is not “Homestay Ready”**
- I/We am/are unsure if my/our child is “Homestay Ready”. Please contact me/us to discuss.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
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## Social/Emotional Ready

“A student was not able to function without one-on-one support for multiple days—this led to teacher-in-residence having to spend most of their time supporting the one student, versus being available for others. A big ask for a parent volunteer-led trip to be responsible for this high need kiddo.”

### “Social/Emotional Ready” means your student:

1. Has been asked by you and told you they want to go on the 5th Grade trip to Japan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
2. Has been asked by you and told you they want to homestay with Japanese families.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
3. Wants to make friends with Japanese students.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
4. Is fine being in groups with students who are not their closest friends.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
5. Can reasonably get along with all of their classmates.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
6. Understands and maintains appropriate and respectful boundaries regarding nudity and sexual expression.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
7. Consistently, and without prompting, says please and thank you in English and in Japanese, and understands the importance of their use.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
8. I/We understand that ONK, trip directors and chaperones cannot provide one-on-one assistance to students on a daily basis.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure

**I/We have carefully considered and answered every “Social and Emotional Ready” question honestly.**

- Yes, my/our child is “Socially and Emotionally Ready”**
- No, my/our child is not “Socially and Emotionally Ready”**
- I/We am/are unsure if my/our child is “Socially/Emotionally Ready”. Please contact to discuss.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian

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## Family Ready

In addition to student preparedness, parents and legal guardians must also be “ready” to send their students to Japan. *This means your family has had candid, honest and open conversations about your student’s desire to participate in the exchange.*

### “Family Ready” means:

1. I/We have directly asked my/our child whether or not they wish to participate in the 5th grade Cultural Exchange to Japan and they answered, “yes”.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
2. I/We am/are not persuading my/our child to go on the 5th Grade Cultural Exchange against their voiced wishes, or against the professional recommendation of their teachers, doctors, and/or care providers.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
3. All custodial parents and/or legal guardians fully support my/our child’s participation in the 5th Grade Cultural Exchange to Japan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
4. I/We am willing to fully disclose social/emotional/medical information about my/our child that will be shared with the trip organizers, directors and chaperones.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
5. I/We am willing to acknowledge and disclose my/our child’s behavior strengths and weaknesses, and hold them accountable.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
6. I/We trust the trip directors, teachers in residence, and all chaperones to care for my/our child in my/our absence.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
7. I/We understand that trip chaperones are parent volunteers, not trained adolescent specialists, will care for my/our student to the best of their abilities and that a chaperone may respond to my/our child’s needs differently than I/We would.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
8. I/We understand and accept that once my/our child leaves for Japan I/We will not be able to communicate with them unless it is deemed necessary by the trip director, even if my/our child requests to talk with me (typically in the case of homesickness).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure
9. I/We understand that ONK, trip directors and chaperones have no authority over who students interact during their homestays. This may include classmates whom I/We have requested my/our child not be partnered or placed in small groups with.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure

**I/We have carefully considered and answered every “Family Ready” question honestly.**

- Yes, I/we are “Family Ready”**
- No, I/we are not “Family Ready”**
- I/We am/are unsure if I/we are “Family Ready”. Please contact me/us to discuss.**

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Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian

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Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian

Student's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We have carefully read, considered, and honestly answered all of the questions regarding my/our child's (name \_\_\_\_\_) readiness to participate in the 5th Grade Cultural Exchange to Japan.

***Each custodial parent/legal guardian of the Student Participant must sign below unless court documents proving sole custodianship are provided.***

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*Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian*

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*Signature of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian*

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*Printed Name of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed Name of Custodial Parent/ Legal Guardian*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*