

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Ruth Floyd, Executive Director of Business Services

SUBJECT: Field Trip Opportunity Offered to Students (non-district sponsored)

DATE: April 18, 2023

TYPE: Action Required

Claudia Holum, German teacher at Stanwood High School and Stanwood Middle School, is requesting Board approval to offer a field trip opportunity to Stanwood High School students to participate in an educational tour to Germany and Austria through Xperitas organization in the summer of 2024.

This is a non-district sponsored educational trip. Ms. Holum, students, and employees that participate will not be representatives of the school district.

**Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board approve Claudia Holum's request to offer students the opportunity to participate in the Xperitas field trip to Germany and Austria in the summer of 2024.**

Date: March 2023  
To: Stanwood-Camano School District Board of Directors  
From: Claudia Holum, German Teacher, Stanwood High School & Middle School  
Re: Educational Student Travel to Germany & Austria – June/July 2024

I respectfully request permission to solicit students, after school hours, to participate in a non-district-sponsored educational two-week tour to Germany and Austria the summer of 2024. I believe that this educational program will enhance the participating students' language skills as well as increase their cross-cultural awareness and understanding. These skills are all critical in the development of young people to be respectful, successful global citizens.

I have chosen Xperitas to be our partner on this program. Xperitas is a nonprofit educational organization located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Xperitas provides immersion travel programs for students learning Spanish, French, and German. Founded in 1972, Xperitas' mission is "Transforming lives through shared global experience and intercultural learning." Students must be willing to speak the target language during the trip. Furthermore, students must have completed at least their second year of high school language study by the time they travel.

Because of my previous experience with this company (trips every other year from 1995 - 2019), I recommend their program as a high quality study experience. Xperitas arranges for each student to spend several days with a host family, attending school, and participating in all family activities. This provides an excellent real-life extension of the classroom experience and immersion into the German culture and language. Financial aid is available to students based on need.

Please find attached the letter to parents notifying them of Board Policy #2320 regarding non-district sponsored educational tours which they will receive and will have to sign before their student can apply and register for this educational tour. Furthermore I am attaching frequently asked questions and answers, information about Xperitas, a sample itinerary (not our final itinerary), insurance coverage, and references. Here is a link to their 2023 covid protocols (it has not yet been decided what that will look like for 2024): <https://xperitas.org/resources/covid-19-protocols>

Please let me know if you have further questions. Thank you very much for your consideration in making this educational opportunity available to our students. I am eager to begin planning. Please let me know when you have made a decision.

Appreciatively,



Claudia Holum  
German Teacher/German Club Advisor  
Stanwood High School  
cholum@stanwood.wednet.edu  
(360) 629-1300 ext. 5325

April 2023

Dear German Students and Families,

I would like you to please read the following information, in accordance with Board Policy # 2320, and return the signed bottom slip to me at your earliest convenience:

1. This educational tour to Germany is neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Stanwood- Camano School District.
2. I, Claudia Holum, am not acting in my capacity as an employee or agent of the Stanwood-Camano School District.
3. This educational tour to Germany is not approved, endorsed, or otherwise sanctioned by the district.
4. All participants of this tour, their families, and heirs release the district from any reliability associated with this educational tour.

Please let me know if you have further questions regarding this policy.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Claudia Holum  
German Teacher SHS/SMS  
German Club Advisor

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I/we have read the information about board policy # 2320 regarding non-district sponsored educational tours, and I/we understand that the tour is not approved, endorsed, or otherwise sanctioned by the district. Participants, their families, and heirs release the district from any liability associated with such tours.'

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Frequently Asked Questions & Answers

### Who is Xperitas?

Xperitas is a nonprofit educational organization based in Minneapolis, Minnesota dedicated to promoting language learning and global citizenship through authentic immersion experiences.

### What is the Xperitas Mission Statement?

“Transforming lives through shared global experience and intercultural learning.”

### How do Xperitas programs benefit the entire community?

- Xperitas teachers and their students frequently participate in a variety of activities before, during and after their program.
- Enthusiastic students may share their experiences with civic and social organizations.
- Teachers may arrange projects and presentations for use in their school districts.
- Students share their experiences with family and often cultivate a new passion for travel and language.

### Who is eligible to participate?

Though most Xperitas participants are in high school, we also work with world language students at the elementary and middle school levels. Two years of instruction in the target language is our minimum recommendation for students participating in a family stay abroad.

### How many schools are involved with Xperitas Programs?

Since 1972, Xperitas has worked with hundreds of schools in over 30 states to provide immersion experiences for more than 100,000 students.

### What does a typical Xperitas program consist of?

A typical program includes several days of travel to cultural sites in addition to a family stay and/or school visit.

### How does an Xperitas program differ from a typical tour?

- Xperitas programs are run entirely by world language educators or expert guides whose primary objective is a high-quality educational experience for participating students.
- Xperitas provides comprehensive educational materials to adequately prepare each student for his/her program.
- Nearly all Xperitas programs include a family stay and/or school visit, providing participants with unique insights into the target culture as well as the opportunity to speak the target language with native speakers in authentic settings.
- Students are asked to speak the target language during the entire program, providing them with numerous opportunities to challenge themselves and cement the concepts learned in the classroom.



**How do we support students from under-resourced families?**

Xperitas is a nonprofit organization and, as such, seeks to support every student who is committed to language and cultural immersion. In schools that offer travel on a regular basis, students can plan and save over a two- or three-year period. Xperitas shares fundraising ideas with students, teachers and parents who request them, and many students can fundraise a portion of their program cost themselves.

**Is financial aid available to students?**

Xperitas maintains a financial aid fund to benefit eligible students. Each year Xperitas disperses more than \$50,000 in financial aid grants based on need. Xperitas is also proud to provide a \$2,000 alumnus scholarship to one student per year who plans to study a world language in college and up to four writing scholarships annually of \$500 each. See our website for the most up to date eligibility requirements and application materials: [www.xperitas.org](http://www.xperitas.org)

**What is included in the price of the program?**

Xperitas strives to provide transparent and fair pricing for all programs. Our program price includes airfare, lodging in hotels and the homes of volunteer host families, in-country ground transportation, and health/cancellation insurance. The number of meals provided vary by itinerary.

**What preparation and costs are involved for the District and accompanying teachers?**

The district will need to factor in the cost of a substitute teacher if school time is missed. For teachers and other adult leaders accompanying the students, their program costs (apart from non- included meals and incidental expenses) are covered – provided that the group meets the minimum student-to-leader ratio. In cases where the school's program enrollment does not meet the ratio, the teacher/leader(s) will be charged a pro-rated program price.

**Are the participants covered by insurance during the time of the program?**

Yes. Limited medical and cancellation insurance is included in the price of the program. Details of this coverage are available on our website. Xperitas is protected by a multimillion-dollar liability policy for its operations abroad and teachers who travel as leaders are covered under this policy.

**What provision is made for medical or other emergencies?**

The standard parental release form gives leaders and Xperitas the authority to secure necessary medical treatment and/or to send the participant home for medical treatment.

**What is the student-leader ratio on Xperitas programs?**

Approximately 6 students per leader. Minimum group size varies by itinerary.

**Who will supervise the students during the program?**

Supervision is provided by the world language teacher(s) accompanying the students and/or a capable leader selected and assigned by Xperitas. During the family stay the students will be supervised by their host families. One of the American group leaders will also be available on an "on-call" basis within the family-stay community. The local Xperitas family stay coordinator is also available.



**What kind of transportation is used on the program?**

Flights are arranged on commercial airline carriers. Public buses and trains as well as chartered motor coaches and vans may be used depending on your destination or the size of your group.

**How can a student be contacted during the program?**

Contact with students is made possible through a communication network linking Xperitas with its representatives abroad and local correspondents along the itinerary. All necessary telephone and fax numbers are printed on the student's final itinerary, a copy of which the student is instructed to leave with his/her parents. Xperitas provides group leaders and parents with an emergency number to reach staff at any time during the program. For parents who need to contact their child in an emergency, it is best for parents to contact Xperitas first.

**What happens to a student who causes a discipline problem on the trip?**

In the rare case where a student violates Xperitas' Code of Conduct (which must be signed by all program participants and a parent), Xperitas reserves the right to return that student to the United States at the parents' expense. This option will not be employed until the teachers/leaders have exhausted their disciplinary measures or if the individual's behavior threatens the group.



## REST ASSURED ADVANTAGES

FINANCIAL | HEALTH | SAFETY

Included in Every Language  
Immersion Travel Program

# PROTECTIONS

**Automatically included in every program.**

We don't just talk about how we care about our travelers, we integrate essential protections into every aspect of our programs. We strive to keep our pricing as transparent as possible. *Xperitas Rest Assured Advantages* are designed to provide teachers, students, and their families with the travel assurances and assistance they need.

We include desirable items that prioritize financial protections, traveler safety and well-being in every program.

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# WHAT'S INCLUDED?

## Peace-of-Mind

### Pre-Travel Insurance Coverage

- Trip cancellation coverage due to medical reasons only\*
- NEW! Trip cancellation & delay insurance (additional coverages up to \$2000 for issues related to COVID-19 and more!)\*

### Insurance Coverage While Traveling

- Medical coverage for accidents and illness while on the program, up to \$50,000
- Emergency medical evacuation per doctor orders or natural disaster/political instability involving the program location
- Liability insurance for group leaders

*\* Xperitas prides itself in clear cancellation policies with specific deadlines for action that are communicated to student families in advance of those deadlines in the event their circumstances change.*

### Financial Assistance

- Meaningful financial aid programs covering up to 60% of program costs for eligible participants\*
- Early Bird discount
- Sibling discount
- Returning participant discount
- Merit-based Scholarships
- Coffee Fundraising Program
- Fundraising ideas
- Teacher stipends to minimize teacher's out-of-pocket costs during program

*\*Over the past decade, Xperitas has awarded over one million dollars to expand language and cultural immersion opportunities.*

### Pre-travel Support

- A dedicated Xperitas Program Manager
- Adherence to health and safety guidelines from *recognized* health and government authorities domestically and abroad
- Participants are registered with *STEP*, the U.S. State Department's *Smart Traveler Enrollment Program*
- Pre-travel resources to prepare students for a safe travel experience

### Support While Traveling

- Communication with your dedicated Xperitas Program Manager during travel abroad through post-program
- In-country support with trusted local partners and Family Stay Coordinators
- 24-7 emergency support from Xperitas





## Comparison Chart | Educational Student Travel Programs

Questions	Xperitas	Organization #2	Organization #3
How long have they been in business?	Since 1972		
Financial Stability: Can you view their IRS 990 or recent audit?	Yes, you can view our 990-tax return on <a href="http://Guidestar.org">Guidestar.org</a> . We can provide a letter demonstrating financial stability upon request.		
Do they emphasize language immersion?	Yes		
Do they offer a family stay component?	Yes		
Do they provide preparation materials?	Yes		
Is Financial Aid available?	Yes.  Participants whose families have a household income of up to \$55,000 will receive financial aid support if they apply.		
Do they require a student Code of Conduct?	Yes		
Do they offer a teacher training workshop?	Yes		
Do they offer other grants or awards for teachers and students focused on language learning?	Yes—please visit our website for more details.		
Itinerary Comparisons			
How long are the programs?	7-21 days		
Are hotels located in the city center?	Yes		
What type of transportation is provided?	Varies by itinerary		
Is an entry fee allowance included?	Varies by itinerary		
Is a leader stipend included?	\$25-\$50 per student on published programs		
Are meals included?	Breakfast every day; other meals depend on the itinerary.		

**Comparison Chart (continued)**

<b>Itinerary Comparisons</b>			
Insurance: What is included?	Accident, sickness and trip cancellation and delay insurance for students & teachers.		
Is liability insurance included to cover your school, district and teacher(s)?	Liability insurance is provided to all traveling teachers. Schools/districts may request a certificate as an additional named insured.		
Is additional insurance offered?	Additional insurance coverage may be purchased by individual travelers prior to their trip.		
Is the airline fuel surcharge included in the price?	Yes - fuel surcharges are included in the program price.		
May program participants pay by credit card?	Yes – via Xperitas’ secure online payment portal		

*sample  
itinerary*

Visit [xperitas.org](http://xperitas.org)  
to see our Germany  
video!

## Abenteuer in den Alpen

### 15-Day Self-Guided Language Immersion Program in Germany

Upon arrival, you're off to the medieval town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber. Then, take in the sights of München, with a visit to the memorial at Dachau, and the lovely *Schloss Nymphenburg*. From there, the group explores the German Alps and meets their host families – *Willkommen!* Tour the *Schwarzwald*, and enjoy a trip to the university town of Heidelberg. Guided programs are only available in the summer.

### Trip Overview

15  
DAYS



SELF-GUIDED



WITH  
FAMILY STAY



FROM \$3,899  
SEATTLE



### Features & Inclusions

- ROUND-TRIP AIRFARE
- OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS
- IN-COUNTRY TRANSPORTATION
- INSURANCE
- XPERITAS STAFF GUIDE

### What Others Are Saying

*"My family was so welcoming, and I learned so much being included in the small activities of their daily life. I miss them already!"* — **Katherine S., Brookfield, WI**

*"I loved how this trip seemed to open my son's eyes to different cultures and gave him a sense of accomplishment with his use of his language skills."*

— **Laura M., Granby, CO**

Visit [xperitas.org](http://xperitas.org)  
for more photos,  
stories and pricing  
information.

## References for Teachers, School Administrators, School Board Members & Parents

French	German	Spanish
<b>AnnMarie Allen</b> Bayport Blue Point HS <u>Bayport, NY</u> <a href="mailto:aallen@bbpschools.org">aallen@bbpschools.org</a> <u>631.472.7800</u>	<b>Linda Havas</b> Greendale HS Greendale, WI <a href="mailto:linda.havas@greendale.k12.wi.us">linda.havas@greendale.k12.wi.us</a> <u>414.423.0110</u>	<b>Belinda Bjerkvold</b> Whitefish Bay HS <u>Whitefish Bay, WI</u> <a href="mailto:belinda.bjerkvold@wfbschools.com">belinda.bjerkvold@wfbschools.com</a> <u>414.963.3928</u>
<b>Mauri Deer</b> Farmington HS Farmington, MN <a href="mailto:mdeer@farmington.k12.mn.us">mdeer@farmington.k12.mn.us</a> <u>651.252.2501</u>	<b>Lynn Hinzmann</b> Duluth East H.S. <u>Duluth, MN</u> <a href="mailto:lynn.hinzmann@isd709.org">lynn.hinzmann@isd709.org</a> <u>218.336.8830 x2159</u>	<b>Kim Lackey</b> Rockwood Summit HS Fenton, MO <a href="mailto:Lackeykimberly@rsdmo.org">Lackeykimberly@rsdmo.org</a> <u>314.660.7979</u>
<b>Jane Ditewig</b> R.A. Long HS Longview, WA <a href="mailto:jditewig@longview.k12.wa.us">jditewig@longview.k12.wa.us</a> <u>360.575.7296</u>	<b>Claudia Holum</b> Stanwood HS Stanwood, WA <a href="mailto:cholum@stanwood.wednet.edu">cholum@stanwood.wednet.edu</a> <u>360.629.1300</u>	<b>John Fitzer</b> Delano HS <u>Delano, MN</u> <a href="mailto:john.fitzer@delanoschools.org">john.fitzer@delanoschools.org</a> <u>763.972.3365</u>
<b>Julia Price</b> Westosha Central HS <u>Kenosha, WI</u> <a href="mailto:pricej@westosha.k12.wi.us">pricej@westosha.k12.wi.us</a> <u>262.843.2321x260</u>	<b>Beth Lillskau</b> Prairie MS Cedar Rapids, IA <a href="mailto:blillskau@crprairie.org">blillskau@crprairie.org</a> <u>319.848.5500 x1057</u>	<b>Justin Peeper</b> Homestead HS Fort Wayne, IN <a href="mailto:jpeeper@sacs.k12.in.us">jpeeper@sacs.k12.in.us</a> <u>260.273.1765</u>
<b>Cara Heminger</b> Department Chair Lincoln Public Schools Lincoln, NE <a href="mailto:cheming@lps.org">cheming@lps.org</a> <u>402.436.1305</u>	<b>Doug Philipp</b> Cheyenne Mountain HS Colorado Springs, CO <a href="mailto:runhiketeach@yahoo.com">runhiketeach@yahoo.com</a> <u>719.475.6110</u>	<b>Tonya Piscitello</b> New Trier Township HS Winnetka, IL <a href="mailto:Piscitet@newtrier.k12.il.us">Piscitet@newtrier.k12.il.us</a> <u>847.428.7822</u>

The above contacts have agreed to serve as references for Xperitas programs.

You may contact them with questions.

[Learn More About Early Bird Discount for 2024 Programs](#)

# Insurance Coverages for Immersion Programs

PREPARED FOR SAFE & HEALTHY TRAVEL

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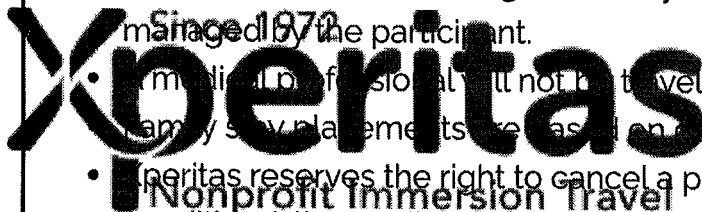
## Included Insurance Protections

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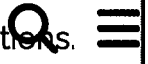
Xperitas cares about its participants and the quality of the immersion experience we offer. We integrate essential protections into every aspect of our programs so that our travelers are covered.

### Health Conditions & Special Needs

Traveling abroad can be a stressful experience that may exacerbate a health condition. Participants must disclose any health conditions, medications, medically verified allergies, or dietary restrictions of which Xperitas, the program leader and/or the host community or host family should be made aware. This includes mental, emotional and/or social health concerns. For this reason we ask participants to indicate on the program application any health condition of which Xperitas, the program teacher/leader and the host family should be aware.



- All health conditions, allergies, dietary restrictions, and medications must be self-managed by the participant.
- Medical professionals will not be traveling with groups. Family stay placements are based on consideration of medical or dietary conditions.
- Xperitas reserves the right to cancel a participant who does not disclose a health condition/allergy/dietary restriction or disability on their application or provide updates of an existing or new diagnosis.



[Learn More About Early Bird Discount for 2024 Programs](#)

## Cancellation Insurance



- The cancellation insurance included in the program price is for medically related causes only affecting the participant or a member of the participant's immediate family.
- The maximum coverage amount (\$1000) is applied against the incurred loss calculated as of the date Xperitas receives the written cancellation. A physician's statement and signature will be required for any medical claim.

## What Else is Covered?



- All Xperitas program participants are covered by Xperitas' traveler insurance, Core™ Travel insurance, which includes evacuation for groups who "are at risk of grave physical harm or death" due to a natural disaster or political instability while traveling abroad.
- In the event that a participant falls ill or has an accident while traveling, the group leader(s) will ensure the traveler receives medical attention immediately. Limited insurance for minor illness or accidents and trip cancellation insurance is provided for all Xperitas program participants. Coverage details, policies and instructions can be found on the Core Travel FAQ document below. The insurance policy pays 100% of covered expenses for emergency medical evacuation, and is coordinated by Zurich Travel Assist, a travel assistance company that operates around the world in conjunction with our insurer. The Zurich Travel Assist emergency hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- **Note:** Pre-existing conditions, mental illness and pregnancy are not covered. Xperitas recommends that each traveler's own comprehensive medical insurance be current and include coverage for the destination country.

Core Travel Medical and Trip Cancellation Insurance is included in the price of all Xperitas travel programs. [Find Core Travel FAQ here.](#)

[Learn More About Early Bird Discount for 2024 Programs](#)

## Trip Cancellation & Delay Insurance Program

Participant health and safety is always a priority at Xperitas. We want to make sure all our participants are covered in case of unforeseen complications when planning or traveling. Through the International Volunteer Programs Association (IVPA) we have secured this trip cancellation insurance program for our participants.

### Program Coverage Highlights

- This program provides additional coverages that are not included in the Core Travel Medical and Trip Cancellation Insurance that Xperitas provides to all our travelers.
- Trip cancellation coverage up to \$2,000 should you need to cancel your participation prior to the program start date if you are impacted by illness (including COVID-19), required to quarantine related to COVID-19 or experience accidental injury and other

covered events.

Since 1972



• Trip Cancellation and Trip Interruption coverage up to \$2,000 should you be impacted by illness (including COVID-19) or required to quarantine related to COVID-19 or experience accidental injury or other covered events that occur during your program.



## Program Note & FAQ

[Learn More About Early Bird Discount for 2024 Programs](#)



The Trip Cancellation Insurance Program is separate from the included Core Travel Medical and Trip Cancellation Insurance policy and is included for all 2023 language immersion program participants. [Click here for the detailed IVPA FAQ.](#)

## Special Note for Leaders



Xperitas will cover the cost up to \$2,000 (food, lodging, and transportation up to \$150/day) if a leader needs to remain in country because a student(s) is in quarantine.

## Additional Insurance Coverage

Xperitas is pleased to provide participants an opportunity to purchase additional insurance coverage through Core Travel Insurance. Some participants on Xperitas programs request additional insurance to augment the insurance automatically provided on all Xperitas programs. You are not required to purchase additional insurance, but we want to make it easy if you do.

[Optional Core Travel Plans](#)



[Core Travel Contact Information](#)

