

# Stanwood Camano School District

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM: STEVE LIDGARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – BUSINESS SERVICES

SUBJECT: SOLICITING STUDENTS FOR FIELD TRIP TO GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

DATE: MARCH 1, 2022

TYPE: ACTION NEEDED

John Swanson, Mathematics teacher at Stanwood High School, is requesting Board approval to solicit Stanwood High School students to participate in a STEM based educational trip to the Galapagos Islands through World Strides in June 2023.

This is a non-district sponsored educational trip. Mr. Swanson, students or employees that participate will not be representatives of the school of district.

**Recommendation: We recommend the board approve John Swanson's request to solicit students to participate in the World Strides STEM based Field Trip to the Galapagos Islands in June 2023**

February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

To: Stanwood-Camano School District School Board

From: John Swanson, Stanwood High School

Dear Board Members,

**RECEIVED**

**FEB 18 2022**

**STANWOOD-CAMANO  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

I am requesting permission to solicit students for an upcoming trip. I would be leading the fourth STEM based trip from Stanwood High School next summer. This trip would be our first trip to the Galapagos Islands and would occur at the end of June 2023. While there we would learn directly about volcanoes, various ecosystems, the giant tortoises, marine biology and a variety of other STEM topics. In addition to that, we would learn about the history and culture of the Galapagos Islands. I have always believed that travel impacts students' growth and learning, but I was shocked to see the statistics and how much of an impact travel really does have. This would be our fourth STEM based trip, the first to the Galapagos Islands, and my plan is to develop it into a tradition so that the experiences can be shared with many Stanwood students over the years.

While this would be my third international trip with students, I have taken them on many trips over the years. I have been leading the annual trip to the University of Washington for the past 13 or so years for Math Day. As a wrestling coach I have taken students to tournaments and camps for the past 17 years. This summer I am taking a small group to Iceland (our second trip there) and in 2019 I took a group to Alaska. In the beginning I was a bit nervous to take students on long trips. However, my previous experiences and working with the tour company (World Strides), all my worries have been put to rest and I am just excited to go and to share this amazing experience with the students.

I would like to start this process by getting parents to an evening informational meeting about the trip.

#### **Overview of Details**

I have included some papers with information pertaining to our trip.

- I. A sample itinerary of the trip.
- II. The Next Generation Science Standards Alignment for the trip. This is an educational trip and it does align to our set science standards. Students even have the option to work to get science credit.
- III. Student Rules and Regulations Personal Behavior Contract and Emergency Medical Release. This is the behavior contract that the tour company uses.
- IV. Information on how COVID is being handled and their successful track record in doing so.
- V. Information about the tour company, World Strides. This company offers educational trips for many subjects both internationally and domestically. They are a full-service agency that will make our travel arrangements, lodging and meals, scheduled tours and transportatio, will provide us with a course leader, and provides the insurance, emergency support, and educational materials. World Strides has been in business for over 50 years and was founded by a teacher who took his middle school class to Washington, DC and thought that there should be an easier way for teachers to make educational trips with their students. They have an exemplary record and an amazing reputation.
- VI. Trip Finances and school district responsibility.  
This trip is being financed by the students who are going, their families, and fundraising efforts. The students are responsible for any extra spending money that they want to bring with them and any other expenses incurred during the trip. The district will not be responsible for any of the finances for the trip. The travelers have medical coverage of their own and that provided through World Strides. We have our own travel arrangements to and from the airport. The trip is during the summer, so there will be not costs for class coverage or anything else that would be needed if it were during school.

Again, I am very excited about this trip, as are many students who have heard about the last trip. More than that, I am excited to work to make trips like this a part of the STEM educational experience that Stanwood High School can offer to our students.

Thank you for all the support that you offer to the students of our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Swanson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Swanson

Teacher

Stanwood High School

# GALAPAGOS



**WorldStrides**  
Educational Travel & Experiences

## SAMPLE ITINERARY

DESTINATION: Galapagos

### YOUR DAY-BY-DAY ADVENTURE

#### DAY 1

Arrive in **Quito, Ecuador.**

Meet your WorldStrides Course Leader and begin your once-in-a-lifetime experience!

Hotel check-in

#### DAY 2

Breakfast

Tour Quito with your Course Leader and see its top attractions including:

**Compañía Church** The Church was built in 1605 by the Jesuits, it is one of the most significant baroque structures of South America.

**Panecillo Viewpoint** The most important natural viewpoint in Quito.

**Independence and Presidential Palace** The center of the city showcasing art, history, and landscaping as well as a monument for those who called for independence from the Spanish Empire.

**San Francisco Church** A 16th-century Roman Catholic church, the largest historical architectural structure of colonial Latin America.

Lunch

**Mitad del Mundo** The middle of the world! Stand on the equator at zero degrees latitude. Experience interactive exhibits and learn about the unique scientific considerations at this location.

Dinner and return to hotel

**Evening Activity:** Consider the geologic origins of the islands and why they are scientifically significant before participating in an evolution activity.

#### DAY 3

Breakfast and hotel check-out

**Flight from Quito to Santa Cruz Island in the Galapagos Islands** Santa Cruz is the second largest island of the Galapagos.

**Twin Craters** Explore a pair of volcanic sinkholes call Los Gemelos. Their formation was caused by a large collapse of land rather than a volcanic eruption.

**Highlands of the Island** Travel into mist-covered forests and see many different ecological communities. Stop at a ranch and observe giant tortoises in their natural habitat.

Tour **Lava Tunnels** and engage with an activity on volcanic landforms and tectonic plates

Lunch and hotel check-in

**Darwin Research Center** Founded in 1959, this educational research center works with the National Park Service on conservation and sustainability in the Galapagos Islands. Examine and learn about the climate, geography, and ecology of the area.

Dinner and hotel check-in

#### DAY 4

Breakfast and hotel check-out

Transfer to **Isabela Island**

Spend your morning touring the **wetlands** and investigating estuaries and endemic mangroves.

Visit the **Playa de Amor** and see flamingos eating at a local lake. Learn about Darwin's finches and participate in an adaptation activity.

**Giant Tortoise Breeding Center** Created to protect these amazing animals throughout their life cycle. Study species differentiation and complete a ecological relationships activity.

Lunch

**Wall of Tears** Visit One of the most important historical sites on the Galapagos Islands. Hand-built by the prisoners sent to the island back in the 1940's. Thousands of inmates were injured or lost their lives while being forced to build the structure.

**Snorkel at Concha Perla** Walk through mangroves to a shallow bay perfect for snorkeling, packed full fish, playful sea lions, and the Galapagos penguin.

Dinner and hotel check-in

#### DAY 5

Breakfast

**Sierra Negra Volcano Excursion** Full-day guided excursion through the Sierra Negra Volcano area. Hike the rim of the six-mile wide crater, then trek across the lava fields and fumaroles. Along the way, consider the unique ecological landscape and learn how to correctly identify the different types of volcanic rock.

**Soccer Match with Locals** After a full day of exploring, enjoy a friendly soccer game with locals.

Dinner

#### DAY 6

Breakfast and hotel check-out

Transfer by boat to **Las Tintoreras**

**Las Tintoreras Guided Excursion** Come face to face with some of the Galapagos more interesting residents: marine iguanas, Galapagos penguins, sally lightfoot crabs, green sea turtles, resting white tip reef sharks, and more.

**Snorkeling Adventure** In the clear blue waters. Learn how to identify the many varieties of fish and study their marine habitats. Consider the threat of climate change to these important ecosystems.

Transfer to **Santa Cruz Island** by boat

Exploratory time along the **Boulevard of Puerto Ayora**

Dinner and hotel check-in

#### DAY 7

Breakfast and hotel check-out. Transfer to **Balra Island** via **Itabaca Canal**

**Flight to Quito.** Explore Otavalo while participating in a fun scavenger hunt.

**Farewell dinner** in Otavalo with a Andean Musician show

Hotel check-in

#### DAY 8

Breakfast and hotel check-out

**Otavalo Market** Witness a wide range of colorful weavings, jewelry, clothes, wood & stone carvings, and more produced by the Otavaleños, an indigenous group of Latin America.

**Peguche Waterfall Hike** to this waterfall, considered a ceremonial site where locals carry out traditional rituals prior to the sun and harvest celebrations.

**Nanda Manachi Instrumental House** Learn about traditional, hand-crafted Andean instruments and listen to authentic music.

Take part in a **Pachamanca** ceremony, an ancestral Andean cuisine preparation where food is cooked underground for 2-3 hours.

Visit **Cuicocha Volcanic Lake** Created by volcanic dome, this crystal clear water has depths up to 200-meters.

Dinner and overnight flight home

### AN ALL-INCLUSIVE EXPERIENCE



ROUND TRIP  
TRANSPORTATION



HOTEL  
ACCOMMODATIONS



THREE MEALS  
A DAY  
(UNLESS OTHERWISE  
STATED)



GROUND  
TRANSPORTATION TO  
AND FROM  
ALL ACTIVITIES



ALL ADMISSIONS AND  
FEES FOR SCHEDULED  
ACTIVITIES



EXPERTLY  
TRAINED  
COURSE  
LEADERS



24-HOUR  
EMERGENCY  
SUPPORT



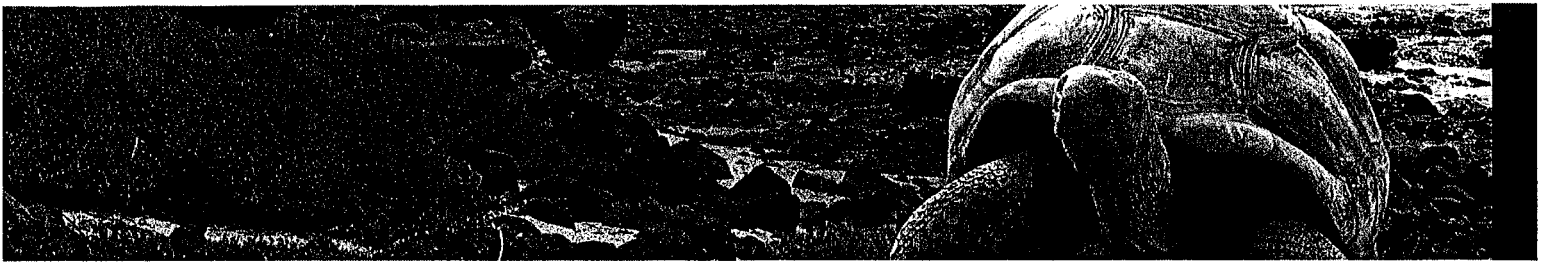
ACADEMIC  
CREDIT

### LEAP

LEARNING THROUGH EXPLORATION  
AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

This trademarked approach to learning is one of the many aspects of a tour that sets WorldStrides apart. LEAP is designed so students are engaged and active learners and challenged to think critically, all while growing personally and intellectually. It's not just about seeing amazing sites; it's about getting the students to interact with the people, the culture, and the actual places these locations have to offer.

The above represents a sample itinerary. Changes or substitutions may be made depending on your travel dates, arrival and departure times, national holidays, and events beyond WorldStrides' control at the discretion of WorldStrides as it deems necessary or desirable.



**UNMATCHED  
SAFETY  
AND SECURITY**  
AROUND THE  
CLOCK COVERAGE

- > WorldStrides name badges with detailed emergency contact information for all travelers
- > \$1 million USTOA Travelers Assistance Program
- > Comprehensive liability coverage for you, your school, and all travelers
- > Accident, medical, and dental coverage for all travelers



**MOTOR COACH DRIVERS**  
Only the best motor coach drivers to transport your group



**TOUR CENTRAL**  
Our 24-hour local office, available to provide support



**DOCTORS ON CALL**  
Exclusive partnership giving you access to doctors for consultations and treatment recommendations



**COURSE LEADERS**  
Your destination expert to guide your group during your trip

**COMMITMENT  
TO  
EDUCATION**

- > Free professional development for traveling teachers
- > Hands-on educational experiences with an expertly trained course leader
- > Opportunity for students to earn free high school and even college preparatory credit (on some programs)
- > Educational materials including Student Discovery Journals and teacher support materials

**ACCREDITED, JUST LIKE YOUR SCHOOL**

WorldStrides undergoes the same rigorous accreditation process that your school is required to do. It's this process and these credentials that ensure your tour will be as educationally valuable as it is fun.



**TURNKEY  
SERVICE FOR  
TEACHERS  
AND THEIR  
FAMILIES**

- > \$2.5 million in financial assistance available for families with annual adjusted gross incomes of \$85,000 or below
- > Flexible and affordable payment plans available
- > All registration and financial services for families provided by WorldStrides
- > Multi-lingual customer support team for families
- > All trip promotional and registration materials provided by WorldStrides to the program leader
- > Discounted trip price for family of program leader and chaperones
- > Optional Full Refund Program available to families for a small additional fee

**GIFT OF  
EDUCATION  
FUNDRAISING**



The Gift of Education puts students in the driver's seat of their own fundraising. Students can send e-cards or a letter and share links on Facebook, and in one simple click friends and family members can make a direct donation. 100% of the money raised goes to offset the price of the trip.

Visit [fundraising.worldstrides.com](http://fundraising.worldstrides.com) for complete details.



## **Student Rules and Regulations Personal Behavior Contract**

The WorldStrides tour you have elected to attend offers many unique opportunities and experiences. Beyond the educational benefits, the tour offers opportunities to form new friendships and to meet the challenges of independence.

We at WorldStrides promote a tour atmosphere where chaperones and students support one another with genuine respect. As a student participant, it is your responsibility to help make the tour a positive and enjoyable experience for yourself, fellow students, and chaperones. All participants are expected to demonstrate high standards of conduct and to accept personal responsibility and consequences for their actions. You are expected to exhibit honesty, courteousness and consideration toward others. This includes those in your group, as well as anyone else with whom you may come in contact, such as Motorcoach Drivers, guides and restaurant and hotel staff.

Our goal at WorldStrides is to make this trip an educational, safe, and enjoyable experience for everyone. We require your cooperation and commitment to the following behavior standards to help us meet this goal.

We expect the student/participant to obey the following rules of behavior:

- ❖ The student is to follow the directions and the rules and regulations established by the chaperones both prior to and during the tour.
- ❖ The student shall not be involved in any way with smoking, alcohol, illegal drugs, vandalism, theft, or any other type of behavior that is judged by the chaperones to be detrimental to the health, well-being, safety, or reputation of him/herself or anyone else in the group including the chaperones or WorldStrides.
- ❖ The student shall comply with all rules and regulations of the various governmental and vendor agencies (such as airlines, hotels, motorcoach companies, etc.).
- ❖ The student shall remain with the group at all times unless, and only if and when, the chaperones specifically allow you free time.
- ❖ The student shall follow the directions of the Program Leader, chaperones, and WorldStrides staff.
- ❖ The use of hotel facilities carries with it the responsibility of leaving them in the same conditions in which they were found. The student is responsible for any damage.
- ❖ Quiet hours at the hotel will be observed from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. At 10:30 p.m. students must be in their own rooms. Students must remain quietly in their rooms until awakened by chaperones.
- ❖ The student may never leave the hotel unless accompanied by a chaperone.
- ❖ The student must sleep in his/her assigned hotel room each night.
- ❖ Good common sense, respect and consideration for others and their property should be practiced daily.

If the student should violate any of these rules, he/she may be sent home at the sole discretion of the chaperones. In such cases, the parent/guardian will be contacted and the student sent home at the parent's expense.

### **Student Contract**

I have read, and I understand the behavior rules and regulations of WorldStrides. I agree to comply with all of these rules and regulations.

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Parent Contract**

I have read, and I understand and support the rules and regulations of the WorldStrides tour. I represent that my child or ward has read the rules and regulations and has agreed to comply with all of them. It is understood that the signature on this behavior contract of one parent or guardian implies the consent of the other.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND TO WORLDSTRIDES. RETURN TO YOUR PROGRAM LEADER.**