



Community High School Foreign Exchange Program

We are the only Dupage area High School with four exchange programs to Germany, France, Spain and Costa Rica.

Students from CHS accompanied by their teacher travel to a foreign country for two or three weeks where they live with families, attend classes at the local high school and go sightseeing. The following year the students from the foreign country come to West Chicago and live with our families, attend our classes and visit major points of interest in Chicagoland.

Any student studying a foreign language at CHS may host a student from another country. To qualify to travel to another country, students must be in their second year of language study and have satisfactory academic and behavioral records. Students may also choose to receive $\frac{1}{4}$ academic credit for participation as a host and/or as a traveler.

CHS students have an exceptional opportunity to meet and improve their communicative language skills with students from all four of these countries, whether hosting or traveling to France, Costa Rica, Spain or Germany.

German Exchange

The German Exchange Program began in the spring of 1980 with the Schloss Internat Eringerfeld and the following year we found an ideal partner school the Simon-Marius Gymnasium in Gunzenhausen, Germany. The match between our schools, communities, and families was so perfect that we have been together ever since. We will be celebrating our 35th Anniversary in the spring of 2015 during our partner school's visit.

Our students travel to Gunzenhausen for a three-week program in Germany, where students live with a German family. They attend school daily, make presentations in classes, and participate in field trips which are designed to familiarize them with the life and culture of that area of Germany. Students visit the historic cities of Nürnberg and Würzburg and often take a three-day trip to Munich and the Alps, where they visit the fairy-tale castle of Neuschwanstein and view the world from the top of the Zugspitze, the highest mountain in Germany.

The exchange continues the following March, when the German students are hosted in our community and attend West Chicago Community High School, making presentations in our classes, and participating in activities designed to familiarize them with our Chicagoland area and our American way of life.



Costa Rica and Spain Exchanges

The Exchange programs for Spanish started in 1991 with an exchange to Costa Rica. We have traveled or hosted with them every year since. The trip to Costa Rica lasts 3 weeks and includes a visit to the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, complete with day and night tours of the reserve, horseback riding, a visit to a Butterfly Farm and a ride on the zip line through the forest canopy. The trip coincides with one week of the semester vacation of our hosts and each family takes one of our students to different places during the trip. Students have visited active and dormant volcanoes, historical sites, and any number of the pristine beaches that give Costa Rica its name. Visitors from Costa Rica come to Chicago during their “summer vacation” in January. For many of the travelers, it’s the first they’ve experienced cold and snow (“Cold” in Costa Rica is 50°!).

The exchange program with Spain started in 1995. Because Spain’s school year coincides with ours, the trip is held over spring break, and lasts about 10 days. We include a stay in Madrid, the capital city. The students get to see world class

museums and the bustle of a European capital, as well as traveled to many other cities near our host schools. The trip is whirlwind, and our sister school in Soria has made us feel at home during our trips. The town is surrounded by mountains and has historical sites dating from before the Roman conquest of Spain! The Spaniards visit West Chicago in September and see Chicago as the summer winds into fall.



French Exchange

The French Exchange Program started in the spring of 1985. Twenty-five students and two teachers, Madame Saury and Madame Mattera from the Lycee Emanuel Mounier in Grenoble, France came to Community High School for two weeks. Marjorie Appel, head of the Foreign Language Department and French teacher initiated the program after making contact with Madame Saury during her year as a Fulbright Exchange teacher in France.

Each year students from Community High School have either gone to Grenoble or hosted students from Grenoble for almost 30 years!

When students go to France they live with families, attend classes at the Lycee Mounier and visit important places close to Grenoble. One year students went to Geneva, Switzerland and toured the United Nations. After Grenoble, students spend three days sightseeing and shopping in Paris.

Students from Grenoble come the CHS for two weeks, live with families of students who are studying French, attend classes at Community High School, sight-see and shop in the Chicago area. A favorite place to visit is Navy Pier.

The goals of our Exchange Programs are to improve students' language skills, increase their knowledge of other countries and people, while promoting international understanding and friendship. Students truly appreciate the importance of studying a foreign language after their memorable experiences!