



COSTA RICA 2026

**FOR BOLLES STUDENTS IN
GRADES 6-8**

Travel Dates
MAY 26-JUNE 2, 2026

Cost
Approximately \$3850-\$4220
Includes flights, accommodations,
and all meals in Costa Rica

Contact
Jon Ezzell, EzzellJ@bolles.org;
Adriana Stam, StamA@bolles.org;
Allison Chandler,
ChandlerA@bolles.org

**APPLICATIONS AND \$500
DEPOSIT DUE BY
NOVEMBER 7, 2025**



GLOBAL LEARNING: NICOYA PENINSULA, COSTA RICA

In the Nicoya Peninsula students will be immersed in a community renowned for its exceptional well-being. Each day, they will engage with community members, and learn from local organizations addressing global issues. These organizations include environmental activists, educators, biologists and other impactful and purposeful leaders. In the evenings, the group will come together for reflection and learning sessions to process their experiences. This tranquil setting serves as a platform for students to connect their newfound knowledge with how they can apply it in their home communities. Students will visit an International Wildlife Rescue and meet with local guides to learn about preservation, take part in a nightly turtle patrol (weather permitting), and towards the end of the program students will have a chance to celebrate their learning with a canopy zipline tour and visit to the mud baths near Volcano Rincón.

The mission of World Leadership School is to partner with K-12 schools to reimagine learning and create next-generation leaders. The WLS sees travel as a powerful tool for guiding students toward lives of purpose.

For more information, visit
Bolles.org/global-learning-and-engagement/travel-programs



IMMERSIVE PARTNERSHIP-BASED TRAVEL PROGRAMS

NICOYA PENINSULA, COSTA RICA

COSTA RICA

Costa Rica ranks among the top 20 countries worldwide for **biodiversity**, despite the fact that its land area represents less than one third of one percent of the planet's surface. There are more than 1,400 species of orchids in Costa Rica, and new ones continue to be discovered every year! This staggering biodiversity stems from Costa Rica's function as a land bridge between two continents and its combination of **varied ecosystems and geographic features**. These include rain and cloud forests, savanna, mountains, volcanoes, two separate ocean coastlines, beaches, and mangrove swamps.



No country in Latin America has been more successful than Costa Rica in creating **long-standing economic and political stability**. Costa Rica has aggressively protected its natural resources and, in the process, become a global model for the rewards of **sustainable tourism**. A quarter of Costa Rica's land has been officially protected, and off the coast ten times that area has been set aside as marine reserves.



APPROACH TO GLOBAL ISSUES

Nestled along the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, the Nicoya Peninsula not only boasts stunning natural beauty but also stands as a microcosm of global issues and solutions. In a world grappling with **environmental degradation, health challenges, and cultural transformations**, the Nicoya Peninsula offers a unique perspective. Its exceptional status as a "Blue Zone," where residents enjoy longer, healthier lives, illuminates the importance of community, lifestyle, and diet in combating global health concerns. However, despite its natural wealth, **the region is not immune to the pressing global issues of deforestation, biodiversity loss, and the impacts of climate change** that threaten its unique ecosystems.

The Nicoya Peninsula exemplifies the **delicate balance between the preservation of nature and sustainable development**. As the world faces escalating environmental crises, this region grapples with the encroachment of agriculture and real estate development on its pristine landscapes, underscoring the **global challenge of conserving biodiversity amid economic pressures**.

Furthermore, its commitment to sustainable tourism and renewable energy mirrors the international pursuit of eco-friendly practices in the face of climate change.

The Nicoya Peninsula serves as a microcosm of global issues, offering valuable lessons in nurturing the planet's health, fostering resilient communities, and preserving our natural heritage in an era of rapid change.

Costa Rica's proactive approach to climate change and other challenges has garnered international recognition and positioned the country as a **leader in sustainable development**. The government's commitment, combined with active participation from civil society and the private sector, has been instrumental in addressing environmental issues and fostering a sustainable future for the country. The government's commitment, combined with active participation from civil society and the private sector, has been instrumental in addressing environmental issues and fostering a sustainable future for the country.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The United Nations developed **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** as a part of the blueprint for the UN 2030 Agenda. The SDGs are an **urgent call for action** for all countries in a global partnership to tackle the pressing issues facing the world. They recognize that addressing one goal must go hand-in-hand with strategies to work on other goals.

At World Leadership School, we work with our network of partners around the world to use the SDGs as a lens to showcase how local communities, regions, and countries are working to meet the UN SDGs. Our curriculum is woven throughout our programs and helps students gain valuable insights on a program that they can use back in their own home communities.



**THIS PROGRAM
CAN HIGHLIGHT
THE FOLLOWING
SDGS:**

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



14 LIFE
BELOW WATER



BASIC ITINERARY, LODGING & FOOD

Our program on the Pacific Coast is situated on the Nicoya Peninsula. Groups will arrive at Liberia International Airport and then travel south to the Nicoya Peninsula. Here, students are immediately immersed in a community renowned for its exceptional well-being. The Nicoya Peninsula holds a special place among the world's famed "**Blue Zones**", a select few regions where people enjoy remarkably long and healthy lives.

This unique phenomenon has piqued the interest of scientists and health enthusiasts alike. What distinguishes Nicoya is its high concentration of centenarians and a lifestyle deeply rooted in healthy habits and strong community bonds.

Students will discover why people from around the world come to study this unique region of Costa Rica.

"This was an amazing experience to learn more about myself and others, form new bonds, make new connections, step out of my comfort zone, and explore more of the world."

**STUDENT FROM
TRINITY HALL**



Throughout the day, they will immerse themselves in the community, engage with its members, and learn from community-based organizations addressing global issues that affect their communities. These organizations include environmental activists, educators, biologists, and other impactful and purposeful leaders. Depending on the time of year, while on the Nicoya Peninsula, students will also learn about the efforts to protect the turtles that call this region home. By participating in nightly patrols along the beaches, students will gain insights into the initiatives aimed at safeguarding turtle nests from poachers and assisting in the release of hatchlings into the ocean.

It's a hands-on way to forge a connection with nature and actively contribute to the preservation of these magnificent creatures, all while basking in the serene coastal landscapes of the Nicoya Peninsula.

In the evenings, the group will come together for reflection and learning sessions to process their experiences. The final few days of the program will be spent at the Chilamate Beach Retreat, a unique beach tent camp managed by WLS Costa Rica Coordinators.

This tranquil setting serves as a platform for students to connect their newfound knowledge with how they can apply it in their home communities.

On the concluding day, they will return to Liberia International Airport for their journey back home.



WLS MISSION AND APPROACH

The mission of World Leadership School is to partner with K-12 schools to reimagine learning and create next-generation leaders. We do this by taking students out into the world and coaching teachers to bring purpose to learning.



World Leadership School works with schools in a variety of ways. We deepen **global, impact-driven student experiences** through travel, and work alongside teachers to bring **world-connected learning** back into the classroom through workshops, faculty travel and the WLS Coaching Institute. We help educators make a shift towards learner-centered pedagogies, such as **project-based** and **purpose learning**, and try bold new ideas and experiences in class. School leaders celebrate these showcases to accelerate classroom innovation across the entire faculty.

Youth Purpose



At World Leadership School, we see travel as a powerful tool for guiding students toward **lives of purpose**. World Leadership School has over a decade of experience working with K-12 schools to design and deliver immersive partnership-based travel programs in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the USA.

There is growing research on how adolescents develop purpose. This work builds off recent brain science and validates the leadership development work we do at World Leadership School. We believe the rise in teen stress is a symptom of a larger crisis of meaning.

The biggest problem growing up today is not actually stress; it's meaninglessness.



- DR. WILLIAM DAMON, DIRECTOR, STANFORD CENTER ON ADOLESCENCE



Only 20 percent of American youth today have purpose, according to research from Stanford University, which defines purpose as a “stable intention that is both meaningful to self and consequential to the world.” Purposeful students are happier, healthier and manage stress more effectively than students who are merely goal-driven.

At World Leadership School, we believe there are visible and intentional strategies K-12 schools can pursue that help teachers and students explore purpose and bring greater meaning to learning. We believe the question guiding the future of learning is **“How can K-12 schools help students explore, discover and articulate purpose?”**

97%

of students are more interested in immersing themselves in another culture.

93%

of students are inspired to take action on global issues in their community and beyond.

95%

of students feel empowered to find solutions to global issues.

96%

of students are more interested in investigating the world.

96%

of students are better able to understand the difference between cultures.

42%

of students want to reshape what they plan to study or do in the future.

THE WLS EXPERIENCE

Purpose-Centered and Impact-Driven

The deep learning that happens when traveling schools develop a long-term partnership with a rural school or an NGO is purpose-centered and impact-driven. Through these partnerships, students are immersed in community life, work alongside local students, and learn from local leaders.

**disconnect, de-center
& re-envision**

Walking Together

World Leadership School's programs are designed around research and our own experience with responsible and sustainable community engagement. The focus of our work is deep and long-term partnerships. We recognize that each traveling school, and community, has its own journey and our goal is that they walk side-by-side with each other – this is what we call **"walking together."**

Students disconnect from technology and their normal rhythms of life; they are pushed off balance, or de-centered, through **immersive experiences**; and they work alongside local leaders and students to see the world, and themselves, in a new way. Our programs are guided by our approach to **community engagement**, which is rooted in long-term partnerships with the communities with whom we engage.

Partnerships look different depending on each community. We partner with non-governmental organizations, associations, schools, artisans' collectives, or any other group. In working with smaller communities, we are aware of challenging dynamics that may exist outside of our partnership. We involve **community leaders** from the beginning and strive to overcome challenges and avoid the pitfalls of traditional community service work.

Learning Experience

The bulk of learning on our programs comes from experiences that students have on the ground with community partners and local leaders. These leaders offer inspiring examples of how to overcome obstacles and unite people around a common need. They also come in an amazing diversity of styles and temperaments. Some of these leaders are highly educated, while others are not;

some are outspoken, while others are quiet; some occupy elected positions, but others work only through social networks.

By studying these leaders, students learn there are many ways to work for change and leadership is more than being popular or having a lot of social connections. During the program, students reflect on what these leaders have in common. Over the years, we have boiled these reflections down into three core principles.

Purpose-Driven Leaders...

...LEAD FROM THEIR
STRENGTHS AND
COMPENSATE FOR THEIR
WEAKNESSES

...LISTEN DEEPLY AND
VALUE MULTIPLE
PERSPECTIVES

...CREATE A "LEADERSHIP
STORY" ABOUT
THEMSELVES THAT THEY
EMBODY THROUGH THEIR
THOUGHTS, WORDS AND
ACTIONS



Learning Experience

Our progressive curriculum designed specifically for the development ages and stages of Middle and Upper School students has emerged from studying community leaders, purpose theory, and positive psychology, the study of how human beings flourish. Recent neuroscience has proven the deep link between emotion and cognition when it comes to developing compassion, empathy and other complex human behaviors. This is not “touchy-feely” or “soft” work -- it’s exactly the opposite.

Students experience our curriculum that helps them answer two important questions: **“Who am I?”** and **“How do I take action in the world?”**

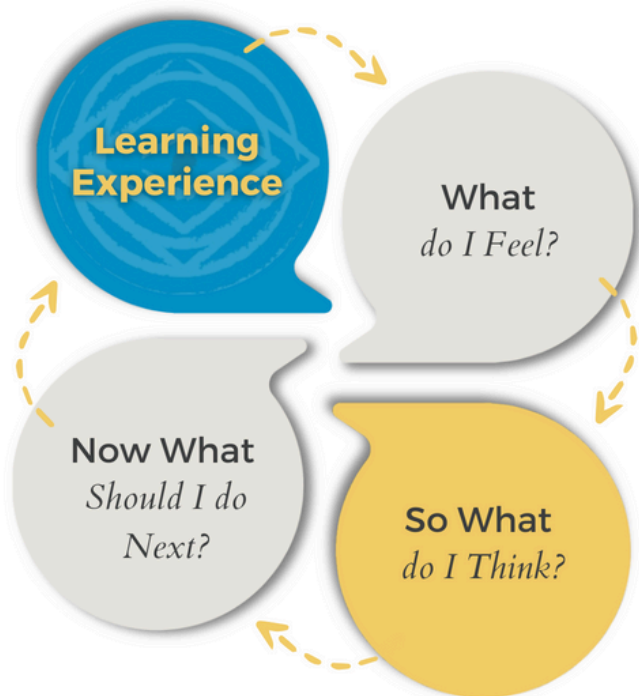
We think of this as a journey both inwards and outwards along a path of purpose. Students explore who they are and how they impact the world. The experience culminates when students bring together self-learning into their own **“leadership story.”** In the process, many students connect with a new sense of purpose.

We have developed **two sets of curriculum** designed for two different development stages - one is designed for upper/high school students, and the other is developed specifically for middle/lower school students.



To help guide student learning, WLS has developed **two sets of curriculum**, one for middle school and the other for high school students. Students begin this curriculum before travel and continue during the program.

Our curriculum is based on the **WLS Action Learning Cycle**, which is a process we use each day to help students process their experiences. Our instructors are trained to facilitate our curriculum in combination with their unique leadership styles and skill sets. They will adapt learning sessions to the needs of the group throughout the program. But this is not “soft” work -- it’s exactly the opposite. This work helps students stand up for themselves and others. In the WLS Action Cycle, students use both their **emotions** and their **thoughts** to process their **experience**. But change only happens when we act, so our cycle begins and ends with **action**.



STAFF

The safety of our programs rests on the experience and skills of our Staff, Instructors, and Country Coordinators, who convene annually at our staff training in one of our program locations across the world.

- The **Staff** of World Leadership School, based in Boulder, Colorado and Washington, DC, have many years of experience working in different educational environments. Their focus is logistics, risk management, program design, professional development, and consulting.
- Our **Instructors** are veteran educators with extensive international experience. They have wilderness medical training and often have past affiliations with Peace Corps, Outward Bound, NOLS, and/or independent schools.
- Our **Community Coordinators** live and work year-round in the communities we partner with. They screen our homestay families, evaluate our transport and other service providers, and provide emergency support.



RISK MANAGEMENT & SAFETY

We strive to **responsibly manage risks**. Our itineraries minimize highway travel and maximize immersion in rural communities that we know well. We update our risk management protocols, integrate feedback into program design, and invest in safety and communication equipment. Despite these efforts, World Leadership School cannot

guarantee safety nor can it eliminate the inherent and other risks of international student travel. For information regarding program activities and associated risks, risk management, and student and parent responsibilities, please contact our office or visit www.worldleadershipschool.com.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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WORLD LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

IMMERSIVE PARTNERSHIP-BASED TRAVEL PROGRAMS

NICOYA, COSTA RICA | 8 DAYS

DAILY ITINERARY – *Subject to Change*

Other cultures function differently, especially regarding schedules and timelines. Despite our best attempts to plan thoroughly, unanticipated circumstances and last-minute changes to the itinerary will happen. Community engagement experiences, which are determined according to the host community's interests, availability, and otherwise, can change at the last minute. Students often say that learning to be flexible and accepting different (and often challenging) cultural practices is one of the most valuable things they take from a World Leadership School program. Please be flexible and remember that adapting to change is critical for future leaders working in global settings.

Day 1 - Tuesday, May 26th

- Midday arrival in Liberia, Costa Rica
- Transfer to Reserva el Toledo in Hojancha (2 hours) with lunch en route
- Community orientation
- *Learning Session: Fears and Values*
- *Learning Session: AMPing Up*
- Dinner and stay at [Reserva el Toledo](#)

Day 2 - Wednesday, May 27th

- Morning tortilla-making session and breakfast at Reserva el Toledo
- Introduction to the [Blue Zones - Nicoya, Costa Rica](#)
- Guided tour with host and community elder (*possible topics include reforestation, sustainable food production and community leadership*)
- Afternoon visit to [Coopepilangosta](#) (green ecological coffee processing plant)
- *Learning Session: True Colors*
- Sunset visit to the Monte Alto Mirador lookout for a 360-degree sunset view of the Nicoya Peninsula
- Stay and eat all meals at [Reserva el Toledo](#)

Day 3 - Thursday, May 28th

- Breakfast at Reserva el Toledo
- Morning visit to Ecomuseo en San Vicente de Guaiti for a Chorotega ceramics workshop with lunch
- Afternoon transfer Nosara (1.5 hour drive)
- *Learning Session: Building Utopia*
- Dinner and stay at [Chilamate Beach Camp](#)

Day 4 - Friday, May 29th

- Community Engagement Day 1, possible partners include:
 - [International Wildlife Rescue Nosara](#) - SDG #15 ([Life on Land](#))
 - [Ostional Wildlife Refuge](#) - SDG #14 ([Life Below Water](#))
 - Local high school - SDG #4 ([Quality Education](#))
 - Local recycling center - SDG #11 ([Sustainable Communities](#))
 - [Nosara Crece](#) - SDG #5 ([Gender Equality](#))
- *Learning Session: Circle of Questions - BEARS*
- Possible evening turtle patrol
- Stay overnight and eat all meals at [Chilamate Beach Camp](#)

Day 5 - Saturday, May 30th

- Community Engagement Day 2, possible partners include:
 - [*International Wildlife Rescue Nosara*](#), [*Ostional Wildlife Refuge*](#), *Local high school*, *Local recycling center*, [*Nosara Crece*](#)
- *Learning Session: Community Inquiry*
- Stay overnight and eat all meals at [*Chilamate Beach Camp*](#)

Day 6 - Sunday, May 31st

- Community Engagement Day 3, possible partners include:
 - [*International Wildlife Rescue Nosara*](#), [*Ostional Wildlife Refuge*](#), *Local high school*, *Local recycling center*, [*Nosara Crece*](#)
- Afternoon surf lessons
- *Learning Session: Finding Your Inner Leader*
- Stay overnight and eat all meals at [*Chilamate Beach Camp*](#)

Day 7 - Monday, June 1st

- Breakfast at Chilamate Beach Camp
- Day trip to Volcano Rincón de la Vieja (1.5 hours drive)
- Canopy zipline tour in Rio Blanco Canyon and lunch
- *Learning Session: Candle Circle*
- Afternoon visit to mud baths
- Dinner and stay at guest house in Liberia

Day 8 - Tuesday, June 2nd

- Morning transfer to Liberia for return flight

PROGRAM FEE

The program fee includes:

- All logistical coordination and in-country arrangements
- In-country ground transport, including charter transport and airport pick-up and drop-off
- Accommodations, including eco-lodges
- Nutritious snacks and meals
- Cultural presentations, adventure activities, rental gear, entry fees, and tips
- Community contribution
- Pre-program, program, and post-program Learning Sessions for middle and high school students
- Veteran instructors who are trained in wilderness medicine
- Community coordinators who live year-round near the community and maintain relationships of trust with local leaders
- Risk management protocols and 24-7 emergency communication
- Emergency medical, evacuation, and international liability insurance

GLOBAL LEARNING IN COSTA RICA

Travel Dates: 5/26/2026-6/2/2026

Trip Cost: \$3850-\$4220

Please contact Allison Chandler chandlera@bolles.org with any questions



United States Passport

- ☐ Yes ☐ No, I will apply for one ASAP ☐ No, but I have a passport from another country and I understand I may need a visa to travel on this trip

Passport Country _____

Passport Number & Expiration Date

Bolles Official Use Only

Do not type/write in this space

Date Received: _____

Signatures: _____

Forms: _____

Paragraph: _____

Payment: _____

M/F _____

GL _____

Student's Name (as it appears, or will appear, on passport)

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Date of Birth (Month/Date/Year)

Date of Birth _____

Current Grade Level

Grade Level _____

Address

Street Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Parent Email

Email Address _____

Student Email

Email Address _____

Family Information

Preferred Contact ☐ Mother ☐ Father

Contact's Full Name _____ Phone Number _____

Travel Experience Please list any previous travel experience

Personality Please check the boxes below that best match your personality

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outgoing | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservative | <input type="checkbox"/> Talkative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shy | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Humorous | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Studious | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Spontaneous | <input type="checkbox"/> Feels for Others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organized | <input type="checkbox"/> Curious | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive | <input type="checkbox"/> Makes Friends Easily |

Please Feel Free to add
2 More Personality Traits

Travel Information May 2026

Do you have any allergies?
(animal, medication, food, smoke, etc.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please specify.

Are there any dietary restrictions?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please specify.

Does your family have a religious affiliation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No

If Yes, please specify.

In addition to this application you are required to write a 100-word paragraph explaining why you are applying for this program. For example, what are your interests as they relate to this program, what are you curious about, and/or what skills and qualities will you bring to the group. Please type below or submit your writing with your application.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Custom Travel Program Acknowledgment Form

Dear Bolles Parents and Guardians, Your child is applying to participate in a unique program that has been specifically designed by The Bolles School and World Leadership School for travel to Costa Rica. In order to activate your travel application you must submit the following to Allison Chandler: the application, a non-refundable deposit of \$500 (which will be returned if student is not selected), and the student paragraph. Parents and students, please carefully read the policies below and sign and date the form below acknowledging that you fully understand all the policies mentioned on this form and in the travel application.

The Application Process When we process applications, we consider (among other things) interest shown in the subject related to the program and feedback from faculty and advisors. Furthermore, to be eligible for Bolles travel experiences, applicants must not have any major disciplinary infractions in the calendar year before travel. Violations of School policy to the one-year mark will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The list of finalists selected will be sent to the Dean's Office a second time for clearance one month prior to travel. Should you have any questions about the selection process please feel free to contact Allison Chandler.

***Please note that if a student is not accepted into the program, your travel deposit of \$500 will be refunded.**

Cost of the Trip The Global Learning in Costa Rica program fee of \$3850-\$4220 is based on factors such as group size, itinerary, travel dates, and flight arrangements.

Payment I understand that the price for this custom program is based on group size, itinerary, travel dates and flight arrangements. I acknowledge that if I cancel my child's participation, my \$500 deposit is non-refundable and that additional cancellation charges may apply based on the date of my cancellation. I understand that the airline will determine the refund policy for the airline ticket, and that there may be additional costs that are non-refundable depending upon the size of the group and the date of the cancellation. I understand that no refunds can be made for cancellations postmarked fewer than 60 days before departure. The deposit is paid via check to The Bolles School.

**Travel deviations are not permitted for this program.

**I understand that a 10% late fee will be added to all payments not received in accordance with the dates listed below.

11/7/25

\$500 Deposit

12/8/25

1/2 remaining balance (after acceptance to program)

1/12/26

Final payment

Refund Policy Because of the special nature of a custom program and the importance of maintaining the group size, cancellation fees may apply. The airline will determine the refund policy for the airline ticket, and any additional fees may not be refundable depending on the group size. In the unfortunate case that a student should need to withdraw from the program at any time, a letter of cancellation must be given to Allison Chandler.

Trip Cancellation Insurance: World Leadership School provides Emergency Medical and Evacuation Insurance. They strongly encourage families to explore purchasing their own trip cancellation insurance to cover financial loss if the student is unable to go on the program.

Participation I am aware of, and approve of, my son/daughter/ward's decision to apply for participation in the Costa Rica travel Program. I am aware that his/her participation in this program is contingent upon acceptance into the program according to the established selection process. My child is also aware that his or her participation in this program is contingent upon acceptance into the program according to the established selection process.

Please sign and date below to acknowledge that you fully understand all policies above.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Application and deposit are due to Lori Gibbs (front office) by 11/7/2025