

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Ruth Floyd, Executive Director of Business Services

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

DATE: February 7, 2023

TYPE: Action Required

John Swanson, Mathematics teacher at Stanwood High School, is requesting Board approval to offer a field trip opportunity to Stanwood High School students to participate in a STEM-based trip to Iceland through WorldStrides tour company in June 2024.

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

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board approve John Swanson's request to offer students the opportunity to participate in the WorldStrides STEM-based field trip to Iceland in June 2024.

January 24th, 2023

To: Stanwood-Camano School District School Board

From: John Swanson, Stanwood High School

Dear Board Members,

I am requesting permission to solicit students for an upcoming trip. I would be leading the fifth STEM based trip from Stanwood High School during the summer of 2024. This trip would be our third trip to Iceland and would occur at the end of June 2024. While there we would learn directly about geothermal energy, glaciers, plate tectonics, volcanoes, plant biology, and a variety of other STEM topics. In addition to that, we would learn about Icelandic history and culture. 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 fifth STEM based trip, the third to Iceland, and my plan is to continue developing it into a tradition so that the experiences can be shared with many Stanwood students over the years.

While this would be my third trip to Iceland 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 14 or so years for Math Day. As a wrestling coach I have taken students to tournaments and camps for the past 18 years. This summer I am taking a group to Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands. I have also taken groups internationally to Iceland in 2018 and 2022 and in 2019 I took a small 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 transportation, 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

Iceland

5-day/4-night sample itinerary

DAY ONE

- > Travel Day

DAY TWO

- > Reykjavik City Orientation
- > The Pearl

DAY THREE

- > Golden Circle
- > Thingvellir National Park (S)
- > The Great Geysir (S)
- > Gullfoss Waterfall
- > Friðheimar (S) T E
- > Kerid Crater Lake (S)
- > Geothermal Bakery

DAY FOUR

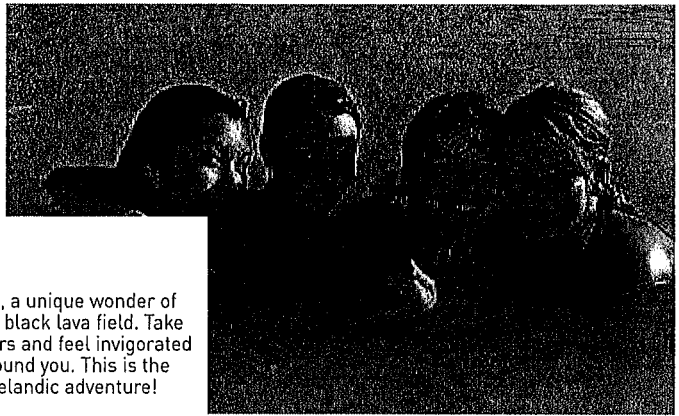
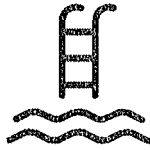
- > South Shore
- > Seljalandsfoss Waterfall
- > Solheimajokull Glacier (S) E
- > Vik/Dyrholaey and Reynisfjara Beach (S)
- > Skogafoss Waterfall
- > Lava Centre Experience (S) T E M

DAY FIVE

- > Hveragerdi Geothermal Park
- > Hellisheidi Power Plant (S)
- > National Museum (S) T E M

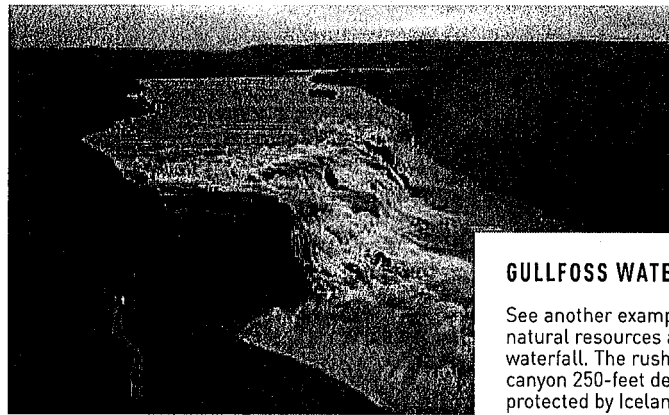
DAY SIX

- > Blue Lagoon (S)
- > Gunnhver (S)



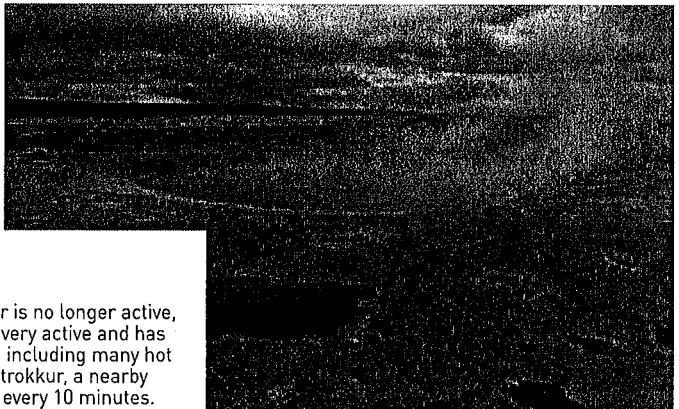
BLUE LAGOON

Explore the Blue Lagoon, a unique wonder of nature in the middle of a black lava field. Take a dip in the famous waters and feel invigorated by the natural beauty around you. This is the perfect ending to your Icelandic adventure!



GULLFOSS WATERFALL

See another example of Iceland's beautiful natural resources as you explore Gullfoss waterfall. The rushing water drops into a canyon 250-feet deep, and the site is protected by Iceland's government.



THE GREAT GEYSIR

Although the Great Geysir is no longer active, the area around it is still very active and has unique geothermal sites, including many hot springs. You'll also see Strokkur, a nearby geyser that erupts about every 10 minutes.



VIK/DYRHOLAAY AND REYNISFJARA BEACH

Stroll along the black sand beaches of Reynisfjara Beach. See basalt columns that wall off surrounding cave-filled cliffs. From the beach, you can see Reynisdrangar pillars that rise from the sea—legend says they were trolls turned to rock by the sun.



Iceland is a STEM-focused trip

We're with you every step of the way

Pre-Tour

All participants are required to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test in order to travel. If their test is positive, we work with them on options for future travel. A Safety Briefing is conducted for all participants to share travel tips and best practices for staying healthy, and our Top Travel Safety Tips help students learn about safety in a series of short, fun videos.

On-Tour

In addition to consistent hygiene practices, we've refined every piece of the itinerary from hotel selection and meals to motorcoach protocols and flexible rooming options. If a participant experiences symptoms, we safely separate them from the rest of the group and arrange testing. If the test result is positive, we are there every step of the way.

Post-Tour

Our team goes above and beyond by offering support for any group with participants who become ill during the 14 days after returning home. In the event a participant tests positive, our team supports teachers in contact tracing and notifications as needed.

Meet your support team

Program Staff

All WorldStrides team members are fully vaccinated and trained in-depth on current COVID-19 protocols. They will guide your group throughout their learning journey and also support you with health and safety best practices while on program.

WorldStrides On Call

It's your 24/7/365 support team. Your On Call team supports participants in case of any incident – from flight delays to itinerary changes to supporting student illness or injury during the program.

Doctors On Call

Medical consultation is always just a phone call away. Our Doctors on Call team is available 24/7/365 to respond to any illness or injury on program. They can arrange COVID-19 testing, provide medical support and guidance in the event a participant tests positive, and even work with travelers experiencing mental health issues.

"I had one of the greatest times of my life. I learned a lot and had a fun time with my friends. I would highly recommend taking the opportunity to participate in this trip experience if you have the chance."

-Nicholas, Student

"I was comforted to know that WorldStrides kept on top of all COVID protocols. When our school leader sent group photos, I could tell they were on a trip of a lifetime with memories made forever."

-Claudia, Parent



WorldStrides

Educational Travel & Experiences

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.