

Jesuit High School

French Language Immersion

Vannes, France

What?

An exchange program between Jesuit and St François Xavier high school in Vannes, France.

It is a family-to-family exchange: you will host a French student in your home, then your son/daughter will stay with that student's family in France. There may be an opportunity to host without traveling.

Why?

It is our goal to provide students with a fun, positive way to learn intimately about another culture, further their language skills, broaden perspectives, and build connections to other peoples in our increasingly interdependent world. Travel abroad also builds life skills such as self-reliance, self-knowledge, independence, empathy, critical thinking and problem-solving.

When?

The French students (approx. 18 of them) plan to come to Portland from the middle of February through early March (approx. 2weeks). Jesuit students typically leave the second or third full week of June and spend 2.5-3 weeks in Vannes. We usually carry out the exchange every other year.

Where?

The French high school, St François Xavier, is located in Vannes (in Brittany, in NW France), a beautiful, small city on the coast. Students' families live in Vannes or in nearby small communities. We will likely fly into either Paris or Nantes, with train or car travel to Vannes. While at least 1 chaperone will accompany the group to and from Portland, there will be two chaperones in Vannes.

Who?

We will select 12-18 Jesuit student participants; they must have completed level 2 or above in French at the time they travel. They will be selected based on their interest, motivation, maturity, and ability to adapt well to a new social environment and represent JHS. Students who participate in the exchange are expected to continue taking French classes for at least one year following the exchange. The two chaperones who will accompany the group will be Jesuit HS employees, or possibly the spouse of a JHS employee; Mme Préviale may be one of the chaperones. The St François Xavier students will be selected by their English professor and chaperone, and will likely be 15-16 years old. We do not yet know the gender breakdown of the French group; it is likely that some female JHS students will be matched with male French "brothers" rather than "sisters."

This exchange experience is for students who...

- Love exploring new places, learning about different cultures, and meeting new people.
- Are comfortable around people who have different political, religious, and economic beliefs than you.
- Are willing to immerse themselves in French for a few weeks.
- Are willing to follow the guidelines established by the program.
- Are ready to make new friendships and international connections that may last a lifetime!

And for families who...

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- Trust their student's ability to make responsible decisions while overseas without his/her own parents for a few weeks.
- Trust their student's ability (with the teachers' support) to handle any cultural misunderstandings or difficult situations that may arise while in France.
- Are enthusiastic and have time to welcome a student for a couple of weeks and introduce him/her to life in the Portland area.
- Love to learn about new perspectives and can engage in respectful dialog about world issues.
- Are eager to see their student's self-reliance and global connections blossom.

How much?

Based on our past exchanges, we estimate the cost to be approximately \$3300, give or take a few hundred dollars, for the flights and transportation to and from Vannes, ground transportation in Paris, medical insurance, and the cost of the chaperones. The cost will depend on fluctuations in plane tickets and the group size; as we have of course not purchased tickets yet, we do not know their exact cost. We should be able to quote a more exact price in the next few weeks. We strive to keep costs as low as possible and are fortunate to be able to offer this trip for simply the price of the tickets and insurance since we do not charge any organizational overhead expenses. We will need a non-refundable deposit of \$500 once your student is selected to go, in order to hold the plane ticket; the balance will be required in two later payments.

What does hosting a student involve?

Host families provide a wonderful way for a young person to learn about another culture in a welcoming and structured environment. You will provide a bed and meals for your exchange student, as well as transportation to and from school. The student should be treated like (and follow the same rules as) a member of your family. You will have to explain your family rules and routine so the student knows what is expected, how to help out, what to expect of you, etc. The French student becomes part of your family for the time s/he is in Portland. The French students will attend classes at JHS on school days, although there will be 2 organized group activities per week for the French students; this allows them to see more of our region and gives them a break from classwork. Host families will be responsible for minor costs for group activities (likewise in Vannes: your son/daughter's group activity costs will be paid by their host family. We estimate no more than \$150). Students bring their own spending money for shopping, souvenirs, etc. We ask parents to help plan and chaperone the French students during the school-day group activities as Mme Schmidt and Mme Prévale will be teaching during those times. 😊

What kinds of activities will my student do in France?

Jesuit students may spend a couple of days at St François Xavier school during their first week in Vannes depending on the arrival date, although their host students will be done with classes. St François Xavier classes end at the end of June. When not in classes, students will be with their host families doing normal family activities and perhaps visiting the region, going to the beach or a café, etc. They will also participate in some group activities as the French students do here: dinners, visits to local sites, museums, etc.

How can my student apply?

Applications available from your French Teacher and the Christian Service office.