



SHEBOYGAN/ESSLINGEN HIGH SCHOOL EXCHANGE PROGRAM 5-Month Reciprocal Exchange Program

Information for Interested Students and Parents

The Sheboygan Chapter of People to People International has been sponsoring an annual exchange with Sheboygan's sister city, Esslingen, Germany, since 1970. Since that time over 200 Sheboygan County high school students have participated in this unique program. Many have made lifelong friendships. Esslingen is a charming city of about 100,000 located in southwestern Germany on the banks of the Neckar River, near Stuttgart. Applications for the exchange are due each year by July 1. (NOTE: The application deadline has been moved up to July because of the time needed to obtain a Visa to study in Germany.)

Applicants are usually freshmen or sophomores. Applications should be completed and returned by July 1, and the selection of students, which will include a family interview, will be completed by the middle of September. Since classes in Esslingen are conducted in German, applicants should be strong students and have good study habits. American students will miss the second semester of their sophomore or junior year. They will finish their first semester and leave for Germany in mid-February, returning in mid-July, along with their exchange partner who will live with them until mid-December.

American families selected for the exchange are expected to:

1. Provide the visiting student with his or her own bed – preferably in a separate room.
2. Spend time with their German student and include him/her in family social activities and show him/her places of interest in and around Sheboygan.
3. Participate in People to People activities and gatherings for exchange students.
4. Provide transportation for the student.
5. Provide parental supervision at all times.
6. Share family meals together.
7. Meet the Esslingen student on arrival at the airport and transport him/her to the airport upon departure.
8. Join the Sheboygan People to People Chapter (Annual family membership is \$35).
9. Support the People to People fundraiser, a brat fry normally held in March, by selling tickets before the event and working the day of the event. This fund raising event supports the exchange program.

Costs:

The cost of the program includes the round trip airfare and the personal expenses of the Sheboygan area student while in Germany. Plane ticket costs change from year to year and are currently \$1,400 - \$1,600. The expense of having another member in the family for five months is offset by the fact that there will be one less family member at home while your student is in Esslingen. There are NO administrative fees charged by People to People for a student to participate in the exchange program.

It may be helpful to consider that the money you are now spending on your student here (allowance, music lessons, shampoo, clothes, etc.) can be the personal expense money for Germany. If your student is now driving, you can cancel their car insurance for the five months they will be away, as they will not drive in Germany. The Sheboygan Area School District provides the Esslingen students with cafeteria meal tickets, activity tickets, and book rental. Arrangements may be slightly different at other area high schools. Membership in the YMCA and other community organizations are also sometimes available for the Esslingen student.

Other Questions:

You may have other concerns about having an unknown person in your family for a time. If your student is selected to participate, the exchange committee will provide more information and suggestions. However, we know that you might want some of your questions answered before you decide to apply! The advice that has worked for many others is to treat the student as your son/daughter – it is just too difficult to have a guest for five months. An advantage to this program is that your student will be going to live in your German student's home, so the exchange is really between families. The committee uses the application information to make the best matches possible.

The German students will arrive here with at least four years of English, so communication is not a big problem. You may have to speak a little slower at first and explain some slang. (On the other hand, the American students go to Germany with far less experience with the German language, and they will find that it will take them longer to get up to speed.)

You may have many more questions as you try to decide if you want to apply. Please feel free to call and ask questions – we've been in the same place!

For more information, contact Jon Keckonen at 920-457-4318 or visit the chapter website at www.ptpsheboygan.org. Applications for the program are available on the website.

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