

2018 JQ SENIOR TRIP

Q&A summary from May 2nd Information Sessions with Grade 6 Families

Q: Why did we step away from Exchanges?

A: We did not receive the grant we applied for in 2013 and were unable to secure another grant from one of the three agencies that provide them. As a result, our exchange school backed out. That year, parents worked with the school to identify a viable alternative and they settled on a combined tour of Montreal and Quebec City with a company called – [Jump Street](#) tours. This also coincided with new teaching staff joining JQ whom did not have prior experience in organizing exchanges. Given how well the tour worked out and taking into account teacher preferences, we have continued with the tour. In the past two years we have added the option of the [Gulf Islands Film & Television School](#) (GIFTS).

Q: What is the difference between the tour and an exchange?

A: With the tour we do not partner with a school in Quebec and our kids are not billeted with a family for accommodation. All arrangements are made for us by the tour company. Our children tour Quebec City and Montreal, they travel by coach, stay in hotels or dorms with their classmates and they go on activities arranged by the company (please visit webpage for more details: <https://www.jumpstreet.com/teachers/tour-finder/quebec-city>).

With an exchange, we partner with a school in Quebec and our children stay in a Quebec family's home while they are visiting Quebec. They do activities as arranged by the families and the school that we partner with. We in turn billet the Quebec students in our homes when they come to Vancouver. The parents and teachers have to plan and lead all activities for those kids while they are here in Vancouver (the Quebec kids do not attend school with our kids while they are here in Vancouver)

Q: is an exchange possible again?

A: It is, if our teachers want to undertake that and plan for it – including apply for a grant. We will not know that information until at least the fall.

Q: Can we gauge parent interest or preference in an exchange?

A: Yes, with a clear understanding that it is ultimately a teacher/school decision. We are hoping to gauge parent interest with a parent survey.

Q: What is the Gulf Islands Film and Television School?

A: GIFTS is a film school located on Galiano Island that provides a 5-day course for French immersion students. They offer a hands-on film making experience with industry professionals who guide them through each stage of the production process. They work in teams on their film project and leave with a video of their production (please visit webpage for more details:
<https://www.giftsfilms.com>

Q: What is the difference in cost between an exchange and the tour, as well as GIFTS?

A: An exchange and the Jump Street tour are essentially equal in overall cost per child which is about \$2,200. With the tour, we need to cover the entire amount through family contribution and fundraising, whereas with an exchange we might offset the amount if we receive a grant. With an exchange, it is also important to remember that there are 'hidden' costs in hosting a child here like extra groceries, dinners out, etc. GIFTS runs about \$700 per child.

Q: How much do families have to pay?

A: This all depends on the amount we fundraise. For the 2017 trip, the class was able to raise about \$52,000 and this offset the overall trip cost per child by about 50% - so the family cost of the tour came to about \$1,100 and GIFTS to \$350.

Q: What if one cannot afford to cover the cost of the trip?

A: Our intention is that every child who wants to go can go regardless of which trip they choose. To that end, PAC has realigned the prior Endowment fund to a Bursary fund and allocates a specific amount per year that families can apply for - up to \$500 per child. If families require more support they can confidentially approach Natalie and we will find a way via the school and/or PAC to cover their child's costs.

Q: What if we have new teachers at the school that do not want to do a Senior Trip?

A: We anticipate this to be highly unlikely; however, if that were to be we could look at other options like our administration organizing the trip with alternate chaperones accompanying the kids.

Q: When will we know what we are doing next year?

A: During the coming weeks and through to the end of the school year is when any staffing changes, if they are to happen, will take place. Until that time no commitments can be made. Once our teaching and administrative staff are confirmed conversations and commitments can be made specific to a 2018 Senior Trip. We should know earliest in late June or latest in early September.

Q: When is it too late to book a tour or apply for an exchange grant?

A: We have a good rapport with Jump Street now and have booked as late as January of the year the kids travel. Ideally, we would want to book by mid-to-late fall 2017. If our teaching staff are keen to take on an exchange we would need to identify a school and apply for grants in the September/October timeframe.

Q: Can parents be chaperones for the trip?

A: There are insurance implications for this and extending appropriate insurance can be quite costly. Our tradition is to have teachers, administrators and others like support workers or JQ alumni act as chaperones – this also enhances the ‘independence’ experience for the kids.

Q: Why do we have two options as opposed to keeping the kids together?

A: Offering the two options is something the teachers and our current administration feel quite strongly about. It allows for choice and inclusivity for those who would rather not travel to Quebec, and a more financially affordable option.