**Australian Student Exchange Information Sheet**

If you are interested in spending a semester in Australia during either your sophomore or junior year in High School, then Lakewood Sister Cities has a program for you.

Since 1978, Lakewood Sister Cities Program has sponsored a High School Exchange Program with Sutherland Shire in Australia. Over the years, our student exchange has developed into one of the most successful programs in the Jefferson County school system. Our program includes hosting an Australian high school student in your home for one semester and then you spend the following semester in that same Australian student’s home.

Applications are accepted from students in grades 9 & 10 each year in January.

# About Lakewood Sister Cities Program

Lakewood Sister Cities Program was founded in 1977 by Win Schendel to promote world peace through student exchanges, adult home visits, working exchanges, and other multicultural events. We have Sister City relationships with Sutherland Shire in Australia, Stade in Germany, and with both Portsmouth and Chester in England. Our program offers you travel, personal contact, and family involvement in cultures all over the world. Please visit our website if you are curious about some of our other programs.

Lakewood Sister Cities Program is a nonprofit, nonpartisan volunteer organization of Jefferson County residents who are working for a more peaceful world through direct family communication across international boundaries. We draw individual and family members from all over Jefferson County.

Lakewood Sister Cities is a member of Sister Cities International. Locally we cooperate with the Jefferson County School District, local Chambers of Commerce and the City of Lakewood.

# Australian Student Exchange

Our exchange program offers Jeffco students the opportunity to go to Sutherland Shire, a suburb of Sydney, Australia's largest city located in New South Wales. The exchange is unique in that it is reciprocal. After the American student and family have gone through the application and interview process, and have been selected for the program, they are partnered with an Australian student and family. The Aussie student arrives in July to spend six months living with the American family, attending Jeffco schools. Then both students leave in January to spend six months in Australia, living with the partner's family and studying at a high school in Sutherland Shire.

The Exchange Program is well supervised on both sides with many planned activities and trips. Some of the costs can be defrayed by group fundraising activities.

## Sutherland Shire

A suburb of Sydney, Australia's largest city, Sutherland Shire, is in New South Wales. It is bordered on the north by Botany Bay and on the east and south by world-famous surfing beaches and the Royal National Park. Sutherland Shire is a quiet area of single-family homes and small businesses. The climate resembles southern California and is an oasis for water sports. National sports are soccer and rugby leagues while koalas, kangaroos, and opals are national symbols. Visitors return overwhelmed by the hospitality of the Australians and awed by the expansive beauty of a vast continent.

## Eligibility

Students that want to apply for the Student Exchange Program must meet and maintain several requirements.

Applicants ***MUST:***

* Have a current GPA of 2.75 or better.
* Be enrolled in a Jefferson County High School and be a Jefferson County Resident.
* Be in grade 9 or 10 to travel the following year in grade 10 or 11.
* Assist in promotion of and recruitment for the program the following year.

Be sure, this is not just a student exchange. This will involve your entire family. Lakewood Sister Cities is a volunteer organization made up of folks just like you - parents, families and students from previous exchanges. So, the families of the applicant must also meet and maintain several requirements.

All families ***MUST:***

* Be willing to host an Australian student the first semester of next year.
* Be able to participate in all of the required events over the next 1.5 years.
* Be able to provide transportation for the student to all of the required events.
* Be willing to head a committee to organize events for the exchange group.
* Be resilient, flexible, accommodating, and tolerant in the strangest situations!

## Typical Schedule of Events

#### In America

Applications Due End of March

Interview Meetings (3) Start of April

Selections Final Mid April

Pairing Potluck End of April

6 Toastmasters/Parent Planning Meetings May-June

Aussie Arrival Orientation Early July

Aussies Arrive Late July

Welcome Barbeque Late July

Camping Trip August

Mayor’s Banquet September

Group Meetings I & II September and November

Southwest Trip (Aussies only) Mid October

Liaison Weekend (Aussies only) September or November

Ski Trip Early December

Farewell Party Early January

Aussie Depart Early January

Americans Depart Mid January

#### In Australia

Americans Arrive in Australia Mid January

Australian Welcome Barbie Mid January

Camping Trip February

Toastmaster’s Banquet March

Liaison Weekend to Nelson’s Bay April

Presidential Debutante Ball May or June

Farewell Party Early July

Great Barrier Reef trip Early July

Yanks Arrive Home Mid July

## Cost Estimate: Australian Student Exchange Program

Lakewood Sister Cities is for everyone! Fundraising opportunities are available to cover large parts of the cost of the airline tickets, medical insurance and ground package. All estimates are based on expenses from the previous year exchange expenses and are subject to change. **These are estimates.**

#### Estimated Costs and Expenses

Application Fee $35

Lakewood Sister Cities Family Membership Dues - 2 years $80

Program Fee (Administrative costs/copying costs, food, cost of
reservations for meetings, parties, camping, etc.) $300

Department of State Re-designation Fee $250

Group Uniform $100

Roundtrip airline tickets for USA-Australia and flight to
Cairns/Great Barrier Reef $2,600 - $3,000

Ground Package (trips to Outback, Cairns, camping, etc.) $3,500

#### Miscellaneous expenses

Passport, Australian Medical Insurance, etc. $240 - $375

Camping Trip: 3 family members, Aussies paid $100

Ski Weekend: 3 family members, Aussies paid $200 - $300

Mayors Banquet $25/person X 3 family members, Aussies paid $75

**ESTIMATED TOTAL $7,400 to $8,100**

***Fundraising can offset the cost! You Decide $$***

Garage Sale, Safeway/King Soopers, Food Cards, Car Washes, etc.

For more information, please contact the Student Exchange Coordinator:

Grace Long 303-989-1133