



Family Service Learning Program Frequently Asked Questions

About School the World

School the World is a non-profit organization committed to improving the quality of and access to education in the developing world. In the past nine years, we have built 119 schools throughout Guatemala and Honduras by partnering with the local government and rural community leaders. Aside from building schools, we train teachers, empower parents through bi-monthly meetings, and sustainably stock classroom libraries through a matching program. In 2016, we began introducing an initiative around PLAY to our strategy. Play is proven to increase students' mental and physical health, learning skills, gender equality and life skills. We committed to building play spaces to facilitate free play, organized recess games, and eventually an inter-school soccer league and have since built 59 playgrounds at our existing schools.

Who

Any parent(s)/guardian(s) who wish to participate in a service program with their children. The typical age range will vary from upper elementary / middle school to lower high school.

What

Families commit to paying a per person fee and participate in fundraising efforts to cover construction and material costs for the project. Travel fees can be paid in full or families can choose to fundraise for their trip in addition to the fundraising efforts necessary for the project.

Where

Families complete their service work in Central America. School the World is established in three countries: Guatemala, Panama and Honduras. In Guatemala, the group will work in the rural Western Highlands of Guatemala (the department of Quiche) and experience the Spanish colonial city of Antigua. In Panama, service work is completed in the Ngabe Bugle Comarca and the group also visits Panama City. In Honduras, service groups travel specifically to Southern Honduras and work in the Department of Valle.

What Will Families Do?

Families raise the funds to build a primary school building and/or a playground for children living in poverty. At the end of the week in the community, everyone (including the entire community and local Mayor) will participate in a Dedication Ceremony to celebrate this support for education. Among other things, service travelers can expect to mix cement, install play equipment and paint. Families will also have time within the classrooms to help teach lessons as well as complete a home visit to understand daily life within the community.

While raising funds in the months leading up to the trip, families have the option to learn about successful fundraising tactics as well as attend educational seminars to learn about the region's history and culture.

Is It Safe?

Safety is our top priority. Our team personally investigates and inspect medical facilities, housing and food preparation. We evaluate each building project for any potential safety concerns. We use only known drivers and vehicles; we require certificates of insurance and maintenance. STW carefully vet all of our communities and spend considerable time in them before beginning any build. There also will be at least two STW leaders (one U.S., one local) as well as adult chaperones with each group.

We purchase insurance for each traveler to cover medical risks, emergency medical evacuation and cancellations due to death, illness and similar situations. Families have the option to purchase additional "Cancel for any Reason" insurance should they choose to. Reach out to a member of our staff to discuss as needed.

Requirements

- Complete and submit an application to Natalie at natalie.hambor@schooltheworld.org or by sending to the School the World office.
- Submit an initial payment of \$500 per traveler (families have the option to raise the remaining balance of our per person travel fee in addition to the fundraising requirement for the school and/or playground build).
- Complete and submit all required waivers of liability signed by both the student and a legal guardian to be distributed at later date via SchoolDoc, an online management system.
- Submit an accurate health history and a certification of good health from a physician, including a statement that the student does not have any physical, psychological or medical condition that would inhibit participation in the mission.

- Visit travel clinic with preliminary itinerary to obtain any recommended vaccinations at least three weeks prior to trip.
- Passports valid for at least 6 months after trip return date.

How Will We Raise the Funds?

STW will provide the families with a “Fundraising Toolkit” and will guide families in online campaigns and provide a list of suggestions for independent & group events. Every family will have the opportunity to create an online fundraising page through our peer-to-peer platform.

What If Families Do Not Meet the Fundraising Deadlines?

If families do not meet the fundraising deadlines, we require payment to make up the difference between the amounts due and the amount raised. If you would like to discuss special circumstances please call Natalie at 617-867-9500.

Are There Refunds?

Please see our full refund policy at schooltheworld.org.

Are There Any Other Costs?

There will be no other required STW costs. If families choose to participate in an extra activity, options will be provided and discussed prior to departure, there may be an additional cost of \$25-\$40. Families may choose to tip any hospitality vendor, and/or bring additional spending money for souvenirs. Families should bring their own money for meals during travel in airports as well as for any checked baggage fees.

Where does STW general funding come from?

One of our past funders was USAID, a division of the US State Department. We also receive substantial support from many generous individuals, corporations and foundations such as The Harbourton Foundation, the General Electric Company, the GE Foundation, Cigna and Dole.

Will there be any cultural activities?

Yes, there will be afternoon cultural activities varying per trip (e.g., visiting local Mayan ruins, the colorful market of Chichicastenango, visiting the Panama Canal and Casco Viejo, and more). Additional activities will vary depending on the country the group will be visiting and working in.

For more information about our programs, our leadership and our Board of Directors visit our website: schooltheworld.org

For any questions, please contact Natalie Hambor at natalie.hambor@schooltheworld.org or our office staff at (617) 867-9500.