



STRESS-FREE GAPP PLANNING

How to streamline planning for student cultural exchange programs & travel abroad





Perception versus Reality

The German American Partnership Program or GAPP, leverages the strong relationship between the United States and Germany to facilitate cultural exchanges between U.S. and German schools. Administered by the Goethe-Institut, the program promotes intercultural understanding, German language skills, and fosters friendship. GAPP provides a real-world language and cultural immersion experience for students from both countries. Entering students into a GAPP exchange program is exciting. For many students, being hosted by a family abroad is a life-changing experience.

Coordinating this experience takes time. Some teachers take on program coordination themselves for a variety of reasons. This may be because teachers perceive it as a way of saving money, being more flexible in how travel is arranged, or because this is the way they have always done so in the past. In a rapidly changing world, there is always change and, change may be more beneficial than first thought.

You want the best for your students but increasing demands on your time in and out of class are mounting. Dedicated educators want to ensure they are offering the best, most cost-effective program possible. While doing all the GAPP planning yourself may appear cost saving on the surface,

coordinating yourself might really be more costly in the end. There are compelling reasons to consider working with a language immersion travel specialist. The right organization may not only reduce the overall program cost but may reduce some of the non-tangible costs as well.

The Cost of Time

In addition to school day instruction, you are likely putting in additional time beyond the school day for after-school help for students, advising extracurricular clubs, mentoring, or attending staff meetings. This does not even include time spent at home grading, preparing classroom activities, or doing other job-related tasks. According to EdTech, the average teaching day is around 12 to 16 hours a day. Your personal time, the time for you to rest and recharge, is nothing short of precious.

Taking care of yourself is just as important (if not more) than taking care of your students. Without taking care of yourself, you won't have the energy to help your students. One way to streamline the process for GAPP planning is to work with a language immersion travel specialist. The right organization is set up to handle GAPP coordination tasks quickly and efficiently, allowing you to spend time on other activities. Simplifying this part of the GAPP planning process can give you back the time you need for yourself and help your program run more smoothly.





Get Back Precious Time

Just having someone to help handle a portion of the communications required for GAPP planning will give you back time. Immersion travel organizations often assist with communications including the following:

- Logistics
- Payment handling
- Online registration
- Emergency communications

Above & Beyond the Obvious

Because this is what your immersion travel specialist does, many times they include services you would otherwise have to pay for if you were coordinating travel yourself. These perks can offset or reduce any additional cost of working with a partner.

The Value of Peace of Mind

Immersion travel organizations are often set-up with local support systems while abroad as part of their service. They serve to assist with any issues that may come up during your trip and, in case of emergency, act as your liaison both in country and back home.

Expanded Access to Immersion Experiences

Some immersion travel organizations offer expanded accessibility to GAPP programs through financial aid for qualified student families. Financial aid opens opportunities to students who would not otherwise be able to participate in a GAPP program. Awards may range and, in some cases, can cover upwards of 60% of program costs for qualified applicants.

Partners may also offer merit-based scholarships that are not necessarily based solely on financial need. These scholarship opportunities offer more than financial rewards. They are also excellent college resume builders, demonstrating a student's drive, language and global competency goals.

Turn-key Fundraising

Fundraising activities are another aspect requiring coordination. Today, enrichment opportunities and fundraising go hand-in-hand. Most immersion travel partners have a ready to distribute program, saving you time and effort.

Another method of fundraising is a "gifting" account. This is an account where family and friends can donate directly toward your student's GAPP language immersion travel to offset the cost. Some organizations are set up to offer these as part of their normal travel package for no additional charge.

EDUCATIONAL BRIEF



Preparation Activities

Another compelling reason to work with a language immersion travel partner is that many offer travel preparation kits with activities designed to prepare students for their experience abroad. The materials in these kits may include self-awareness activities, global competency builders, or guidelines on what to expect from a host family experience. Working with these materials prior to travel can enhance a student's confidence and allay parent concerns.

Summary

Self-care is not self-indulgent. Making time in your schedule for you is important for you to be the best educator you can be. There are language immersion travel specialists that can work with you to coordinate your GAPP program and make it even more successful. Working with the right immersion travel organization can allow you to more efficiently plan, offer more, and get back the some time to rest and recharge.

About Xperitas

Xperitas is a non-profit that has been arranging student immersion travel experiences for over 50 years. Our mission is to make student language immersion travel and intercultural exchange more accessible. Over the past decade, our organization has provided over a million dollars in financial aid, merit-based scholarships, and classroom grants to qualified participants. We are also GAPP planning specialists and offer many benefits for educators seeking to plan these important exchange programs.

Have questions about GAPP planning support? Reach out and contact us. We are always happy to answer any questions you may have.

GAPP PLANNING

