

# French students leave Bristol after ash delay

Monday, April 19, 2010 10:38 PM EDT

By FREESIA SINGNGAM, STAFF WRITER

BRISTOL — The eruption of the volcano Eyjafjallajökull in Iceland that affected flights in Europe delayed the departure this of French exchange students who visited Bristol Central High School.

BCHS French teacher Amanda Robustelli-Price said that although many of the students were homesick, and some of them spent all their money, they stayed positive and still had “great experiences” in their extra days in Bristol.

“It has been a surprising, fun, and busy four days,” Robustelli-Price said.

Students from Bristol Central High School travel to La Queue lez-Yvelines in France in the fall, and the French students come to Bristol in the spring. Two weeks ago, the 28 students from La Queue lez-Yvelines, France arrived in Bristol to visit area attractions, including New York City, and to attend school.

The students were scheduled return home Friday, but because of the volcanic ash in the air, they weren’t able to depart until late Monday night.

Ann Marie Meehan, whose son Craig is a sophomore taking French at BCHS, hosted Thomas Laridam, who is the equivalent of a sophomore in France. She, along with the other host parents, hosted Laridam an extra few days and dropped him off at BCHS at around 2 p.m. Monday afternoon. The French students were then taken to the John F. Kennedy Airport in New York.

Meehan said that at first the host parent were told the Monday flight was canceled, but then it was delayed to later at night.

Robustelli-Price said she especially wanted to thank the Bristol host families because many of the parents said they would have been happy to host the students longer if they couldn’t fly home today.

“All families who were able to host the extra time did so with grace and humor,” she said. “So many parents volunteered extra time and space for the few families who were unable to host for an extra weekend. They all rearranged their schedules to make room for the longer stay of their guests and did their best to support the French students. Today, many of the parents came to say goodbye and many of them cried as much as the students.”

Robustelli-Price said the three French teachers spent a long time working with their French travel agent to make alternate arrangements. “The good news is that the group has been in touch with the French consulate and should get home sooner because they are in touch with this important government agency,” she said.

<http://www.bristolpress.com/articles/2010/04/19/news/doc4bcd10571293b127687546.prt>

© 2010 bristolpress.com, a [Journal Register](#) Property

[The Bristol Press](#) ([bristolpress.com](http://bristolpress.com)), Serving Bristol, CT