Clifton High School Mustang Band

Guidelines for Chaperones

INTRODUCTION REMARKS

The main objective of this outline is to give each individual who has been selected to serve as chaperone on a Mustang band trip a clearer perspective of his / her duties, responsibilities and other activities required on a trip. Chaperoning a group such as this is an exciting and challenging experience: however, it is also a great responsibility. The hours are grueling tests of stamina and strength which begin at check-in time on the day of the trip and end after all the students have been picked up by their parents upon our arrival home.

The success of any Band trip depends upon the complete cooperation of everyone involved. It must be understood that certain rules and regulations are necessary for an orderly, safe and exciting trip.

THESE RULES MUST BE ENFORCED WITHOUT EXCEPTION

A copy of the rules and regulations will be distributed to each person making the trip. Keep in mind that these rules have been designed to keep the entire group safe and happy. Also remember that the welfare of the entire group cannot be sacrificed for the wishes of a few. The basic rules have been established and proven successful on prior trips with certain alterations made to pertain to the specifics of each individual trip.

As a chaperone, you will be working with the most important element of the Mustang Band … the students. This is their trip and you are there to help them. It is hard work but it doesn’t mean that you can’t enjoy yourself. Get to know your charges; experience the trip with them. You will see a completely different side of your people, a side that as a parent alone you can’t experience. But as a chaperone you will … and you will always remember it.

GUIDELINES:

1. It should be understood that for any large group, there can be only ONE leader. In the case of the Mustang Band, the Band Director assumes the responsibility for all actions and activities of the organization while on a trip or a performance. He is the one who must answer to the Board of Education for any incidents that may occur.
2. Chaperones are directly responsible to the Trip Chairman. He / she is, in turn, responsible to the Band Director.
3. Chaperones are to assist in carrying out all regulations; however, don’t be tyrants. If a problem develops and persists, notify the Band Director.
4. You are chaperoning the specific students assigned to you – not your own child. If your child has a problem, his / her chaperone will handle it.
5. Chaperones will hold daily meetings to discuss the day’s activities, problems, duties, ideas, etc.
6. The chaperones are to work as a team, not as small cliques working against each other. If you have a question or dispute with another chaperone, it is to be ironed out at the chaperone meeting. Most of all never put another chaperone down in front of the students. Incidents of this type on previous trips have proven quite disastrous and embarrassing.
7. The trip has an established itinerary that will be adhered to. Any changes to be made shall be the result of a discussion by the Trip Committee with the final recommendation or decision being made by the Trip Chairman and the Band Director. It is inevitable that there will never be 100% agreement on all decisions but keep in mind:
   1. The professional Band Staff is accustomed to making decisions for large groups of STUDENTS … which is quite different from family or business decision making;
   2. All changes will be made after careful discussion … weighing all the facts and possibilities;
   3. Any decisions made are to be upheld whether you agree or disagree. They are not be discussed in any form with the students unless you are specifically told to do so; and
   4. Reasons for change may occur as a result of weather conditions of an extreme nature or items of interest not scheduled as part of the regular itinerary that might be enjoyed by all. This does not mean souvenir hunting, as enough free time will be allotted for this.
8. It is the chaperone’s responsibility to oversee the students – not overpower them. Don’t be a parent … be someone they can talk to and enjoy being with. Make yourself available to your students at all times (day and night).
9. During allotted free time, if a group of students wishes to go somewhere, they may do so if:
   1. They have a chaperone with them;
   2. It is a group of at least six;
   3. Inquiries are made for others who may wish to go along; and
   4. Enough free time is available before the next scheduled activity.
10. If you leave the hotel with a group of students, you must notify the Trip Chairman and / or the Band Director as to:
    1. Who is going with you;
    2. Where the group is going; and
    3. The time the group will be returning.
11. Chaperones are not to go off on their own unless everyone has been given specific permission to do so. It will then be the duty of the chaperones to wander the same area where the students are … not as spies, but as a familiar face in the event that any assistance is needed.
12. At curfew check, you will take a physical head count of all your students. All must be in the proper room. Anyone who is not or is excessively late should be reported to the Band Director. Students are not permitted to leave their room after curfew for any reason, nor are you to bring them anything (i.e. soda, ice, pizza, etc.)
13. After curfew check, you will have a specific duty watch. The type of duty will depend on the logistics of the hotel, hour of curfew established, restlessness of the troops, etc. You must remain at that post until relieved or dismissed by the Trip Chairman or Band Director.
14. Under no circumstances are chaperones to leave the hotel after curfew or watch duty. We must be in consistent awareness of our people in case of an emergency situation.
15. Wake-up calls are a must! Make sure everyone in the room you are calling is up; wait a few minutes and call back. After a reasonable amount of time, go in the room to get your charges out of the “rack”. When we leave the hotel, everyone will assemble at a given time and area to depart as a group … NO STRAGGLERS!
16. The student room captain will fill out a room damage report immediately upon entering his / her room. He / she will give the report to you … show you the problems, if any. You will then turn the reports to the Trip Chairman.
17. On the morning of the trip, you will thoroughly check each of your student’s bags, carry-on, instrument case, etc; looking for and, if finding, confiscating all liquid refreshment which may have a suspicious content. Check for shampoo, after-shave, mouthwash, perfume, large bottles of valve oil, etc. Also check all drugs, making sure that they are prescription drugs and necessary. Be sure you are aware of all medication needed by your students and the reason for that medication.
18. Remind your charges that hotel services that are charged to the room are off limits, this includes, but is not limited to, room service, closed circuit TV, movies and telephone calls. All telephone calls to home are to be made collect.
19. There are rules for all chaperones … no alcoholic beverages while in public or on duty. Alcohol is strictly off limits for all Bandsmen, even the 18-year-olds. Help us set the example.
20. In case of illness where a student cannot participate in a planned activity, the chaperone responsible for that student will remain with him / her, unless other specific arrangements have been made with the consent of the Trip Chairman or Band Director.
21. Most important!!! USE COMMON SENSE IN ALL SITUATIONS!!! If you have to ask a question, ask the people in charge who will know the proper answer. If you have a problem you cannot solve, get hold of another chaperone for assistance or locate the Trip Chairman or Band Director.