

Band Trip Survival Guide

As a parent and/or student, you may have many questions regarding the trips, especially if you or your child haven't been on one before. This is a guide to help the parents and students and provide as much information as possible.

Band trips are an earned privilege for each student. One of the greatest legacies of the band program is that students work toward the future to make performance trips possible for future students.

Band performance trips require much hard work from the students and staff at GHS. Once our band has been invited to attend an event and the school board has approved it, the students are required to attain very specific levels of musicianship. Music must be memorized and played-off, the band must practice and consistently perform at higher levels of skill as required. It demands a great degree of dedication from each student. The hard work always pays off though, as the students never fail to enjoy themselves thoroughly on each band performance trip. Music Boosters also play an important supportive role. From our yearly fundraising events (Chili Luncheon, Concert on the Concourse, Lambeau Field Concession work) to volunteering any time when needed, the Boosters are able to support the GHS Band program and also help them to attain their goals.

For your convenience, printable check lists will be provided at the end of this manual.

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A BAND TRIP?

The purpose of these trips is educational and each one is completely different. We try to take one trip a year which will be a three-day/two-night trip. Band trips are also intended to be fun for the students, as well as educational. Every trip has some type of performance associated with it. Every student is encouraged to attend because the rewards of such an experience are countless. All band members are eligible to attend if they are in good standing in the band program.

2. HOW OFTEN DOES THE BAND GO ON TRIPS?

Usually this is an annual event.

3. DO WE GET INVITED TO ALL OF OUR PERFORMANCES/TRIPS OR ARE THEY BY AUDITION?

Some of each.

4. IS MY CHILD REQUIRED TO ATTEND BAND TRIPS?

No. Your child may choose to attend or not. Their grade for band will not be adversely affected if they choose not to attend. However, attendance is strongly encouraged because the rewards of such experiences are countless.

5. HOW MUCH DO THE BAND TRIPS COST?

The cost of the trips varies from around \$200.00 to close to \$1,000.00. The length of the trip most often will be the main determining factor on how much it will cost each student. Early in the school year the directors will inform the students and their families of that year's trip and set a date for student sign-up. After the number of students

interested has been determined, the final details and cost of the trip will be arranged. Trip costs and payment schedules are set up well in advance.

6. HOW ARE BAND TRIPS PAID FOR AND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT?

Band trips are paid for by each individual student. The Grimsley Band Boosters are often able to donate money that will decrease the total amount each student has to pay if the band has auditioned or received a special invitation to perform. Additionally, families can apply to GCS for a \$100 need-based grant. Our band students also participate in a fundraising event(s) each year. A portion of the sales a student makes for this fundraiser are allocated to the individual student's account at school. Any balance the student has in his/her school account may be applied at any time toward the cost of a trip but may not be applied toward the initial down payment for the trip. The money remains in the student's school account as long as he/she is a student at GHS. We very strongly encourage all students to earn money for their school accounts via fundraisers each year. It greatly helps to defray the amount of money the parents (or students) have to pay for a trip. Do note though, students are not allowed to take money out of the school account to use for spending money on a band trip, it can only be applied toward the scheduled payments for a trip.

When trips are finalized, and the students know for sure they will be going on a trip, a payment schedule is set up and information is sent home to the parents. You'll usually have several months to fully pay for the trip. The first payment for any trip is normally a "non-refundable deposit" that applies toward the overall cost to the student.

7. HOW MUCH EXTRA "SPENDING MONEY" WILL MY CHILD NEED FOR A BAND TRIP AND HOW IS THIS HANDLED?

Extra spending money is a completely "personal matter" and is determined by the parents and students themselves. They may take as little, or as much, extra spending money as they want. There are two different ways the spending money can be handled.

I. Each bus will have a chaperone who is designated as the "treasurer" for those students. The students can give this chaperone their spending money and will have an opportunity once each day to get as much spending money from the treasurer as they think they will need for that day.

II. The students themselves may keep all of their spending money and manage it themselves.

You and your child will have to decide which way is best for you. You can send traveler's checks rather than cash, the travelers checks -- they can usually be cashed at the hotel and 2 forms of ID are required. With that being said, cash is always best.

Regardless of how much money students keep with them at any given time, here are a few good pointers:

1. Girls...do not carry your money in a purse. It is much too easy to lose a purse, or have it stolen. Put your money in a FRONT POCKET of your pants or shorts. If wearing a jacket or a coat, do not keep your money in those pockets. It is easy to lose or misplace jackets and/or coats and pickpockets find them an easy target. You can get a "traveler's wallet" that goes on your arm (some even go around your waist) and holds money and ID. If you use a traveler's wallet you do not have to worry about a purse being stolen or lost and your money is always with you.

2. Boys...if you are using a wallet, carry it in your FRONT POCKET, not the back pocket. It is much too easy for pickpockets to steal a wallet if it is in your back pocket. If wearing a jacket or a coat, do not keep your money in those pockets. It is easy to lose or misplace jackets and/or coats and pickpockets find them an easy target. Once again...a traveler's wallet is an incredibly useful item to have.
3. Do NOT leave money or ID in your hotel room. Keep it with you at all times. Hotels do sometimes have small "room safes" available for their customers. You need to reserve them in advance and the individual student will have to pay for the room safe if they choose to get one.

Fanny packs are also useful for students to keep their money, ID and small items in. *(And we get it, they're not in style, but they're functional and will keep your items safe.)*

8. ARE THERE ANY EXTRA COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH A BAND TRIP?

There are usually a small number of meals the students will have to pay for on their own. This information is made known in advance and you are given ample time to plan for that. In the past, students have found it helpful to share meals when they can. When they went Florida, students were able to share some of their meals at the various parks they attended and reduce the amount they had to pay for out of pocket. Some parents have found it useful to purchase gift certificates for fast food restaurants (such as McDonald's). The gift certificates can be redeemed at the specific restaurant, providing there is one readily available to the students. If the gift certificates are not used during the trip, they can always be used once they return home.

Any other extra costs that might occur are related to student behavior on the trip. If the students take "souvenirs" from the hotel rooms or damage the hotel rooms, they WILL be required to pay for that. Encourage your child to leave hotel pillows, linen, blankets, towels, etc.... AT THE HOTEL and to treat their hotel room like it is their home, or better. If your child misbehaves to the extent that they must be sent home, they will be sent home with a chaperone and the parents will be responsible for paying to have the child and chaperone sent home.

9. HOW SAFE IS MY CHILD ON A BAND TRIP?

As long as your child follows the Rules and Basic Expectations will be outlined at the parent/student meeting prior to leaving on the trip, they are just as safe on a band trip as they are at home. Band trips are well chaperoned, students are kept extremely busy with very little downtime, and they are well supervised at all times. Trip Itineraries are set up well in advance and provided to the families

10. IF MY CHILD HAS SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS OR TAKES PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION, HOW IS THIS HANDLED ON A BAND TRIP?

These issues are set up and handled prior to leaving for the trip. There is always a REQUIRED parent/student meeting prior to leaving on the trip and this issue (as well as others) is gone over in great detail. If you child has special needs or specific information regarding his/her health, this should probably be discussed with the band director privately. You should also make sure the chaperone assigned to your child is aware of these issues as well. At the high school level, the students are expected to be able to handle taking care of their own medications and will be able to carry it in their luggage if you want. Otherwise, direct communication should be made with the band director and the assigned chaperone.

Additional health insurance is not necessary for your child when they attend a band performance trip. It's up to each parent to make sure their current health insurance company covers any needs which may arise while your child is on a band trip, either within the state of North Carolina or outside the state of North Carolina. During the pre-trip Student/Parent meeting, there are specific forms that must be filled out and turned in.

Over the counter medications, ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE CARRIED BY STUDENTS. This is a GCS policy. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Aspirin/Tylenol
- Pepto Bismol/Imodium AD/Pepcid AC
- Over the Counter cold & allergy medications -One note here, Nyquil (or generic equivalent)
- ***NO MEDICINES MAY BE SHARED BETWEEN STUDENTS FOR ANY REASON...***

11. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF MY CHILD AS A BAND MEMBER WHILE THEY ARE ON A BAND TRIP?

Rules and Basic Expectations will be provided to you.

12. AS A BAND PARENT, CAN I ATTEND A BAND TRIP WITH MY CHILD?

There are two ways a parent may attend a band trip:

1. As a chaperone. Chaperones travel with the band and are subject to the same rules and basic expectations. Chaperones must also pay for the trip themselves, the cost is determined quite a bit in advance of the trip. Once a trip is approved and set up, parents are allowed to volunteer to be chaperones. We almost always have more people volunteer to be chaperones than are actually needed. If you want to be a chaperone for a trip, sign up early. You'll be notified if you are chosen. A background check is required by Guilford County Schools.

13. IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, WILL I BE ABLE TO CONTACT MY CHILD WHILE THE BAND IS ON A TRIP?

Without fail, you will be able to contact your child in the event of an emergency. Contact information is provided to the parents at the required parent/student meeting prior to the trip. The specific band trip handbook is handed out at the parent/student trip meeting. Students are required to take the trip handbook with them, so be sure you make a copy of any information in the book you think you may need to keep at home.

14. WHAT PERSONAL ITEMS ARE ALLOWED ON THE BUS AND IN THE CARRY - ON LUGGAGE?

See the Code of Conduct & Packing list

15. DO THE BAND STUDENTS TRAVEL ON SCHOOL BUSES?

If the destination is not too far away and will not require an overnight stay (ie local parades), they do travel on school buses. If the destination is farther away and requires the students to be gone more than a day, they travel on coach buses (ie Florida trip). There may even be some trips that require the students travel by airplane, though this rarely happens. The mode of transportation is determined in advance and included with the basic trip information provided to the parents and students.

16. WHEN THE BAND IS ON A TRIP, ARE STUDENTS ALLOWED TO VISIT WITH FAMILY THAT MAY LIVE IN THAT AREA?

No. Unfortunately we cannot accommodate side trips for personal reasons.

17. HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE EACH CHAPERONE RESPONSIBLE FOR?

On average, we try not to have a chaperone be responsible for more than 10 students per trip. However, exceptions do occur.

18. ARE THE BAND STUDENTS EVER ALLOWED TO GO OFF UNSUPERVISED?

Yes, students do have limited free time. Very often we tell the students that if I learn that if we can't trust you while at home, here in Greensboro, why should you be trusted when the band is hundreds of miles from home? With that said, our students have been remarkable in their maturity and ability to handle responsibility. To date, we have not had any major problems with students utilizing free time in a positive manner while they are on a band trip.

19. AM I A GRIMSLEY BAND BOOSTER?

You are a Grimsley Music Booster if:

- You have a child in any of the music programs at GHS
- You were a student in any GHS music program while in high school.
- You simply have a sincere interest in supporting the GHS Music Programs