

# BUENA BANDS - Chaperone Instructions

## 1. Responsibilities

As band parents, we are occasionally called to make the ultimate sacrifice...parent chaperone. This job is not for the weak individual; it takes a great deal of nerve to climb on a school bus or an airplane with 80 high school students! In reality, this is probably one of the most enjoyable parts of being a band parent. A parent chaperone must come equipped with at least three attributes and they are a keen eye, a sense of humor and the acceptance and tolerance that no, you haven't seen everything!

Chaperones are basically another set of eyes for the band staff. We can't be everywhere all the time. You are our greatest asset when we are spread thin. Your biggest responsibility to the students is their safety. Kids are invincible or least they think they are. They take chances and sometimes don't consider consequences before they act. **THIS IS NORMAL TEENAGE BEHAVIOR!** You can help by trying to help avert kids from making mistakes. This sometimes takes all the psychic powers you have. You must be able to read minds and have eyes in the back of your head.

### *BASIC RULES TO REMEMBER*

- All school rules and policies are in effect for the duration of any trip taken by the band.
- Chaperones should spread themselves out through the bus.
- Students may talk as long as the noise level does not become a distraction for the driver. NO radio, tape player or CD player is to be used without headphones. No screaming or yelling.
- Everyone should remain seated at all times. There is to be no talking, shouting or gesturing out the bus windows.
- Public display of affection is always a very uncomfortable subject. However, school policy addresses this issue. We are to let these kids have fun, but it is not our responsibility to help them through puberty. If you are uncomfortable with a situation, discreetly ask the individuals to put a little distance between them. If the situation continues, please inform Mr. Chun.
- Students are not to change buses for any reason. Only Mr. Chun will have that discretion. We will check roll prior to any departure. The buses will not leave until everyone is accounted for.
- When we arrive at a location, please have everyone remain on the bus until instructed to exit.
- It is up to the driver as to whether food and drink are allowed on the bus. We must keep the buses clean – these will be brand new buses! No trash should be left on the bus when we arrive back at the school. Room Captains will be responsible for keeping the buses clean.

## 2. Discipline

There is a misconception that chaperones are responsible for discipline and punishment of the rule breakers. This could not be further from the truth. In reality, the only student on the trip you can actually punish for breaking a rule is your own child. Only certified staff actually has the authority to discipline school students. It is a sad fact that legal issues make it important that we remember this fact. If someone were to take issue with this, it would be the Band Staff that would ultimately be held responsible.

## 3. Decision Making

Mr. Chun will make all decisions concerning the group. We must remember that all decisions do not just effect those around us, but the entire group as well. It can be as small as "Can I go across the street to that restaurant? It is not as crowded." This seems harmless until a student steps off the curb in front of a car. A chaperone can make the call, the director can get sued and lose his job. Other scenarios set up just as easily. Here are some basic rules about decision making:

- There is no such thing as a five-minute pit stop. If we stop the group, we are looking at a minimum of thirty minutes.
- Kids *WILL* play you against the staff; it is their nature! They *WANT* you to tell them they can do something we said they couldn't do!
- What seems big to you may seem small to them and vice-versa.
- *REMAIN CALM!* Kids love to get a rise out of adults...it's a game.
- You cannot demand respect out of today's kids; you have to earn it. I have learned this the hard way. They are not like we were at their age. They are neither scared nor intimidated by adult authority.

In conclusion, let the kids have fun, but there must be limits. Use your good judgment and when in doubt, ask Mr. Chun.