

# \*\*\* PARENT MEETING AGENDA \*\*\*



This meeting is a critical step in generating enthusiasm and getting your trip off to a fast start. Parents have consistently reported the parent meeting was an essential component in the decision to allow their child to join the trip. The **three biggest factors** parents have emphasized about the meeting are: 1.) the **detailed information** provided 2.) the opportunity for their **child's social growth and responsibility**, and 3.) the **educational value** and hands-on academic experience.

## **INTRODUCTION**

- Set up a sign-in sheet to collect names, phone numbers, and email addresses
- Introduce trip chaperones and yourself as Tour Director
- Hand out itinerary highlighting attractions included on the trip (Getting STUDENTS excited about the tour is your FIRST goal.)

## **EXPLANATION – DECISION TO OFFER TOUR OPPORTUNITY**

### **1.) Educational Benefits**

- Witness first-hand, the curriculum of textbooks by visiting historical locations-making classroom lessons come to life
- Grasp the enormous sacrifices that went into our nation's heritage of freedom through this incredible opportunity
- Experience the rich, patriotic traditions of our country
- Explore world-class museums and view historic artifacts and national treasures
- Gain insight into the democratic process, the consequences of choices, and personal roles in shaping America's destiny
- Become self aware of your ability to make a positive contribution to the world

### **2.) Personal and Social Growth Opportunities**

- Observe the power and sheer wonder of our nation's greatest cities
- Engage in hands-on demonstrations requiring group interaction and team cooperation
- Learn to cooperate with roommates, follow a scheduled budget, display etiquette and reverence at many attractions
- See world class art, architecture and (if applicable) theatre
- Experience different cultures, food types, and meet other students from across the country and world
- Participate in the most important week, both socially and personally, in your life

## **VIDEO PRESENTATION**

- Play the DVD for your destination
- If applicable, show videos of previous trips highlighting the students' friends who traveled
- Incorporate appearances and testimonies of former student travelers
- Include appearances and testimonies of parents of former travelers highlighting the significance of the trip for their child

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## TOUR COMPANY CHOICE

- Explain your decision to have School Tours of America coordinate your tour
- Describe the company's staff, which is comprised of the nation's most experienced educational tour planners, who themselves are former educators, trip sponsors, and parents
- Inform parents School Tours of America is a member of the most prestigious student tour organization – the Student Youth Tour Association (SYTA) ensuring it meets the highest levels of financial protections and ethical practices.
- Notify parents that School Tours of America is affiliated with Adams State College and is the only tour company in the country whose programs have been approved to receive undergraduate and graduate school credit
- Present DC Mayor Adrian Fenty's letter and/or the STA Company Greeting
- Communicate that STA maintains extensive and comprehensive liability, accident, and medical insurance
- Assure parents the tours are a first-rate, truly all-inclusive value which includes:
  - 1.) Round-trip transportation (excluding luggage fees if applicable)
  - 2.) Secure, quality, convenient hotel accommodations such as Marriott, Ramada, Hilton, and Sheraton
  - 3.) All meals (except en route on the plane or bus)
  - 4.) Sightseeing with professional licensed drivers and guides who specialize in their ability to teach youth
  - 5.) Nighttime private security chaperones stationed on the hotel floor to ensure no one leaves their room or no unwanted guests are on the floor
  - 6.) Exciting morning and evening activities filled with educational or social activities leaving almost no idle, free time
  - 7.) 24 hour on-call company representatives at the hotel, a local tour office, and a 24 hour emergency hotline available to all parents and students
  - 8.) Doctors on Call – if necessary, STA will arrange a physician to travel to the group on tour or at the hotel

## STUDENT SIGN-UP

- Encourage parents and students to sign-up and turn in their forms to you before they leave. (The main goal of the meeting is to enroll students on tour!)
- Explain that early registration guarantees their place on the tour and may qualify them for an early registration discount (ask your Tour Coordinator about details)
- Suggest **registering through the STA website** as the easiest, quickest way to join the trip

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## REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT

- Explain trip cost is all-inclusive except for luggage fees (if applicable), souvenir money, and optional tips for guides
- Inform parents of the registration deadline and deposit necessary to secure their spot as space is limited
- Discuss the optional easy pay schedule and payment coupons STA sends allowing parents to spread out payments
- Encourage participation in the Payment Protection Program (This is an important program to protect their investment in the event the parent or school must cancel. Unforeseen events come up and enrolling in this program protects them in the event of a family emergency or other last minute cancellations by the district. Past contingencies such as H1N1 epidemic demonstrate the potential. Moreover, the Partial Payment Plan will substantially reduce the payment and it becomes a wise but affordable investment.
- Refer everyone to the School Tours of America website for more information. **This is the best place to register for the trip.** Once they register, they are sent a traveler ID number to use to create an online account where they can make online payments and check their balance.
- Explain that registrant's canceling without participating in the Payment Protection Program could lose a significant amount of money depending on the date of cancellation. Inform parents STA must make the majority of large payments like airlines, buses and hotels in advance.
- Encourage parents to make payments in accordance with the payment plan and to pay in full by the Final Payment Deadline

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Discuss parent and student involvement in promotion and fund raising (Explain the tour price is based on 35 participants and it is your goal to achieve a full group.)
- Initiate fund raising activities, if applicable (The website and TD Handbook address fund raising, scholarship, and grant possibilities. Ask parents to assist and explain the rules of fund raising. Will there be group activities that contribute to all participants? Will each student have a separate account, etc.?)
- Notify parents of future correspondence and meetings (If possible, set up a website or another form to communicate future meetings. Once parents register for an account, you will be able to send out mass e-mails, but it is a good idea to get their e-mail addresses at this meeting.)
- Give your phone number and e-mail address (school or home) for parents to contact you
- Question/answer session