

## Letter to Parents – May 20, 2011

### HHS Band Trip Spain 2012- Madrid, Valencia, Barcelona March 23-April 2, 2012

Dear Huntsville High Band Students and Parents,

We are delighted to be planning an international trip to Spain in the spring of 2012! It seems like only yesterday that we were marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin, Ireland during the last international trip in March 2008. Since this is a very special event that occurs every four years, we hope that every band student seriously considers this opportunity to attend. Parent chaperones are also welcomed and are important to making the trip a success.

The dates for this trip are March 23 – April 2, 2012. This occurs over the planned spring break for Huntsville City Schools next year. At present, it appears that the flight departure will be the Friday before Spring Break out of Atlanta, with return on Monday, April 2 to Atlanta. Travel to and from Atlanta is planned to be by coach (bus).

The itinerary for the trip begins with arrival and several days of touring in Madrid and the surrounding region, to include several concert performances, followed by similar days in Valencia and Barcelona. Departure back to the U.S. is from Barcelona.

The HHS Band Parents Association held its first informational meeting on May 17, 2011 and handed out initial planning information. ***At this time flights are still being arranged. A group of approximately 82 people will fly out of Atlanta on one airline and the balance of the group will fly on another airline still being scheduled. Flight costs will be averaged for all passengers regardless of specific itinerary. Land travel costs are being finalized as well so total trip costs are ESTIMATES at this point. The total trip cost is ESTIMATED at \$3,000, but the actual cost may be slightly higher or lower than this ESTIMATE.***

What does the trip cost cover? TRIP COST includes: transportation, lodging, entrance fees to all group events, all breakfasts, and all dinners. It does **NOT** include: your passport, lunches, snacks, spending money, or souvenirs. It also does not include the cost of a "HHS Band trip shirt" which will probably cost about \$15-\$20. All costs stated during trip meetings and HHS band emails will be the actual cost or our best estimate. We are working to make this trip as economical as possible. A trip payment schedule was discussed in the informational meeting and is provided at the end of this letter. It will also be posted to the HHS Band web site, [www.huntsvillehighband.com](http://www.huntsvillehighband.com). The HHS BPA will update you on this "trip cost" as the final prices for transportation, lodging, and activities are determined.

**To reserve your place on this trip: Pay a \$200 deposit (per person) by May 25, 2011. Checks are payable to HHSBPA; include Student Name/Potential Chaperone Name/Spain on the memo line and please deliver payment to HHS BPA, PO Box 16054, Huntsville, AL 35802**

Looking forward to Spain in 2012!

Sincerely,

W. David Spencer  
Director of Bands, Huntsville High School

## Planning Notes

**Important Note:** All regular band fees for 2011-2012 year must be paid in full before a student can participate on this trip. Fee schedule is located at [www.huntsvillehighband.com](http://www.huntsvillehighband.com). Fees for 2011/12 have increased slightly by \$40 per year (program fees only).

**A Word on Baggage:** Baggage fees for checked personal luggage would also be in addition to this total trip cost. With savvy planning, packing and sharing of common items among hotel roommates, valuable packing space can be saved. As with domestic flights, one bag and one personal item (can be a smaller bag/personal item) can be carried on board without fees. There will be a limit to how much personal luggage participants can take so that bags and instruments will fit under the coaches for the land portion of the trip. This information will be provided to trip attendees at a later date.

**Chaperones:** We have a great number of parents who have expressed interest to be a chaperone for this trip. We are grateful that there are so many parents who are willing to chaperone. At this point, we do not know exactly how many will be required. Please keep in mind that there may be more people volunteering to be chaperones than the number of chaperones that may be required. For international trips, the price for chaperones is the same as the price for students. Sign-ups for interest will be taken at this meeting. Chaperone decisions will be made based on chaperone to student ratios, space available, and other important factors.

**Forms Required:** At this time a minimum of three forms are required to travel as part of a Huntsville City Schools Field Trip with HHS Band. Forms will be collected later in the planning cycle. Deadlines will be announced. Forms are located on Forms Tab, [www.huntsvillehighband.com](http://www.huntsvillehighband.com):

1. HCS Out of Town Medical Release form
2. HHS Band Medical Consent form
3. HHS Band Code of Conduct form

**Unaccompanied Minor Form:** We learned since our trip to Ireland that this form may be required for students traveling internationally without parents. The form will be provided.

**Passports:** Website for State Department is <http://travel.state.gov>

There are different requirements for minors under age 16 than for 16-17 year olds. Check requirements on website.

**Passport must be valid for at least 90 days beyond the end of the trip! The valid date to look for is July 1, 2012.**

**Passport BOOK is required, NOT a Passport CARD!**

**Passport fees:** First time Adult applicant (16 and up): \$135  
First time Minor applicants (under 16): \$105

**Passport Pictures:** Available at many drug stores, Allied Photocopy, Southerland's Photo, Costco, etc.

**Where to get passports:**

Facility Name	Street Address	City	State	ZIP Code	Public Phone
<a href="#">Clerk of Circuit Court Madison County</a>	100 North Side Square Courthouse	Huntsville	AL	35801	(256) 532-3380
<a href="#">Haysland Station</a>	8401 Whitesburg Dr.	Huntsville	AL	35802	(256) 882-7413
<a href="#">Wynn D. Station</a>	645 Wynn Drive	Huntsville	AL	35816	(256) 722-4749

**Fundraising:** Fundraising opportunities will be available to **help** pay for this trip. All students are highly encouraged to participate in all fundraising opportunities.

**Trip Information:** Our website [www.huntsvillehighband.com](http://www.huntsvillehighband.com) will be updated regularly with trip information. We will have several trip meetings between now and March 2012.

**TENTATIVE TRIP PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

Date	Amount (per person)	Milestone
May 25, 2011	\$200	Initial deposit
June 30, 2011	\$325	
July 29, 2011	\$325	End of band camp, \$850 in band trip account
August 26, 2011	\$325	
September 23, 2011	\$325	\$1500 total in band trip account
October 21, 2011	\$325	
November 18, 2011	\$325	\$2150 in band trip account
December 16, 2011	\$325	
January 27, 2012	\$325	\$2800 in band trip account
February 24, 2012	Balance due	

**Volunteers:** Help is needed to plan a trip of this magnitude. If you like to work with people and are willing to help on a trip committee to assist with organizing meetings, assisting with fundraising, tracking events, making calls, etc., please contact Karen Pigott, 256.519.3185, or Kathy Wachs, 256.881.6225.