

TRAVEL PREPARATION MEETING OKM SENIOR BAND EUROPE TOUR 2020

Wednesday, February 26, 6:30 - 8:00 PM, OKM Multi-Purpose Room.

Doors open at 6:00

Mandatory attendance for all travelers, plus a parent MUST attend.

GOAL: To prepare and practice our travel systems, so everybody feels ready to go!

The first part of the meeting is practice for **everybody** to “do what it takes” to be on time. While touring, if one person is late for our “call time”, the entire group could suffer significant negative consequences (missing flights, etc). **Students must arrive for the meeting with enough time to get set up.** Consider there will be at least 225 people attending, with luggage, etc., parking lot congestion...etc.

WHEN PLANNING YOUR ARRIVAL TIME AT THE MEETING, CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

When entering the multi, you will see 105 chairs in 5 rows of 21, with all tour jackets draped on the backs, and the numbers 1-105 posted on the chairs. Written on the white inside tag of each jacket will be the student’s name, and their tour number.

- **BEFORE 6:30:** Students: Find your **tour number** from the posted list, and be seated in your assigned chair, with all suitcases (carry-on & checked luggage) and all assigned musical gear neatly in FRONT of your knees, straight out and in line with the chairs. All travel documents (passport, etc) will be held tightly in your hand, and you will put on your tour jacket, and be ready for the 6:30 headcount.

- **At EXACTLY 6:30** Chaperones will headcount their groups, and note any lates, collect students’ Travel Documents, and check your gear.

| PROJECTOR SCREEN WALL (backing to Dance Room) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | Entrance to Multi from Gordon Drive | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

WHAT TO BRING TO THE MEETING:

1. **PASSPORT and/or other TRAVEL DOCUMENTS** if needed: We will collect the passports, double check that the data is correct, and keep them all securely locked away the OKM safe until departure day. This is the best, and safest option for the group. In past Europe Tours, we had parents/students show up for tour without their passport, or having brought the wrong passport (thankfully, OKM found the error and solved it...) This causes delays to the entire group, and/or, could cause a student to miss the tour, with no refund. We understand that some might be nervous about handing in their passports, but this is the best policy to ensure our group is all ready to go on March 8.
2. **MEDIUM or COMPACT SIZED SUITCASE (EMPTY) and CARRY-ON (Backpack):** Suitcase **MUST** be Medium or Compact sized, and the same suitcase you will be taking on tour. Large sized suitcases cause problems for our limited space on tour busses, and are very difficult for students to haul upstairs, etc. We will tag all luggage with OKM groovy tape, for easy identification in airports. We will give packing tips at the tour meeting.
3. **INSTRUMENT & MUSIC:** Flutes, Clarinet, Oboe must be packed inside EITHER carry-on or checked luggage. Medium sized instruments (trumpets, alto sax) will be carry-ons. Anything larger, and percussion cases, will probably be additional checked luggage. We will tell students ahead of the meeting about how to deal with their specific instrument.

MEETING AGENDA:

- **Custom Tour Jackets** will be handed out. Each will have the student name, and alphabetical tour number, written on the inside tag.
- **Practice our group systems** for quickly doing attendance in 5 groups of 21 students.
- **Concerts Updates:** We are excited to be hosted within Croatia for several concerts.
- **Final Itinerary Review:** Parents will receive all contact information of hotels during the tour (for safety, it doesn't get posted online)
- **Buddy System** free time supervision refresher. Students will have a bit of free time almost every day, as per the itinerary. For safety, they must follow our strict rules.
- **Instrument and group luggage assignments:** For best economy, we are distributing the concert instruments and equipment to be checked by students. clarinets and flutes will pack their instruments into their checked suitcase
- **Airports:** How to process everybody with luggage, carry-ons, security checks, transfers...
- **Meals:** We have a safety plan in place for students with severe food allergies, and accommodations for students with special dietary requirements. We will also train all students in how we implement this during group meals - simply place a napkin over your plate until Ms. Frederick confirms you are good to go. Sometimes, servers start bringing food before everyone is seated, so students must advocate for themselves.
- **Packing:** suitcases must be "medium"; clothes for weather in Croatia...smaller instruments will be "Carry-on's"; assigning bigger instruments as checked luggage.
- **Spending money** - how much to bring, where to secure funds, security during hotels.
- **Documentation:** Ensuring all travel documents are in place.
- **Cell Phones:** Tips for data, online use, and our healthy guidelines for their usage.
- **Diet:** This tour is very strictly peanut and nut free, as we have students with severe and life threatening allergies
- **Snack in the Backpack:** during the tour, students are advised to always have a snack and water to tide you over, because sometimes it's difficult to thread the needle with timings to feed 112 people. Usually, we'd rather eat quickly so we can do more touring, and the students can have more buddy system free time for shopping.

- **Hotel Load-In Systems:**How we efficiently move 105 students and gear into 6 different hotels, in quads, triples, and/or doubles.
- **Hotel rules:** every night, a chaperone will visit for room check, to see how everybody's doing in personal health, and to give instructions for the next morning. For safety - students are very strictly told to NEVER open their hotel door or leave their room until the designated morning time, for ANY reason, except if there is a fire bell, or a teacher instruction. For ANY nighttime emergencies in the room, students are told they MUST phone the hotel reception desk, who will wake up a teacher - because this is the most assured way to quickly get help. To help remind students to not open their hotel doors after room check,, and to avoid "oops" moments...we will students a bit of masking tape to lightly put over the inside deadbolt and doorknob...as a physical reminder of this crucial safety rule.
- **Hotel Free Time Rules.** Sometimes, students will have some free time in hotels, and we encourage healthy and appropriate socializing that is quiet and respectful of other hotel guests. Whoever possible, we will find nice areas for students to hang out and enjoy each other's company. As we are "one band, one sound", *students must remind each other* to be on their best behaviour. If a legitimate complaint from hotel management is made about any student behavior in our group, we may have to put everyone back in their rooms. It doesn't work to have teachers hollering down hallways for students to be quiet.
- **Interacting with locals:** We encourage students to be friendly towards everyone they meet in during the tour, and sticking up conversations can be great and are encouraged in group settings, but there are limits. *Never tell anybody where we're staying*, or give your room number to strangers. Within hotels, especially in hallways and elevators, don't talk to strangers. That might seem harsh or rude, but it's the best for your safety.
- **Safety and group emergency communication protocols. ONLY FOR STUDENTS ON TOUR:** On March 8, students will get an emergency contact card that they must keep on their person at all times during the tour. It will give them the cell phone number for 24/7 access to our local tour guide, so teachers can be quickly contacted for any student emergency. All others, including parents, are strictly forbidden from calling or texting this number.
- Any **emergency contact from parents to teachers**, must happen as follows: before tour, parents will be given the 24/7 emergency cell access so they can phone our Travel and Tours agents, Mario Skrep, who would phone the OKM principal, who will call our local tour guide to contact the teachers. This way, the full attention and emergency systems of both the Central Okanagan School District and Mariden Tours will be instantly activated, putting all resources into action and awareness.
- **For emergency tour contacting of all parents:** during any emergency, timely, efficient, and accurate communication is crucial. *We will test this system during the launch meeting.* The teachers will be in contact with the OKM Principal, who will provide parents and everyone with interconnected communications between all expert advisors, according to the circumstances, and at the discretion of the Principal and teachers, this may include our Central Okanagan School District senior staff, Mariden and Tours company, Manulife Insurance agents, Interior Health and/or local health care providers during the tour, government agents, etc. We also have all parent contact information as was provided during tour registration. Please check the FAQ section for details about the insurance.