

"Education...

Sanford H. Calhoun High School Music Department



through Entertainment..."

Calhoun Choral Program

Concert Choir/ Chorale/ "Crescendo"

1786 State Street, Merrick, NY 11566

S. Sardo, Director

<http://www.ccp1.org>

Dear Parents/Students:

The 'Festival Disney' Tour is quickly approaching. Plans are being finalized and hopefully the entire trip will go off without a hitch. The tour director has been in constant contact with us concerning our plans, and as of this date all is going as planned. As we close in on the tour weekend, this letter will include information, forms, and a tentative itinerary. Please remember that this itinerary is quite incomplete and subject to change.

Parents and students who have been involved with past tours should pay particular attention to this year's letters. There are many facets of this trip that make it unique, and they will be described in this and future letters.

****All students and chaperones will be required to have a valid photo ID with them at all times. For students under 18, your Calhoun Student ID will be acceptable; students 18 or over must have a federal or state-issued ID (for examples, visit www.tsatraveltips.us). The first time that this ID will be used will be at the boarding gate. Anyone 18 or over without a valid photo ID will not be permitted to board the airliner. This is a federal regulation.**

****Enclosed with this letter is an agreement that the Calhoun Music Dept. requires of all tour students. We will not allow any student to board the bus without this agreement on file. PLEASE make sure that both parent and student read it, and return the form ASAP.**

****Also enclosed with this letter is a medical form. We are fortunate to have Mrs. Johnson, our school nurse, traveling with the group. Please return it ASAP as well.**

Students should remember that they are each representing the Calhoun Choral Program. There are certain ground rules that must be followed in order to ensure a pleasant and productive weekend. Your cooperation and following of directions will help to set the tone for attendance at future spring tours. In the event that a student does not meet the program guidelines set by Disney, Southwest Airlines, the hotel, Calhoun High School, or the staff/chaperones, that student will be sent home at his/her own expense. Parents will receive a collect phone call notifying them of the action to be taken. Of course, reasonable, positive, responsible conduct is required at all times, but especially when flying, or in the hotel. A good rule of thumb for students is this: you all know me pretty well by now. 'If you don't think I'd approve, don't even try it.'

As you know, there is heightened security at the airports and at theme parks. There are a number of items that are no longer allowed in carry-on bags, and must be checked. Do not lock checked baggage, as the TSA will be inspecting all checked baggage at the airport (for packing tips and explanations, visit www.tsatraveltips.us). Disney Security (which, in my experience, is the best theme park security in the world) searches all bags, camerabags, backpacks, purses, etc upon entering the parks. Please keep this in mind when packing.



A few parents have shared with us their plans to cheer us on in Orlando. While we are very happy about your involvement in this exciting weekend, please keep in mind that we are responsible for your child, as well as 78 other children. I would ask that you not stay in the same Disney resort hotel as the group. In past years, we have had isolated incidents of parents 'trying to help', but in so doing, making my job more difficult. Your child is responsible for following all of the instructions given by me and the other chaperones. If you feel that this might cause a problem, please contact me prior to the tour.

All students are expected to participate in all scheduled activities. There are seven chaperones attending the festival to make sure all students are present at all activities and at mealtimes. NEVER GO ANYWHERE ALONE!!!! You cannot leave the boundaries given to you by us at any event- please pay close attention.

Quoting from the Festival Disney director's manual: "The behavior of all students involved in Festival Disney is a direct reflection on Disney as well as on their school and community. Remember, our Guests expect your group to meet the same appearance and conduct standards as our professional Walt Disney World performers..." Students, please remember that your parents are signing a tour contract (enclosed), and you will be held accountable for your actions. I will, of course, strictly enforce the 'Festival Disney' rules that prohibit alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and smoking during the festival weekend. I know I won't have to worry about these rules being followed, but they need to be stated.

The following is taken from the CCP Handbook, which is available at www.ccp1.org-

"...4. An extended trip is not a vacation. It is planned to gain an opportunity to perform in the same arena as other groups from other areas. A mature, positive attitude is required and expected of all members of the Calhoun Choral Program at all times. When at parks, performance areas, award ceremonies, and other attractions, all students are to remember that they are representing the Bellmore- Merrick CHSD, Calhoun High School, and the Calhoun Choral Program. When staying at a hotel, all members are to stay out of the halls and in their rooms. You are to be on your best behavior so as not to disturb other guests. No loud radio or tv playing, loud talking, running in the halls or misconduct is permitted, nor will it be tolerated.

5. All participants are responsible for their own equipment and belongings at all times."

Students should plan for many contrasting weather scenarios. While the temperature should range in the mid-high 70s/ low 80s, a jacket should be packed, as well as rain gear. Also, the sun is more direct in Orlando- remember sunscreen! Also, please remember that water quality varies from state to state, and since Nassau County has some of the purest water in the country, you may not be used to Orlando's water.

Many parents ask how much money students should bring with them. Well..., it depends. As the itinerary shows, 3 breakfasts are included with the festival. Students are responsible for the remainder of their meals, while they are in the various theme parks. Also, Disney souvenirs are in abundance. My suggestion would be for the student to ask any classmates who were on last year's choral tour how much they needed, and to augment it, based on the "theme park factor". Or, to ask a student who went with us to Orlando in 2009.



As per district policy, a mandatory evening parent-student-administrator meeting will be scheduled as we get closer to the tour. More details will follow.

I can't begin to tell you how proud I've been of the students' work ethic and dedication. I truly believe that both groups will make their school and community very proud of them as well.

If you have any questions concerning any aspect of the festival please contact me at 516-992-1373, or via email: ssardo@bellmore-merrick.k12.ny.us.

Yours in Music,

Mr. Sanford Sardo
Director of Choral Activities
Calhoun Choral Program

PS- Remember to return medical form and signed contract ASAP.