

LGHS Band Boosters

Italy Trip Travel Timeline and Process Notes

The Band Boosters has an informal process related to travel. Travel is planned by a trip chair and the Band director with input from the larger Band Boosters community. For international trips, a trip treasurer has traditionally been used, as the amount of work involved is far too much for one person.

This timeline documents the process used in planning the Italy trip scheduled for April, 2010.

TIMELINE

1. **Early spring, 2008**- call for trip chair yields no volunteers to chair. Carolyn Dufort, current Band Booster president, assumes role.
2. **Spring 2008**- Trip chair begins planning (bids and inquiries) trip. This process includes having a conversation with Mike Boitz, SHS, for his input on meaningful destinations and his recommendation on tour companies.
 - **Choice of destination:** When trip chair begins talking with companies in Spring 2008 she asks them what countries are the most popular, best weather for April, economical, and safe. Recommendations are Austria, Italy, Vienna/Prague. We also considered Spain--but Italy was recommended over Spain. Italy was preferred for the following reasons: 1) since we had already gone to Austria and Vienna, 2) people were already talking about and excited about Italy (from the previous international trip), 3) the tour companies polled listed it as a top 3 destination for April and 4) our new band director is Italian and had never gone to Italy.
3. **September 2008** At September Boosters meeting, vote taken to determine whether an international or domestic destination is preferred. International receives 20 votes, Domestic 1, don't care 13. Discussion of destination ensues, with Italy as the recommended destination from the Trip chair. Most Boosters support this destination. Some alternative destinations are proposed: Canada and China in particular. Neither receives much support. Trip chair researches possibility of China, but is told that it is not recommended for a short 1-week trip, nor is it considered as safe a destination. Boosters are told that the cost for an Italy trip will be approximately \$2800.
4. **December 2008** Mr. Fortino (director) announces that he has agreed to take the band on the trip, after becoming more acquainted with the students and our organization.
5. **January 2009** Director and trip chair receive bids from 3 companies, including Gateway, the tour operator for previous trip to Austria. All contain variable components (either surcharge or air/land price "subject to change" at 60 days from date of travel). KI bid is the lowest. Gateway is the second lowest, but there was some dissatisfaction with Gateway's hotel choices and performance venues during the Austria trip.
6. **January 2009** Director asks for references from colleagues on an on-line forum. Receives "thumbs up" on all of the companies from which we are accepting bids. Director creates a spreadsheet comparing the itineraries, inclusions, and exclusions of all of our bids.
7. **February 3, 2009**- Director and Trip chair meet with KI company CEO. Trip committee is impressed by Oliver's experience and attention to our trip objectives.

Subsequently, trip committee decides that KI Concerts offers us the highest quality package as well as the lowest cost of the three bids received.

1. (Note: Director has never traveled internationally and has only been West of the Rockies once. Due to director's inexperience with international travel, it becomes apparent that trip chair would need to handle the planning and logistical end and Director would handle musical aspects. This is in contrast to trip planning at Saratoga, where the music director handles all logistical and planning activities with his staff)
8. **May 2009.** School board approval given.
9. **May 2009.** Trip chair recruits Lori Ingle to be trip treasurer. Trip committee now consists of Director, Trip Chair and Trip Treasurer.
10. **June 10th** Deadline for \$200/person deposit for trip. Trip chair explains to KI Concerts that it is too early to collect a firm commitment from all of our families. KI Concerts agrees that they can reserve airline seats with a \$100 deposit per person. Music Boosters pays the first payment of \$12K (\$100 x 120 estimated participants) using a "loan" from the \$12K fund generated during school years '06-'09. This \$12K will be repaid by the participants by December—before the funds are needed elsewhere (for overweight fees, busses, etc). Trip committee creates payment schedule that would avoid the months in which Band Fees were due (August and September). Instead of adding \$200 to the July, Oct, or Nov. payment, we made the \$200/person payment be due in December.
11. **June 2009** Based on suggestion from Bill Gallmeister, Carolyn Simon is recruited to join trip as additional musical resource, focusing on orchestra and supporting Mr. Fortino as needed.
12. **May-July 2009** Student and chaperone behavioral expectations laid out by the trip committee in conjunction with School administration. Administration states that all of the other international trips (Senior trip, AP European History) have been moved to the summer months--so they have become, in essence, "non-school trips" because the students have graduated and are off of the "discipline radar". Our trip has been approved during the school year ONLY because they know that we would not be able to achieve full instrumentation during a summer trip. Administration reiterates that trip chair's participation in the planning and attendance on the trip (as a credentialed teacher who KNOWS the kids, has been so involved in the band program, and who KNOWS the trip) also was a factor in receiving board and administrative approval for the trip.
13. **June-July** Trip planning. Director is not available for trip planning, so trip chair and trip treasurer take on this responsibility. During this process, it becomes clear to Carolyn and Lori that these two are essential and required members of the trip, both before and during the trip, for functions including but not limited to transportation arrangements, equipment packaging and shipping, town/venue/tour/hotel logistics, dealing with illnesses, and discipline. With their responsibilities, they will NOT be able to as carefree and independent on the trip as the other parents. In April, when everyone else is packing for the trip and thinking only of themselves or their child--they will be handling a last minute crisis, confirming busses, etc. On the tour, they will be the first ones up and the last to bed. They will be the point people for logistics when arriving at each town, venue, tour, and hotel. If a child is ill and needs to remain behind, they will act as a tag-team. If there is a discipline issue, they will be that student(s) "personal chaperone" for the remainder of the tour. They are in charge of the passports during the tour. They will remain at the hotel at night, wherever the students are--even when other parents have an opportunity to leave the hotel to have dinner on their own.

Carolyn came to the realization in a natural "unfolding" way that their vital function qualifies both of them for complimentary positions on the tour.

14. **August 13-** 1 hr Conference call with 5 KI Concert Staff members, Director and trip chair. Trip treasurer provides data on attendees. Director is also learning about the trip during the call.
15. **September - trip chair** prepares a detailed itinerary and to-do list (flights, hotels, venues, tours, etc.) As information is made available from KI, it is passed on to parents via email and on lghsmusic.org website. Logistical process of passport gathering begins.
16. **October 18.** Trip chair and treasurer take All-day trip to Colorado Springs to meet with KI concerts and Italian tour company in charge of local bookings.
17. **October, November-**Trip treasurer and trip chair are finalizing numbers, collecting passports and making sure that everyone is keeping up with their payments. Trip treasurer spends countless hours invoicing and over 80 hours go into creating the accounting spreadsheet.
18. **December 3-** Mandatory Parent meeting. Trip committee has Pre-meeting with KI Concerts rep. Trip chair prepares Powerpoint presentation, chaperone application, and creates packets with official school forms. Roommate request forms are created and distributed to students at school. Trip chair takes off two days from work to prepare for meeting--Powerpoint, create and copy paperwork, getting new details from KI Concerts to include in the updated itinerary.
19. **December 8, 15, 16** Trip chair spends 3 days on passenger roles, student roster, confirming percussion with Director, weighing/measuring all instruments to submit to airline for approval. Passports copies are FedEx'd to KI Concerts for initiation of passenger manifest. Two days are taken off work. Trip treasurer spends 10 hours copying passports.
20. **December 16** - Band Boosters board discusses issues raised by concerned parent about disposition of complimentary tickets. A vote unanimously supports the idea of the trip chair and trip treasurer being eligible to use these tickets due to their vital role in the planning and execution of the trip. There is no debate about the applicability of the tickets for the Director and Carolyn Simon. Bill Gallmeister follows up with the concerned parent a few days later and communicates the summary of Board discussions and decisions.
21. **December 17-** Trip committee provides feedback on T-shirt design for trip.
22. **Late December/January:** retrieval of remaining passports
23. **January - April:**
 - Tshirt orders
 - Rooming list
 - Bus List
 - Select and purchase Souvenir items for students to give Italian students during Cultural exchange (to promote conversation between the students)
 - Packing List
 - Briefing Session with LGHS Administration regarding Student Behavior and Consequences
 - Collecting passports
 - Packing instruments
 - Figure out budget for tipping tour guides, bus drivers, local tour guides
 - Other details

Trip personnel and responsibilities

Joey Fortino: Band Director

Teacher, LGSUHSD Representative, California Teaching Credential. Music director, program selection, pre-rehearsals, conducting.

Carolyn Simon: Orchestra Director, RJF; K-5 Music Teacher

Warm up and Direct Orchestra, supplement string ensemble performances, support band director where needed, California Teaching Credential.

Carolyn Dufort: Trip Chair, K-5 Music Teacher

Liaison with Tour Coordinators, Trip logistics before and during trip, Student supervision as required during trip, support band director where needed, California Teaching Credential.

Lori Ingle: Trip Treasurer, Passport Control

Liaison with Participant Families, Trip finance, passport administration, and participant records before and during trip, Liaison with participant families, Student supervision as required during trip.