

11th Grade Trip- Civil Rights Journey

Chaperoning Best Practices

Dear Faculty Chaperones for the 11th Grade Trip,

Thank you so much for taking the time and tremendous energy to chaperone this trip. It is a truly wonderful trip and a fantastic experience for everyone involved. There are two teams of adults on this trip. The NewJ faculty and Billy Planer and his crew. Billy's role is to make sure all the logistics are set up (busses, hotels, tickets, meals, education, etc.) We have worked with Billy for years and he is a good friend to New Jew. The NewJ faculty are to make sure the kids are safe, healthy, happy and respectful. There are also many teachable moments that the faculty helps to create. There are times when the roles overlap, but really we are all teammates together. Positive communication amongst all the adults truly helps to keep the trip smooth and fun.

And now, after many years doing these trips, these are my personal tips of the trade:

1. Airport

BAGGAGE CHECK: The cost to check at bag is \$25 per bag first bag, \$35 for the second bag. You may check your bag and save your receipt to be reimbursed by school. The same is true for parking at the airport.

SECURITY: This is one of the more stressful parts of the trip. Students will go through security in groups of 15-20 with a faculty chaperone. They will need their ticket and ID. Please remind the students of the gate number and time they need to be at the gate...not in line at Starbucks, not shopping at the Duty Free, but rather at the gate.

SNACKS: Hopefully they will have plenty of snacks with them. Remind them that food is not provided on the plane, unless they pay for it. They must pick up their trash in the airport, on the plane, etc.

BOARDING : When getting ready to board the plane, wait until all other passengers have boarded first. Check in with Gregg about counting all heads a few times to make sure everyone is present.

ON THE PLANE: When they board the plane, they should sit in the seats assigned on their ticket. Only after take-off may they switch seats. They need to be reminded that there are other people (granted probably not too many) and that they need to find a seat and stay there.

VOICES CARRY: Please remind the students that their voices carry and that they are not to shout across the plane.

2. Hotel Protocol

CHECK IN: This will happen three times on trip and it is a little hectic each time. Students will get off the bus, grab their luggage and wait outside until the keys and room numbers are ready. Either Billy, one of Billy's guys or one of the NCJHS faculty will do this.

BEING A RESPECTFUL AND SAFE GUEST: Please remind all students (a number of times) to speak quietly as there are other people in the hotel besides the 11th grade. Televisions should be a respectful volume. *Additionally, they should not slam doors, or leave their rooms with their doors open at any time, ever. This is wholly unsafe.* Both boys and girls should be fully clothed when walking around the hotel. No shirt, no coke from the vending machine, boys. Girls should not be out and about in little shorts and tank tops.

SHENANEGANS: The faculty will take turns hanging in the hallway and lobby during hotel free time. Please hang with the kids and enjoy their company, but also make sure they are keeping the noise at a minimum and picking up all trash. The students will also likely figure out that it is really easy to order pizza to the hotel. As long as they pay for the pizza, aren't doing it at 2 in the a.m. and are respectful of all other rules, this is usually fine. *Boys may not be in girls rooms and vice versa...under any circumstances.*

LATE NIGHT: We will travel with an armed guard named Joe for late nights in the hotel. He is a lovely man and we've been working with him for years. However, if you hear noise on your floor, please address the loud room or students and nip it in the bud. Every night before you go to bed, you will go to the assigned rooms to say good night to students, remind them of check out time in the morning, the best clothing to wear for the day, etc.

WAKE UP CALL: All students have both cell phones and phones in their room. It is their responsibility to make sure they are awake with plenty of time to shower, eat breakfast and be on the bus whenever the time is determined. However, only one faculty member should ask the front desk to do a wake-up call for all students anyway. You can't be too on time. Also, make sure students know they are responsible for the people in their rooms and they are to help each other be up and out on time.

LEAVING THE HOTEL: On mornings when we move out of the hotel, students must show that their room is clean, before heading to breakfast or the bus with their luggage. Encourage students to clean and pack the night before.

BREAKFAST: A word to the wise: Getting to the breakfast bar before the students could be a highlight of the day. The waffle maker takes a while and there will be a line, even as the bus is supposed to be pulling out of the parking lot. You might want to warn them about the waffle maker line and encourage them to get to breakfast earlier than later.

3. Bus Protocol

COUNTING HEADS: First and foremost, whenever you board the bus, please ask the students to sit down so that you can count them. Once you have a clear number, share the number with the other bus. Make sure you have the total number of students. If you aren't sure, double, triple

check. You will all have a list of students, so that you can figure out quickly who is missing, if anyone is. As soon as you have confirmed everyone is present, be sure to let Gregg or Billy know so that the bus can move on to the next location. **Leaving a student in Birmingham is a sure-fire way to maybe not get your contract renewed. It also might ruin the trip.**

TRASH: Before exiting the bus for the night, make sure no one gets off before cleaning up all trash. This is generally respectful, but it also keeps the bus driver happy. When the bus driver is happy, everyone is happy.

PRESENTING ON THE MIC: Time on the bus is useful for giving logistical information as well as pearls of wisdom. The best times for this are generally at the start of the bus ride or at the end. The kids are usually sleeping between the two. Please ask them nicely to wake up and take off their headphones. This direction will be very helpful to Billy and his team as well.

4. Museums

The best way to engage students in the exhibits, films and other presentations is to be present yourself.

5. Cell phones and Speakers

A gentle regular reminder of turning off cell phones will go a long way. Before any speaker, entrance into a museum, etc.

6. Meals at the synagogues

PRAYER: Prior to eating, having the entire class reflect on something positive or meaningful and then lead into the motzi is a positive way to begin eating together.

BUFFET PROTOCOL: Allow for one or two tables to go up to the buffet at a time. And remind the students that there is plenty of food, and to be respectful of everyone else when filling their plates. Students should not go up for seconds until everyone has had a first serving. Faculty may go first, in order to maintain sanity.

7. Suggested personal items to bring:

- Packets of coffee
- Packets of Emergen C
- Your personal stash of throat candies or Vitamin C
- Music
- Book you enjoy (or grading). There is a lot of down time on the bus
- Dress in layers and have good walking shoes.