

Chaperone Handbook and Responsibilities

(Revised/Effective September 2026)

The ultimate responsibility of chaperones is the SAFETY of the students. For this reason, chaperones are needed to insure the safety and wellbeing of all orchestra students during rehearsals, concerts, special events, and competition trips.

- Chaperones are encouraged to wear school themed clothing or colors to bolster spirit and provide easy identification. It is permissible to wear jeans or shorts. Wear comfortable shoes.
- We recommend that chaperones be prepared for various situations. It is a good idea to carry items such as a flashlight, small scissors, tweezers, travel sewing kit, tissues, safety pins, hairpins and hair bands, band aids, tape, hand wipes, lint tape, paperclips, trash bags, zip locks, rain poncho, etc. Belt bags or backpacks are a good idea. These can be kept with you at all times and allow you to keep your hands free. There is no secure storage for purses or valuables. Even though the buses are locked, they are not secure.
- **All** chaperones will remain with the orchestra at all times to assist with performance preparations, to offer support and encouragement, and to provide attention to the orchestra's specific needs.
- After a performance, chaperones will stand by and wait for specific instructions from the director regarding what is to happen next (i.e.: reload bus, watch other performances, mealtime, etc.). **Always remain with the students unless otherwise instructed by the director.**
- **First Aid Kit and Medical Permission Forms:** A first-aid kit and medical permission forms are on every orchestra trip for minor emergencies. These are located with Mrs. Lambert. **She is to immediately be made aware of all medical situations.**

Below are the chaperone expectations set forth by the Johnson City Schools District per their Field Trip Handbook:

- Keep your group together and in sight at all times.
- Help maintain order and remind students to be quiet when guides/hosts are speaking.
- Keep students on schedule.
- Make sure students leave the areas they visit as clean as when they arrived.
- Notify a teacher immediately if any problems arise.
- Leave your cell phone number with the teacher in case you become separated from the group or an emergency arises.
- Refrain from the use of tobacco or alcohol products in any form, at any time, during the school trip. Wherever students are is considered "school property".
- Use appropriate language.
- Wear appropriate attire that adheres to the school dress code.
- Abide by all school rules while on this trip.
- Serve as a role model for students and let your conduct reflect this at all times.
- Siblings and other guests are not allowed on field trips.
- Remember to pick up an itinerary and student list.

Per the Johnson City Schools Volunteers/Chaperone Requirement policy, all volunteer chaperones, which includes parents/guardians, who attend field trips must be registered through Raptor at the school site and not have any criminal convictions. Volunteers/Chaperones that attend overnight field trips are required to submit to a TBI background check through IdentoGo fingerprinting service and receive a favorable report before departure.

Chaperone Handbook and Responsibilities

(Continued)

(Revised/Effective September 2026)

BUS TRAVEL

- Chaperones need to check in with the Head Chaperone upon arrival 45 minutes prior to departure in order to receive bus assignment. If available, provide cell phone number to head chaperone (designated for each trip).
- The director will appoint a Lead Chaperone for each bus. The lead chaperone for each bus will be responsible for relaying instructions to the students and other chaperones and for assigning duties on the bus as needed. Any and all discipline problems encountered on the trip should be reported to director as soon as possible. Each lead chaperone should carry a trip itinerary at all times and make notes of any last-minute changes.
- The director will determine bus assignments for chaperones as fairly as possible.
 - The front seats of Bus #1 are reserved for the director and staff.
 - Chaperones should plan their bus seating arrangements, to ensure that chaperones are located at the front, middle and back of the bus.
- Bus drivers are our lifelines to get us to where we need to be safely and on time. Bus drivers take their jobs seriously and expect everyone to follow the regular school bus rules. These include the following:
 - Courtesy to all on board is expected.
 - Students are to keep voices at a low volume.
 - Students may listen to portable music with headphones only.
 - No standing or changing seats while the bus is rolling.
 - Horseplay or loud, unruly behavior is prohibited. No yelling, chanting, screaming, or squealing (this will drive a bus driver crazy very fast!)
 - No instruments are to be played on the bus.
 - When we use Charter buses, we may bring videos and/or DVDs. Only G, PG, movies are allowed.
- **When traveling by school bus or charter bus, chaperones are responsible for a variety of jobs. It is crucial that chaperones pay attention to the students and the driver during the bus ride; therefore, socializing should be kept to a minimum so that the following can be taken care of:**
 - Monitor the loading of the bus. Help students with loading the bus by providing appropriate directions. Remind students to make sure that they have their instruments.
 - Maintain a clean bus, periodically passing trash bags down the aisle. It is very important that the students clean up after themselves. We must leave the buses in the same condition, or better than, we received them.
 - Monitor and supervise student activities, which include controlling noise level and correcting inappropriate behavior.
 - Remind students to remain IN seats. No standing or kneeling is permitted while the bus is moving.
 - When making stops, the director will instruct the lead chaperones as to the amount of time allotted for the stop. The lead chaperone will in turn relay the information to the students and chaperones on his/her bus. When students, staff and chaperones get back on the bus, it is **mandatory** that everyone be accounted for by name. The lead chaperone for each bus is responsible for completing a roll call. The director and bus driver will be notified of attendance prior to movement of the bus.

Chaperone Handbook and Responsibilities

(Continued)

(Revised/Effective September 2026)

BUS TRAVEL (Continued)

- Remind students to always stay in groups of three to ensure their safety. No student should ever be found wandering alone. If a student is found alone, have the student stay with a chaperone until he/she can be connected with a group of students.
- When arriving at destination the chaperones must keep students calm and seated. No one is allowed off the bus without permission from the director and without instructions.
- When returning from an event, chaperones will assist in loading the buses and accounting for all students and adults. There will be no switching buses. Lead chaperones take attendance and report back to the director.
- The ride home starts out loud and usually gets quiet very quickly. Don't expect total silence on your bus. Be reasonable with your expectations for the students. The inside of the buses are essentially metal shells and will naturally be loud.
 - You should be able to see both heads in a seat.
 - Students are never allowed to lie down in seats.
 - Please take a trip up and down the aisle a few times throughout the trip to say hello to the students and check activities in the seats. This is especially important when it is dark and you cannot see everyone's heads and hands clearly. It is also just being friendly and interacting with the students.
 - During colder weather, students may have blankets but are not allowed to share the blanket – **only one student allowed under any one blanket.**
- About 15-20 minutes before arrival back at school, the lead chaperones will remind the students to collect all belongings and check for trash around their areas and place it in the appropriate receptacle.
 - Lead chaperones should walk back and check the condition of the bus. If trash has not been appropriately picked up, then students should remain on the bus until the bus is clean.
 - Upon returning to the school, students are required to clean up all trash and leave the buses clean.
- Chaperones will assist in unloading, cleaning and inspecting the bus for cleanliness and items that may have been left.
- We want you as chaperones to enjoy our trips and bus rides. Please have as much patience with the students as possible. As long as students are acting within reason, there should not be a problem with them having a good time.
- Before departing, please check with the director or head chaperone to ensure all end-of-trip tasks and cleanup have been completed.

Hotel and Venue

- Chaperones will ensure that students are in their assigned rooms and settled in **BEFORE** retiring to their assigned room for the evening.
 - A room list will be provided to each chaperone. You are responsible for checking student rooms and physically seeing each student. The door should be closed, and a lock heard before you leave the door.
 - **Please be aware that you may be asked to take shifts sitting in the hallways to ensure student safety during the night.**

Chaperone Handbook and Responsibilities

(Continued)

(Revised/Effective September 2026)

Hotel and Venue (Continued)

- Chaperones will conduct wake up visits to student rooms each morning.
- Chaperones will ensure that students are at breakfast during allotted times.
- Chaperones will ensure that students arrive on time at the buses and/or meet up location before all scheduled departures.
- Students/parents/chaperones requesting to have anything delivered, such as food, bottled water, or other supplies, by anyone, including but not limited to DoorDash and Uber Eats, must have prior approval of Mrs. Susan Lambert. Approved deliveries will be accepted in the hotel lobby with a chaperone or director present.
- Chaperones will ensure the safety of students when visiting attractions, venues, and theme parks.
 - **Chaperones must stay with their assigned group at all times per orchestra and school district policy.**
 - **Ensure that you have every student's cell phone number and that every student has a "buddy" in the event they become separated from the group.**

We want everyone to have fun and enjoy orchestra trips. Volunteering to be a chaperone is an awesome responsibility. You are not only there for your student but for every student. This is not a vacation. We have a specific purpose, and that purpose is to support the students of the orchestra and the director.

Thank you for being an awesome chaperone!