

CHAPERONING WITH THE BRAZOSWOOD BUCCANEER BAND

Revised August 2009

Thank you for volunteering to chaperone with the Brazoswood Buccaneer Band. In return for your time, energy and effort, you will receive a free ride, ticket to each game, and a Sprite, Diet Soda, water (your choice). Getting 300+ kids to and from games/contests is no small feat. It takes a lot of pre-planning, time, energy and support/flexibility from very dedicated parents like you.

This information is being given to you as part of a formal training session. We think that most all of your questions will be answered here, but if after reading through it, you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at one of the places listed below. We're all volunteers, so any comments or suggestions for improvements are welcome!

Chaperone contacts: **Cindy and David McKelroy**
 Home Phone: 979-299-0038
 Cell Phone 979-236-0786 (Cindy) 979-236-0737 (David)
 E-mail: dmckelroy@bucband.org

CHAPERONES MUST RIDE THE BUS TO AND FROM THE GAMES. You may not leave at halftime. To be a chaperone, you need to help with the band until everything is put away at the band hall.

SITTING ON THE BUS: There needs to be a chaperone sitting toward the **back** of the bus so you can see most students. You may catch static from the kids, but they will get use to it. Tell the kids at the first game to leave one empty seat for the chaperones. Please don't let us hear from the kids that chaperones have not been sitting toward the back. It only makes it hard on the rest of us when we try to follow the rules. If we all follow them, the kids will not fight it. Someone also needs to sit in the **front** of the bus to relay any messages from the bus driver.

A. Expectations of Chaperones:

1. Chaperones assume many roles during the course of marching season. Our first priority is to get everyone where they need to be, with everything they need, in a timely and SAFE manner. We are the load/unload crew, first aide, water/Sprite brigade, plume distributors and most of all, surrogate parents, satisfying the needs of the many, not the few. In most instances, the section leaders are expected to oversee their sections, a tradition that is handed down from class to class. However, should a crisis arise, **the band directors are the final authority** and we will act under their direction and on their behalf, reacting appropriately, quickly and fairly. Band directors are very busy and rely heavily on us to keep things moving in a positive direction. If you have trouble, please **report the problem to either Cindy or myself** and we will take care of the problem & report it to the Directors. This will also be covered in our Monthly Board Meetings. Please do not interrupt the band directors during the game/contest. Any feedback will be communicated before the next game.
2. If you are unable to fulfill your chaperone commitment, please contact us as soon as possible at one of the above phone numbers or by e-mail.

3. What do we wear?
 - a) Booster Club shirts or Band T-shirt are great to wear. Not only does it show our support for the band; it makes us visible and easy to spot when on trips.

4. What do we bring?
 - a) Belt bags or backpacks; anything that you can keep on your person at all times and allows you to keep your hands free. There is no secure storage for purses or valuables.
 - b) Rain ponchos or Umbrellas if the chances of rain are up.
 - c) Later in the season, jackets for cool nights and the bus ride home.
 - d) During hot weather, a bottle or two of water.
 - e) Money if you would like something to eat or drink. Students are **NEVER** allowed to eat while in uniform.
 - f) Small flashlights for bus checks. After arriving home, black socks and gloves are hard to see.

5. Confirming attendance.
 - a) During the week, email is our primary form of communication. We will make telephone calls only to those who do not have access to email. If you have email, please get in the habit of checking it regularly for Buc Band information.
 - b) Chaperones for the weekly game will receive an email Sunday or Monday asking they confirm participation by **10:00 pm Wednesday** (10:00 pm Tuesday for Thursday games). If we haven't heard from you by Wednesday night, we must assume you do not plan to attend the weekly game.
 - c) If you have signed up to chaperone a particular week and have not received an email from us by Monday evening, please call or email us. We will check the original signup sheets to resolve the question.
 - d) We will start working on assignments, having them finalized with badges sorted Thursday (for Friday games). ID badges and bus assignments will be on a table near the band director's offices game day.

B. Home vs. Away Games and Report Times

1. Home Games – Even though they are “home” games, we must transport everyone and everything to Hopper Field in Freeport. Arrive at the band hall at TBA (to be announce) to receive your I.D. tags, grab trash bags for buses and stands, and to go over duty responsibilities. Proceed to load trucks behind the band hall to help with water, Sprite, food, plume, drum major stands, Color Guard equipment and cart loading. The student load crew loads the student instruments on a separate truck. We need to only to oversee them. The Pit students load their own equipment, but will need help with the larger instruments and equipment. Tying the equipment down will need to be overseen. We take a total of 3 Load trucks to every game. Because we load most of the equipment after the Bands Run-through we must make every effort to be ready by our departure time.

2. Away Games - Arrive at the band hall at TBA and get your I.D. badges and duty responsibilities. Follow the same procedures as Home games above. Because we load most of the equipment after the Bands Run-through we must make every effort to be ready by our departure time.

3. E-mail messages will be sent out to those who have signed up to be Chaperones with times and other details before each game no later than Monday of each game week. The expectation is that you will send a reply letting us know that you are still able or not able to attend. We will make the bus and duty assignments based on this response. If you have a spam-blocker enabled, please allow our address to be received.

C. On the Buses

1. Student bus captains are responsible for roll check. Introduce yourself to the bus captain and let them know you are there to help them. Encourage your bus captain to take a leadership role; it is their responsibility. Help them maintain quiet during roll call; remind the captain that they can call the bus to attention in order to get things quiet. Seniors usually call their own seat and freshmen are made to ride in the front of the bus. This is a privilege and right of passage, however, if space is at a premium, double the seniors up.
2. 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 BIRD rules. Introduce yourself to the driver and ask if they need anything, you are there to help.
3. Bus Rules to be followed:
 - a) **No body parts should ever extend out a window for any reason.**
 - b) **No standing or changing seats while the bus is rolling.**
 - c) **Nothing is to be thrown out of the windows of the bus at any time (whether moving or stopped).**
 - d) **No horseplay or loud, unruly behavior. Eyeglasses/caps/sunglasses, etc. have been known to fly out of an open window of a bus during horseplay. We will not stop or go back to find them.**
 - e) **No yelling, chanting, screaming or squealing**
 - f) **No sitting on the back of seats (this bends them), nor standing in seats at any time.**
 - g) **No profanity or PDA (Public Display of Affection).**

- D. Please remember that you are the liaison between the driver and the students. The drivers sometimes forget that these students are not normal bus riders and therefore are not well versed in the bus-riding rules. Seniors are sometimes particularly brave because they know they are short-timers and tend to be fearless. Remind the students that, in order to be treated as adults they need to act like adults and clearly relay your expectations as well as the driver's to them. Do not hesitate to hold them accountable and responsible for their actions or lack thereof, but always be fair, discreet and maintain everyone's integrity at all times. We want the kids to have a good time while performing GREAT shows and learning music. Report any problems to Cindy or myself immediately.

E. Arrival at the Game

1. Students should **NEVER** stand up on the buses while they are rolling, even to get dressed. This is especially dangerous at this time because of quick, frequent stops in game traffic. After we're parked and stopped, the students should hurriedly get dressed, **PICK UP ANY TRASH ON THE FLOOR**, close all windows and report to the line up point as quickly as possible.

2. **ALL** chaperones are to report to the load trucks for unloading. (One should stay with the instrument truck.) Their location varies at each away game. At home games, the Parent and Pit trucks are parked between the field house and the home concession stand. The Instrument truck will be by the buses. We will unload and carry all the equipment to the stands. Chaperones do not go with the band into the stadium seats until all unloading has been completed. We don't need to be in the stands until after the kids are in their places because we tend to get in their way. If we are late arriving at a game, we will help the student load crew unload instruments and reload empty cases back into the trucks for safekeeping.

F. Watering the Band

1. After unloading, we will pull the carts to the stadium and proceed to carry the water cans/cups into the stands. **WE DO NOT WATER THE BAND UNTIL AFTER KICK OFF!** We encourage all students to bring their water bottle to all games and contest. We will refill as needed.

G. Half-time

1. Some of you will be asked to help with drum major stands or help the pit students get situated on the field. You'll get to see the show from the field. The rest of us will pick up wayward water cups and watch the show from the stands. Be prepared to pitch in wherever you're needed. If we are the visiting band, we will march first; if we are the home band, we will march last.
2. When the second quarter begins, those who have been assigned to distribute gauntlets will begin passing them out to the band in the stands.
3. About 10 minutes before the end of the second quarter, those who have been assigned to distribute plumes should report to the field. We will don gloves, and hand them to the students as they exit the stands for the field. Upon completion of the half-time show, the plumes will be returned to the Plume workers as the band students re-enter the stands and will store them in their containers. Sprite workers will hand out Sprites and water as the students re-enter the stands as well, after their plumes are returned. Pit students and color guard are always late getting back to the stands, so wait to Sprite and water them. No one gets a second Sprite.

H. Third and Fourth Quarter

Third quarter is spent reloading ice chests, water cans, plumes, color guard and Pit equipment. Drum major stands are the last to be loaded after the game ends. If we're quick at loading, (and we will be) we get to watch the fourth quarter of the game.

The Buc Band does not litter. Mid way through the fourth quarter, we will collect drink cans and any remaining trash. Please encourage the kids to pass their trash to you or pass trash bags. When the band leaves for the busses, will need to make sure all trash is picked up on and under the bleachers.

I. Going Home

1. Student bus captains are responsible for roll check. Encourage your bus captain to take a leadership role; it is their responsibility. Help them maintain quiet during roll call; remind the captain that they can call the bus to attention in order to get things quiet. Seniors usually call their own seat and freshmen are made to ride in the front of the bus. This is a privilege and right of passage, however, if space is at a premium, double the seniors up.
2. When the students return to the bus, they should begin undressing and storing their uniforms in their bags. Remember, once we arrive back at the Band Hall the students must remove their uniform jackets from their bags and hang them on their personal hanger in their correct location. This will allow them to be cleaned between performances.
3. During hot or rainy weather, remind the students while they are on the buses to remove their pants, rain coats, shoes, hats, etc. from the suit bags when they get home so that they will air dry and be cleaned.
4. If they plan to get off the bus for the restroom or water, etc. they **MUST** be in their bibs and the bibs must be worn correctly over the shoulders and zipped up (not hanging at the waist). **NO EXCEPTIONS!** For safety purposes, everything should be stored and everyone seated before the buses move as there will be no standing or moving around after the buses begin rolling.
5. The ride home starts out loud (especially if we won the game) and usually gets quiet very quickly. Use your flashlight as attention getter if needed. You should be able to see both heads in a seat, however, the kids usually do lean against one another on the ride home. Couples are never allowed to lie down in seats.

J. Home Again

About 10 minutes before arriving home, pass around the garbage bag that you brought with you and have everyone clean up their own mess. We all get to go home quicker. After arriving at the Band Hall, it is your responsibility to use your flashlight and check the bus for trash, gloves, socks, etc. Take it off the bus with you and throw it in one of the garbage cans in the parking lot or on the corner behind the band hall. Don't trust the kids to do it, no telling where it'll get thrown! **ALL** chaperones should report to the load trucks behind the band hall to help unload and put ice chests, water cans, and plumes away. Return badges and lanyards to the red tackle box located on the table under the Band Hall clock. When everything is unloaded and returned, we all get to go home. Personal items left on the bus should be placed on the table also.

K. General Items

1. Medications/Illness - The Chaperones **ALWAYS** carry a medical bag containing medical release forms and over-the-counter medications for headaches, stomachaches, motion sickness, etc. Feminine hygiene products are also included. When traveling on buses, the medical bag will be on bus #1 and down front near the directors when in the stands.

The students will probably ask you if you have Tylenol, especially if it is a particularly hot or bright day. Use your discretion and never administer any type of medication except aspirin or Tylenol while on the buses. If a student becomes ill while traveling, notify the bus driver and he/she will radio to the lead bus where the band directors ride and we will all stop.

2. Freshman duties – Upperclassmen will tell you that cleaning up the bus is one of many freshman duties and it has been in the past. However, the bus drivers have relayed to us that they do not want to wait until everyone gets off the bus and then have a freshman or two taking more time to clean up the bus. About 10 minutes before arriving home, pass around the garbage bag that you brought with you and have everyone clean up their own mess. This will make your job easier when we arrive home. We all get to go home quicker. Take it off the bus with you and throw it in one of the garbage cans in the parking lot or on the corner behind the band hall. Don't trust the kids to do it, no telling where it'll get thrown!
4. Student siblings on band buses – Not allowed unless you are chaperoning and it is absolutely necessary that a sibling accompany you. The sibling must meet the following criteria, NO EXCEPTIONS: (1) Be a B.I.S.D. student (for insurance purposes), (2) be mature enough to take care of themselves while you are seeing to the needs of the band students, and (3) purchase a ticket to the game or marching contest. They NEVER get in free to any event! They must sit beside you on the bus at all times. 4) When you reply to our e-mail that you will be attending the game you must communicate at that time that you are taking a sibling with you. Also we will need to know if the child will not ride the bus with you after the game.
4. Profanity – The use of profanity by any student should **not** be tolerated and must be discouraged at all times. This is a poor reflection on our band, students, school and community. Usually saying something like "Keep it clean", "Excuse me?" or an evil eye glance in their direction lets them know they are wrong. Everywhere we go there are young children around and we need to expect our students to set a good example and be exemplary role models for our future band program. If repeated attempts to stop profanity do not work, let us know and we will report it to the band director(s). The students' name(s) would be helpful here.
5. PDA or Public Display of Affection - PDA should be discouraged every time you see it. Here again, this is a poor reflection on our band, students, school and community. For all practical purposes, PDA is defined as just about anything more than handholding. Band trips are neither the time, nor the place for PDA; it just makes everyone uncomfortable. Don't hesitate to stop PDA; but do so discreetly, quickly and effectively, up to and including separation. Expect and encourage the students to act like respectable ladies and gentlemen. Don't embarrass or shame them in front of others as it just makes them worse. The first warning should include something like "Not on my shift". The second warning should include "If I have to tell you again, I'll separate you". The third time, follow through and be firm, seating one with you and the other with the other chaperone. If the PDA continues after repeated attempts to stop it, let us know and we will report it to the band director(s). The students' name(s) would be helpful here as well.

L. Marching Contests

1. Marching contests are particularly challenging, beginning with the time of day and day of the week they are held, and the large amount of food/supplies that we need to take to sustain us all. We usually have to feed at least one meal (usually BBQ sandwiches) to 300+ kids and all chaperones must pitch in for us to be quick and successful.
2. Chaperones are invited to work at marching contests and are invited according to the number of games they have chaperoned.

M. Summary

Thank you again for volunteering your time and energy with the Buc Band. Marching season is a very busy time of the year for everyone from the students to directors and chaperones to parents. Without you and your involvement, none of this could happen as efficiently as it does. We hope that you find your time with the band very rewarding and you're ready to join us again next year!

Happy chaperoning,
Cindy and David McKelroy