

8<sup>th</sup> Grade American Cultures  
Washington, D.C. Field Trip

Dear Parents/Guardians and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students,

This year during your American Cultures semester we have a tremendous opportunity when we travel to Washington, D.C. This letter is to inform you when the trip is occurring, and to collect important information from you if you would like to chaperone the trip.

We would like to share with you the purpose of this trip. We are studying the early history of the United States in class. Part of our class concerns the construction of a new federal capital city, and the development of our government. We will be visiting the White House, the Capitol building, and important monuments which help tell this story.

Because of the large numbers of eighth graders, the field trip will take place on different days.

**Please circle the day that you will be travelling to Washington with your class.**

Spring American Cultures Class 6<sup>th</sup> Period Wednesday February 24, 2016

Spring American Cultures Class 7<sup>th</sup> Period Wednesday March 2, 2016

Spring American Cultures Class 8<sup>th</sup> Period Wednesday March 9, 2016

Below is some information that will be helpful for our trip preparation.

1. A permission slip is accompanying (or will soon accompany) this letter. **Please have your parent sign it** and return it to the school. The more phone numbers you give us, the better able we will be to contact you if it becomes necessary.
2. We expect students to **dress their best**. The White House and the Capitol are special places, and we want students to look good. **Jeans of any color, sweat pants, torn or ripped clothing (intentional or not) and T-shirts are NOT** permitted on this trip. **Shirts** must have collars. Parents, please make sure your student's appearance will proudly represent themselves and the South Western School District. **Shoes, need to be shoes which are comfortable for walking. We will do a lot of walking on this trip,** so be prepared and comfortable.
3. Eat **breakfast before** we go, but be careful how much you drink before your long bus ride. We may stop for restrooms between Hanover and D.C., but there is no guarantee that this will be possible.
4. Students may take their electronics with them on the bus for the ride to and from Washington. Please remember that EHMS is not responsible for any lost or stolen articles. There will be times we must leave our electronics on the bus, and our bus drivers will not always be near our empty busses. Also, because of the intensity of the security checks at the White House and the Capitol, it is best not to overdo the amount of metal in our clothing, jewelry, etc.
5. Any student who is not a U.S. citizen must submit a photocopy of their passport to Mr. Clark or Mr. Housch and also take the original document on the trip.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade American Cultures  
Washington, D.C. Field Trip

6. We would **love to have parents/legal guardians accompany us** on our trip. This will be a good day for you to spend with your student and some of their friends. Please be aware of the following information for parents/legal guardians.

- \*You must be the biological or legal parent or guardian of a student to attend the trip.  
(no older siblings, grandparents, paramours, etc. who are not legal guardians of students)
- \*Adults must go through a background check to tour the White House. The form on the next page is for you to give us the information we need for this check. If there is any reason you fear you may not pass the background check, please do not apply to go.
- \*If you are not a U.S. citizen, you must submit your green card registration number, passport identification number, or some other government issued identification. Take the original with you on the trip.
- \*All adults must present a photo ID to the Secret Service at the time we enter the White House.
- \*Because of space limitations, we might be able to accept only one chaperone per student. If both parents wish to attend, you may submit your personal information. At this point, if you send us your information, you may assume you will travel with us UNLESS we tell you otherwise.
- \*This trip requires a large amount of fast paced walking in order for us to see these important locations. If you cannot make at least a two mile walk including hills, you should not consider going on this trip.

6. **Here is an example of what our day's schedule might look like.** Please be aware that this schedule is subject to change, and frequently does with little advance notice.

- \*4:00 AM—arrive at EHMIS. This is not a typo! This is necessary because the Secret Service determines the time of our White House tour and it may be as early as 7:00 AM. We won't know the exact time of our tour until possibly only a few days before hand. We want to be ahead of rush hour traffic and have time for a restroom break before our White House tour.
- \*7:00 AM—arrive near the Lincoln Memorial and view several monuments and complete a scavenger hunt of information.
- \*8:15 AM—travel to Arlington National Cemetery to view the Kennedy graves, Tomb of the Unknowns, and Arlington House.
- \*10:00 AM—arrive at the White House for our tour.
- \*11:00 AM—travel to the Air and Space Museum for a brief tour and lunch.
- \*11:45 AM—travel to the Capitol for a tour and a visit to the House of Representatives and/or Senate Chambers
- \*2:30 PM—leave Washington for EHMIS
- \*5:00 PM—arrive back at EHMIS

If you have questions, please contact us at

[Thomas.Clark@swsd.k12.pa.us](mailto:Thomas.Clark@swsd.k12.pa.us) or [Robert.Housch@swsd.k12.pa.us](mailto:Robert.Housch@swsd.k12.pa.us)

Thank you very much,

Mr. Housch and Mr. Clark  
8<sup>th</sup> grade American Cultures teachers

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**All parents/legal guardians interested in attending, please complete this form and submit it to the proper American Cultures teacher.**

Parent's last name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's full legal first name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's middle initial \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

Is the Parent a U.S. Citizen?                      YES                      NO

Parent's Nation of Citizenship if other than the United States \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Gender                                      MALE                                      FEMALE

Parent's Town and State of Residence \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*All the above are required by the Secret Service for White House admission.

Also, please tell us

Your student's name \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to your student \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the date you expect to travel to DC with us:

Spring American Cultures Class 6<sup>th</sup> Period Wednesday February 24, 2016

Spring American Cultures Class 7<sup>th</sup> Period Wednesday March 2, 2016

Spring American Cultures Class 8<sup>th</sup> Period Wednesday March 9, 2016

Please return this form to us **in a sealed envelope** by Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, so that we can quickly send the Secret Service the information that they need.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade American Cultures  
Washington, D.C. Field Trip

**Tentative Schedule**

No matter what the forecast, plan for rain and cold weather. Bring the proper amount of warm clothing and rain gear. Although it may be rainy, cold, and windy, there are still more than a couple of places which we will see/walk to which are outdoors. Be prepared.

Do not drink copious amounts of liquid before you arrive at the school. We hope it will be a two hour bus ride, but you never know. Be prepared for a lengthy delay before you are able to use a restroom.

**4:00 AM** Students arrive at Emory H. Markle Intermediate School.

**4:00-4:05 AM** Students will use the restrooms, sit in their assigned row in the auditorium, and meet/check in with their chaperones.

The chaperones will receive a packet that includes a schedule, instructions, scavenger hunt sheets, pencils, “What to do If you Get Lost in Washington” cards and tickets for the House of Representatives for their groups.

Chaperones: Give out the schedules and “What to Do if you Get Lost” cards to the students. If students have schedules they should not be asking “what are we doing?”

**4:10-4:15 AM** General instructions and information will be given to the group in the auditorium.

**4:15-4:20 AM** Groups will use the restrooms, load their Buses, sit in their assigned seat, and quietly wait while the roll is called.

**4:25 AM** Buses Leave Emory H. Markle. Students will be QUIETLY RESTING on the way down. NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES THAT ARE SHINY AND/OR HAVE LIGHTS WILL BE USED UNTIL THE SUN IS COMPLETELY UP.

**7:00 AM** If Buses are fortunate enough to have light traffic and arrive this early, students will use the restrooms on the mall and work with their scavenger hunt sheets to see the Lincoln Memorial, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the World War II Memorial and the Korean War Memorial.

The restrooms at the Lincoln Memorial and this part of “the Mall” may not be open at this time. Walk around the monuments using the scavenger hunt sheet to take your mind off the large coffee and orange juice that you unfortunately drank this morning.

**7:55 AM** Buses are loaded on the north side of the Lincoln Memorial, and are driven to the White House.

**8:00 AM** Buses drive to the White House near the Ellipse and 15<sup>th</sup> Street. If students/teachers/chaperones have not had the opportunity to use the restroom this is the time to use the restrooms at the Ellipse. If we have used the restrooms, we will quickly move to the south side of the White House to take pictures on the Ellipse.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade American Cultures  
Washington, D.C. Field Trip

**8:15 AM** Students, Chaperones, Teachers, and Administrators will line up in alphabetical order by last name. Cameras/gum food will be back on the Buses or in a garbage can. Groups will check in with Security at the southeast side of the White House.

**8:30-8:50 AM** Groups will tour the White House. Even though it is called “The People’s House” **do not touch anything** going through the house except for your feet touching the floor. After the tour, if there is time, groups will gather on Pennsylvania Avenue and take pictures with the cell phones of the north side of the White House.

**8:50 AM** Groups walk east on Pennsylvania Avenue and south on 15<sup>th</sup> Street towards the Ellipse to load their Buses. Please walk quickly as the Buses may be double parked on 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

**9:00 AM** Buses are loaded and will drive to Arlington National Cemetery.

**9:15 AM** Buses arrive at Arlington National Cemetery Visitor Center. Groups will use the restrooms in the Visitor Center. These are some of the best/largest/cleanest restrooms on the trip. This is also a good opportunity to fill up water bottles if one has them. Groups will be quiet and respectful for their time at Arlington.

**9:25 AM** Groups should be walking to President Kennedy’s Grave and to the top of the hill to the Custis-Lee Mansion (Arlington House) for a view of the city and Pierre L’Enfant’s grave (L’Enfant drew up the design/plan for Washington, D.C.).

**9:40 AM** Groups will walk towards the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Changing of the Guard Ceremony.

**10:00 AM** Groups attend the 10:00 AM “Changing of the Guard” ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. If there is another ceremony after the Changing of the Guard ceremony, we do not have time to attend it. We need to be moving towards the Buses as soon as the “Changing of the Guard” ceremony is finished.

**10:10 AM** Groups will walk back to Buses. There may another ceremony starting at the Tomb of the Unknowns, but we don’t have time to see it. As soon as the Changing of the Guard Ceremony is finished, please quietly slip away towards the Arlington Cemetery Visitor Center. This is the last opportunity to use the Arlington Cemetery Visitor Center restrooms.

**10:25 AM** Groups load the Buses and we will drive to the Smithsonian’s Air and Space Museum.

**10:45 AM** Buses Arrive at the Smithsonian’s Air and Space Museum and go into the front lobby and take a left to go to McDonalds to eat lunch.

**10:45-11:30 AM** Groups eat lunch in McDonalds. Groups must be finished. If you choose to get ice cream and its time to go, you must leave it. You cannot carry it through the Museum on the way back to the bus. If you buy an item that makes unnecessary noise, it will be taken away from you until we return that evening to EHMIS. Groups that finish early will go through the Air and Space Museum filling out their scavenger hunt worksheets.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade American Cultures  
Washington, D.C. Field Trip

**11:35 AM-** Groups load the Buses in front of (north side of) the Air and Space Museum and drive to the U.S. Capitol. We will then walk up the west side of Capitol Hill to the east side of the Capitol.

**11:50 AM-**Groups line up on the east side of the Capitol to go through security.

**12:10-1:45 PM** Groups tour the Capitol, AND IF TIME PERMITS see the House Gallery and the Senate Gallery, use the restrooms, and walk to the bottom of (the west side) of Capitol Hill to load their Buses.

CHAPERONES/TEACHERS: DO NOT GIVE THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES GALLERY TICKETS/SENATE GALLERY TICKETS OUT UNTIL WE KNOW FOR SURE IF WE HAVE TIME TO SEE THESE GALLERIES. WE MIGHT NOT KNOW THIS UNTIL THE END OF OUR CAPITOL TOUR.

**2:00 PM** Groups load Buses. Groups leave Washington from the bottom of Capitol Hill.

**4:00-4:30 PM** Students should arrive at Emory H. Markle Intermediate School.

White House prohibited items include, but are not limited to, the following: handbags, book bags, backpacks, **purses**, food and beverages of any kind, strollers, **cameras with detachable lenses**, **cameras with lenses over 3” long**, video recorders or any type of recording device, tobacco products, personal grooming items (make-up, hair brush or comb, lip or hand lotions, etc...), any pointed objects (pens, knitting needles, etc...), aerosol containers, guns, ammunition, fireworks, electric stun guns, mace, martial arts weapons/devices, or knives of any size. The U.S. Secret Service reserves the right to prohibit any other personal items. Umbrellas, wallets, cell phones and car keys are permitted.

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United States Capitol prohibited items closely match the list for the White House. However, the following items are allowed in the capitol:

Pens and Pencils

Cameras and video recording devices are allowed in the Capitol, but cannot be carried into the House or Senate Galleries. Cameras and/or video recording devices must be “checked” before entering the galleries. ANY ITEMS THAT YOU CHECK MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR NAME USING MASKING TAPE AND A PEN.