

General Washington Info

1. **Who is our travel company?** The company we use is called School Tours of America. We have used them *forever* and have been very pleased with our experience. They are very conscientious and feel customer service is an important part of their business dealings. All money transactions will be handled through them. Your payments and registration forms should be mailed to them in Houston.

2. **What is included in price and what will we see?** The cost of the trip includes transportation to and from DC, lodging, all meals, all entrance fees, a souvenir t shirt, tour guides and security guards for the hotel. Unfortunately, due to the continuous rising cost of fuel, the price seems to go up more than we would like, every year. However, we will be visiting the Washington Monument, the Smithsonian, the White House, Mount Vernon, Arlington National Cemetery, the Capitol, the Holocaust Museum, the National Archives, the National Zoo, the National Cathedral, the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, FDR Memorial, Korean Memorial, and Vietnam Wall. We basically see almost everything there is to see in Washington. We arranged for a Capitol appointment with Saxby Chambliss this year, and we are hoping to be able to do the same next year. Each student will also receive a Washington commemorative tshirt.

3. **Why take the bus?** Most students will actually tell you that the bus ride is one of their favorite parts of the trip. (Adults, however, will only tell you how miserable it is!) The bus is slightly cheaper (even with gas prices) and faster than taking a train, and significantly cheaper than flying. We realize that this trip is already very expensive and we hate to incur any additional expenses. The buses do have restrooms for the students to use. We also take movies for them to watch on the televisions that are located throughout the bus.

4. **What kind of food will we be eating?** We will have a breakfast buffet at the hotel each morning. This usually consists of toast, juice, eggs, sausage, French toast, hash browns, cereal, etc. We eat lunch at several government buildings where the students are given coupons and they can pick from different types of food. Their choices are quite extensive and range from salads and pasta to hamburgers, hot dogs and pizza. For dinner we eat pizza at least one night, at Pentagon City Mall's Food Court another night and at the ESPN ZONE the last evening. The amount of food available for the students is A LOT. We have never had any complaints about kids (or adults) feeling like they did not get enough to eat.

5. **What are the sleeping arrangements?** We stay in hotels that are Marriott's or comparable. The students are allowed to pick their roommates. Their roommates can be students from other teams. They will sleep four to a room. Each room will have two double/queen size beds.

6. **What about curfew?** We tape the students doors shut at 10 pm each night. They are not allowed out of their rooms after they have been taped in.....unless there is a DIRE emergency. We have guards that come on duty at 10 pm and stay until 6am each morning. There is one guard for each floor upon which we have students. Generally, the floors will ONLY have our students and chaperones on them. The guards monitor everything that goes on throughout the night and quickly wake up a chaperone at the first sign of a problem. Even though we have a curfew of 10 pm, we do not monitor the students to make sure that they actually go to *sleep*. Whether they sleep or not, they WILL be touring with the rest of the group the next day, and they WILL be woken up at the same very early time as everyone else.

7. Miscellaneous

-Extra money is only necessary if souvenirs or snacks are desired. We recommend \$20-\$50.

-Students may fly up and meet the group but must be accompanied by an adult. It is the responsibility of the child and adult to hook up with us on tour. The cost of the trip does not decrease if a person does not ride the bus on the trip to or from DC. A seat still has to be saved for this person for the touring portion of the trip.

-The student/chaperone ratio is 1:4.

-Everyone is signed up for the trip cancellation insurance UNLESS you check the box on the back of the registration form. Please make sure that you check this box if you are not interested in paying for this insurance.

-Any child who is removed from the trip due to discipline will be given a full refund regardless of whether the trip insurance has been purchased or not.

-We usually take about 75-100 students on the trip each year.

-We only use Fayette County Board approved bus companies.