



Polk County High School
1681 E. NC 108 HWY.
Columbus, NC 28722
(828) 894-2525

May 21, 2025

Regarding: PCHS Band Trip to Atlanta, GA

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in support of the overnight trip for which Kimberley Benson, four teachers, four-six chaperones, and forty band members will travel to Atlanta, GA. The trip will be from March 20-21, 2026. The students will have the opportunity to see the Harry Potter and the Cursed Child musical at the Fox Theater, visit the Georgia Aquarium, visit the Martin Luther King, Jr home, and tour the Georgia Institute of Technology campus.

I offer my full support for Kimberley Benson and her students in this application process and would eagerly field any further questions you may have as to their eligibility for this request.

Regards,

Michelle Bean
mbean@polkschools.org
Principal

TRIP PROPOSAL
For Approval

Polk County High School Band
Trip to
Atlanta, Georgia

Harry Potter and the Cursed Child Musical at the Fox Theatre
Visit to the Georgia Aquarium
Visit to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Home
Tour of the Georgia Institute of Technology Campus

March 20-21, 2026

40 band students
4 teachers
4-6 parent chaperones

Submitted to:
Ms. Michelle Bean, Principal
&
Polk County School Board of Education

Submitted by:
Kimberley Benson

May 21, 2025

TRIP OVERVIEW:

Polk County High School Band students have the opportunity to attend a live production of the musical "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" at the historic Fox Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia, as well as visit several other educational institutions in the city.

The trip will begin on Friday, March 20th at 8:30am. Our first stop will be the Georgia Aquarium, which is the largest aquarium in the United States. Students will see hundreds of different types of marine life, including beluga whales, manta rays, and whale sharks. Students will eat lunch at the aquarium, which is included in the price of the trip. We will check into the hotel in the late afternoon, after which we will have dinner at the Hard Rock Cafe, and attend the musical.

On Saturday, students will visit the Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthplace, and take a tour led by the National Park Service. Students will also tour the adjoining Martin Luther King, Jr. museum and the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church. Next, students will travel to the campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech). They will take a guided tour of campus and visit the student center, the Fine Arts building, the library, and other academic facilities on campus. Students will also eat lunch on campus. We will leave Georgia Tech at approximately 2:30pm and return to Polk County High School around 6pm.

The trip will be arranged through Burke Educational Tours, a subsidiary of Burke Christian Tours located in Maiden, NC.

STUDENT and CHAPERONE COST:**Expenses:**

The total price per student will be \$415, based on quad occupancy.

This includes the cost of the motorcoach, the ticket for the aquarium, the ticket for the musical, lunch at the aquarium, dinner at The Hard Rock Cafe, a \$20 lunch allowance at Georgia Tech, and the hotel room. Students will not be required to bring any money with them for this trip.

FUNDRAISING:

Students with financial needs will be funded through fundraisers and/or scholarships and through Polk County Friends of the Band as needed. No child will be refused this trip because of an inability to pay.

LODGING:

Hotel to be determined by Burke Educational Tours (three-stars or higher)

TRANSPORTATION:

Students will travel in a Burke Educational Tours deluxe motorcoach operated by a professional motorcoach driver.

CHAPERONES:

Kimberley Benson, Band Director, PCHS

Jonathan Greene, Assistant Marching Band Director, PCHS/PCMS

Middle School Band Director

Jonathan Benson

Nikki Parker, PCHS Theatre teacher

4-6 other parent chaperones to be determined

LUGGAGE RESTRICTIONS:

Each traveler is restricted to one medium piece of luggage to go under the bus and one overnight/book bag to take on the bus.

STUDENT MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM:

It is the responsibility of the student and parents to provide any updated information in reference to student health/medical situations. If any changes have occurred since filling out the form in August, please note changes on the attached form (initialed by the parent), and return to Mrs. Benson

DEPOSIT DUE:

A \$100 deposit for students/parent chaperones will be due on September 1st, 2025

BALANCE DUE:

The following payment plan will be offered:

\$100 payment due by October 1st, 2025

\$100 payment due by November 1st, 2025

\$50 payment due January 8, 2026

\$65 payment due February 1st, 2026 (final payment may go down or be eliminated depending on fundraising efforts)

Per the tour company, a \$100/person deposit must be paid to Burke Educational Tours by October 1st, 2025. The final balance of the trip must be paid to BET by February 20, 2026. The payment plan above allows for some flexibility for parents who may need an extension on installment payments.

PERMISSION TO TRAVEL

Our child, _____, has permission to participate in the spring band trip to Atlanta from March 20-21st, 2026

We have received a copy of the trip proposal and the Behavior Guidelines/Expectations.

- We expect our child to adhere to all items mentioned in the Behavior Guidelines/Expectations, as well as any information contained in the Polk County High School Student Handbook.
- We realize that these guidelines, rules and regulations are put in place in order to make traveling a safe experience.
- We will hold our child responsible for any infraction of the rules and regulations that result in any harm to personal self, school or hotel property.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this sheet to Mrs. Benson by March 1st, 2026