Information for the Hawaii Music Festival Tour 2015

Dear Parent or Caregiver,

Interested students from the Concert Band, Senior Concert Band and String Ensemble are invited to participate in the Burwood Girls High School Hawaii Music Festival Tour: March 4 – 10, 2015.

Educational benefits

Exposure to international school ensembles at this Festival will be of significant benefit to our band. The famously high standard of playing and drill in American School bands will be an eye-opener for our girls and inspire them to embrace that ethic. This same ethic applies to the String Ensemble and they will be exposed to a high level of performance and rehearsal practice as well as learning from their experience of meeting students from other countries. We will take part in activities to experience both of these fascinating aspects of the area, as well as spending time with local high school students to see how things are done in their part of the world.

The fact that this is held in Hawaii means the cultural experience will be rich. We intend to take part in a traditional indigenous welcome, tour the Polynesian Cultural Centre and do a dance class. Hawaii has a strong and unique Pacific Island culture and is an unusual and dramatic geographical location, both of which will add to the girls’ understanding and appreciation of the world around them.

The Festival runs for one month (March 5 - April 11). We aim to be there for the first week, so that we are part of the welcome activities and, importantly, the Parade that happens at the end of the first week. While marching is more a feature of American school bands the discipline and teamwork required for marching are attributes we want to instil into our band. Physically it is beneficial too, requiring good posture (which can be carried on when seated) and breathing technique. With this year’s ANZAC Day march as the starting point, we are hoping that working together to prepare towards Hawaii and then the 2015 ANZAC day March will have follow on effects on the girls’ commitment both to the program, and to each other.

At Burwood Girls High School we are dedicated to creating an environment of artistic and educational excellence through which we aim to develop a sense of self-esteem, motivation, respect and pride in a nurturing, supportive and fun environment. Music is an essential part of a well-rounded education and it is a vehicle for group-based activities that build independence and self-worth in students. The String and Band travelling together will further enhance the overall collaborative and mutually responsible commitment to each other that young people learn in their teen years. Being able to include younger players also puts the older students in important positions as role models and mentors, both as musicians and as young women.

This will also be a wonderful experience for the girls as musical colleagues. Travelling, rehearsing and performing together as a team will develop important skills in music-making that we hope will continue into their future together as ensembles. This is also a prestigious opportunity for our school as we will be the first Australian school to take part.
Proposed Itinerary*. All tour and dinner activities involve all students together. For rehearsals and performances, we will split into Band and Strings, but will be at the same venue.

Day 1 – Wednesday March 4
Hawaiian Airlines flight Sydney-Honolulu. Settling in, free afternoon

Day 2 – Thursday March 5
Morning rehearsal and 1st performance. Afternoon/evening educational tour to Polynesian Cultural Centre.

Day 3 – Friday March 6

Day 4 – Saturday March 7
All day Festival workshop sessions, performances and concert attendance. Evening: Sunset dinner cruise.

Day 5 – Sunday March 8
Public performance in City (venue TBA). City Tour. Parade of Bands (Strings will be involved in some way). Evening dinner organised near Waikiki beach.

Day 6 – Monday March 9
All day tour to Diamond Head Crater. Dinner with local school band.

Day 7 – Tuesday March 10
Depart for Sydney.

*This is a suggested itinerary and is subject to change.
Flight Bookings
All students will be expected to travel, stay and eat with the group at all times. Any parents wishing to travel are welcome to be part of the group flight and accommodation booking, but will be responsible for their own transport in Hawaii.

Eligibility
There are limited places on the tour. The following criteria will apply to student seeking a place on the tour.

1. To ensure the personal safety of all students, only students who have impeccable behaviour records at school will be eligible to attend. Students who have not demonstrated the highest commitment to school, their ensemble and their various responsibilities will be exempt from applying to join the tour.

   Students who are in danger of failing to meet the above mentioned behaviour requirements will be given ample notice of this.

2. The tour is open to students in Concert Band, Senior Concert Band or the String Ensemble, in Years 7-12 in 2015.

3. Students who cannot meet deadlines for deposits, instalments and documentation will be withdrawn from the tour.

Logistics
Students will be allocated room groups and day groups to facilitate head counts. At all times during the day, students are to be with, and look out for, all those in their day group and report any matters of concern to the teachers. There will be staff supervision at all times.

Water Activities
There are no water activities organised for this excursion. However, the sunset dinner cruise will involve being on a chartered boat. This is a professionally run operation and will carry required numbers of life jackets. We may also spend some leisure time at the Hotel pool and at Waikiki Beach. At all times students will be supervised by attending staff. If you do not want your daughter to take part in swimming you must indicate this on the student information form.

Accommodation
The group will stay at the Holiday Inn Waikiki Beachcomber Resort, with breakfasts included at the hotel.

Staff
The accompanying staff members are Ms Janina Longman, Ms Jenny MacQueen, Dr Genevieve Campbell.
Fundraising/Student Contribution
It is our experience that students who make the greatest financial contribution to the tour gain the most rewarding experiences. Whether they get a part time job (students over 14 are legally permitted to have a part time job), participate in other fundraising activities or sell chocolates, it will be an important lesson in delayed gratification. Parents are encouraged to come to an agreement with their child about how they can contribute to the cost of the tour through chores at home also. Opportunities will also be available for fundraising at school in the lead up to the trip.

Insurance
Comprehensive travel insurance is included in the price of the tour. If you already have an international travel insurance policy that you wish to use, please let one of us know and we will not include you in the group policy.

Cost
The exact cost of the excursion cannot be confirmed until 60 days before departure, however, at this stage, it is anticipated that the cost will be between $2200 and $2500, based on the number of students going and the current exchange rate. Changes in any of these factors will, however, change the final figure. The program will be subsidising some of the accompanying staff’s costs as well as those associated with traveling with equipment/instruments such as large cases etc.

Ground Component (Hawaii Music Festival participant package) $1055 USD:

- 6 Nights Hotel Accommodation
- Airport Baggage Handling
- Airport to Hotel Transportation
- Hotel Porterage
- All breakfasts, lunches and dinners.
- Hawaii Music Festivals Group Escort
- Entry to all attractions and concerts.
- Participation in the Hawaii Band & Orchestra Festival ®
- Workshop with Music Clinician

Included in the TOTAL price of the Tour (to be confirmed by December):

- Return air fares on Hawaiian Airlines (approximately $1200).
- Comprehensive travel insurance
- Instrument insurance

- Parents’ accommodation if needed (room only)
  - $671 pp, double share
  - $1271 pp, single

NOT included in the price is spending money for souvenirs or passport expenses and extra drinks/food.
**Spending Money**
Spending money should absolutely be the student's own money. Spending money is purely discretionary.

**Payment Method**
You may pay the school a number of ways:
1. By cheque (made out to ‘Burwood Girls High School’)
2. Cash brought to the school office
4. Payment over the phone

You may choose to pay in instalments, or as payments are due.

**A non-refundable deposit of $300 is due to the school by Monday 15 September.**

**Communication**
All communication to do with arrangements for the tour will be through this email: genevieve.campbell6@det.nsw.edu.au

Please send an email to this address with the primary email address you wish to add to the contact list. The primary email provided needs to be that of a parent. You may provide as many additional email addresses as you like to be kept up to date with the latest information.

Please add “Hawaii Tour Contact List” in the subject line.

**Mobile Phones**
Students will be permitted to take mobile phones or devices that connect to the internet with a SIM card. However, we ask that all International Roaming be switched off and students will be encouraged to use free Wi-Fi services with Apps such as “Viber” or “Line”. There is free Wi-Fi available in the common areas of the Hotel.

**Girls**
Some girls’ natural rhythms and cycles are disrupted by plane travel, so they should come prepared for all eventualities. The girls should feel comfortable coming to us for any help and support, emotional or physical.

**Weather**

March is the end of the wet season in Hawaii with an average daily temperature range of 20 – 28°C. Most days hover around 27°C and there is a 40% chance of light rain every day. More detail at: [http://weatherspark.com/averages/33125/3/Honolulu-Hawaii-United-States](http://weatherspark.com/averages/33125/3/Honolulu-Hawaii-United-States)
Luggage
Students should bring 1 main bag/suitcase (preferably on wheels) with a maximum weight of 20kgs to be checked in, and a smaller bag as hand luggage/day pack in Hawaii. The students must be able to handle/lift/wheel their bag themselves, while also carrying their instrument.

Instruments will be checked in and the weight of all instruments will be pooled under the group check in system. It is very important therefore that the weight limit above is observed. We will be having a test weigh of all instruments prior to the tour to confirm these arrangements.

Paperwork
If you wish for your child to participate in this tour, please complete the permission slip and information sheet. Please forward a copy of your passport (if it is available) with these forms. The student’s passport must have at least 6 months validity beyond the travel dates.

If you do not have a passport now, you should apply for one soon, as passport copies need be at school by 19 November for the final DEC submission. Please note that the process to complete and receive a new passport may take approximately 6 weeks.

All paperwork should be finalised by 19 November 2014. Preliminary paperwork is due on 15 September, to Ms Longman. Follow the accompanying schedule for important dates.

Visas
All persons entering the USA are required to have completed an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation) application online. This process will be completed for all travellers, at a meeting at school once all passport copies have been submitted. There is a fee of $14 for this application.

Expectations of Students
In order for this excursion to be a success students are reminded that they are ambassadors for their school and country, and as such their behaviour should be beyond reproach at all times. They should act in a courteous and considerate fashion, respecting the property of others, and following instructions given by teachers or leaders. They should refrain from dangerous activities, and seek clarification with regard to what constitutes a dangerous activity when unsure.

The purchase of and/or consumption of alcohol, cigarettes or illicit drugs is strictly forbidden and students breaking this rule will be required to be collected from Hawaii at the parent’s expense.

Risk Assessment
A comprehensive risk assessment of the Tour is being conducted, a management plan will be put into place and the utmost care will be taken to ensure the safety all students.
Privacy Advice
The information provided by you is being obtained for the purpose of ascertaining relevant medical information, requirements and other health care related needs about your daughter in relation to their proposed involvement in the Hawaii Tour.

It will be used by officers of the NSW Department of Education and Communities to assist planning, to support students, and to minimise risks when conducting this excursion.

Other persons or agencies that may be provided with this information include, but are not limited to, volunteers and members of external organisations who join with the school or are otherwise involved in the planning or delivery of the excursion, sporting or other school activity; and persons that may be called upon to provide health care treatment or other assistance during or as a consequence of this excursion.

Our group will be registered with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT), and each student’s emergency contact details will be included in that registration. DFAT officers are covered by a stringent Privacy Policy, and no student’s details will be used except to contact family in the event of an emergency. The teachers will attempt to contact family in the first instance.

Provision of this information is not required by law, however failure to provide the information may mean that your child can not participate in the Tour.

Provision of this information however, will significantly assist the school in planning a safer educational activity. It will be stored securely. If you have any concerns about provision of this information, please contact the Principal.

You may correct any personal information provided at any time by contacting the school office. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any other questions.

Kind regards

Dr Genevieve Campbell
Director, Ensemble Program
Tour Co-ordinator

Ms Janina Longman
Deputy Principal

Mrs Mia Kumar
Principal

19 November 2014
Dates for the diary*

2014

Wed 3 Sept  □ Preliminary meeting at school
□ Send your email address to genevieve.campbell6@det.nsw.edu.au to be added to the mailing list. “Hawaii Tour Contact List” in subject line.

Mon 15 Sept  □ Documentation:
 □ Permission form
 □ Information form
 □ Deposit of $300 to school
 □ Passport copy (if available)

**Wed 19 Nov  □ Instalment due ($1000)
 □ Copy of passport due
 □ Interim meeting – ESTA group completion

**NOTE: This date (19 Nov) has been extended to Friday 5 December.

2015

Wed 4 Feb (T1 W3)  □ Interim meeting
□ Final balance due (approx $1100 - TBC)

Wed 25 Feb (T1 W5)  □ Final meeting

Wed, 4 Mar (T1 W6)  □ Departure

*These dates are subject to change.