Field Trip Informational Meeting Agenda

1. The Itinerary.

2. Prices.

| Minimum Price | $ _______ @ ________ Students |
| Mid-range Price | $ _______ @ ________ Students |
| Maximum Price | $ _______ @ ________ Students |

3. The Initial Deposit and Final Payment Schedule.

Initial Deposit Date ___________ Final Payment Date ______________

4. Methods of Payment.

5. Refunds.

6. Trip Cancellation Insurance.

7. Liability, Medical Expenses, and Emergency Assistance Protection.

8. The Rules of Safety and Hotel Etiquette.

   The Rules of Safety.
   (a) No Running (no kidding) indoors or out.
   (b) Cross the street only in a crosswalk.
   (c) Cross the street only with a walk light.
   (d) The hotel swimming pool is off limits.

   The Rules of Hotel Etiquette.
   (a) No Running.
   (b) No Shouting.
   (c) No Slamming Doors.
   (d) No Bare Feet or Pajamas in the Hotel's Public Areas.


10. Weather Forecasts and Clothing.

11. What the Students Will Learn.

12. Travel Documentation.

13. Questions and Answers.

Important Web Links:
The Parents' Informational Meeting

The purpose of a parents’ informational meeting is to promote and sell the trip, and collect deposits, in order to bring the number of student participants up, and to bring the price of the trip down.

If you will be launching your trip with an informational meeting, the following is a list of topics (most of which are found in the "Dear Parent" letter) and a sample agenda (which you can reproduce and distribute if you wish) to help you make the meeting complete and concise.

Parents who will be attending the meeting will be predisposed to support it, and thus, the success of the meeting will depend upon your ability to satisfy them that the trip will be (1) safe, (2) educational and (3) well-organized.

To keep the meeting as short as possible, you should distribute copies of the agenda, the "Dear Parent" letter and the field trip itinerary at the door. Ask the parents to familiarize themselves with this material as they are waiting for the meeting to begin.

Finally, encourage the parents to visit the parent page on our website at http://FrenchOnLocation.com/parents and feel free to suggest to the parents that they make notes on the back of the Agenda just to keep all information about the trip in a single place.

1. The Itinerary.

After introducing yourself (and your chaperones if they've been selected), you should start the meeting with a short discussion of the itinerary.

You won't have to read it in its entirety, especially if you've handed it out before the meeting, but you might talk briefly about the highlights, and describe any of the events and activities that the parents might not be acquainted with.

2. Prices.

The first question you're likely to get is, "What does the trip cost?" Thus, you should follow the discussion about the itinerary with an explanation of the pricing.

We recommend that you discuss the full range of prices with the parents, so if participation falls somewhat short of expectation, they will not be hearing about the higher prices for the first time when the final payment is due.

To facilitate this discussion, you should hand-write the range of prices on the spaces provided on the agenda before duplicating and distributing it.
The parents will note that the prices are normally higher with fewer student participants, and lower with more participants. This is not a matter of volume discounting over which FRENCH ON LOCATION has any discretionary control. Rather, it is the arithmetical consequence of reducing the per-person share of the fixed costs, such as the cost of the bus charter, the cost of the guide or guides, and various other fixed expense items, as the number of participants goes up.

For example, if your bus charter cost is $2000, the per-person share would be $50 per person for 40 students, $80 per person for 25 students, and $100 per person for 20 students (a difference of $50).

Please note, however, that more is not always less, when for example, the size of the group is hovering just over the capacity of one bus. That is, the cost for 60 students on two $2000 busses would be about $67 per person, or $17 more per person than it would have been for 40 students on one bus.

If yours is a group of around 40 to 60 students, you might need to explain this.

3. **The Initial Deposit and Final Payment Schedule.**

Typically, the $200 per person initial deposit will be due very shortly after the informational meeting, and you should be prepared to accept checks right then and there. For those parents wishing to pay by credit card, they can simply complete the form attached to the “Dear Parent” letter. The more students that are committed early, the more students you'll be taking in the end, and the lower the price will be for all of them.

The final payment will be due at FRENCH ON LOCATION 45 days prior to your departure date.

When setting your dates, you should give yourself a cushion by setting the students' deadlines (especially the final payment deadline) a few days earlier than your own.

4. **Methods of Payment.**

Let the parents know that FRENCH ON LOCATION does accept VISA and MasterCard and American Express, and that the credit card form is part of the "Dear Parent" letter.

Please remind parents that their checks should be payable to your school or school group (that is, the Foreign Language, etc.) and not to FRENCH ON LOCATION.

5. **Refunds.**

Because all prices depend upon the number of students participating, all deposits and payments to FRENCH ON LOCATION are non-refundable and nontransferable once the number of participants is established.
6. **Trip Cancellation Insurance.**

   This Travel Protection Plan includes benefits to cover forfeited payments and deposits when participation in a trip must be canceled due to covered reasons such as sickness or injury, etc. Complete details of the LEARN ON LOCATION insurance plan are available online

   1: Click on the link below;

   http://www.tripmate.com/wpF436L/tic

   2: **Select your state** from the pull-down menu, and

   3: Finally **click on the blue View/Read PDF button.**

7. **Liability, Medical Expense, and Emergency Assistance Protection.**

   FRENCH ON LOCATION carries $2,000,000 in Professional Liability and Errors and Omissions insurance underwritten by Zurich, a part of Steadfast Insurance Company.

   The comprehensive Travel Protection Plan, referenced above (and included in the price of the trip) also provides coverage for medical expenses resulting from sickness or injury while on the trip. Again, group leaders will be provided with a Travel Insurance Certificate for each trip participant.

   **PLEASE NOTE:** The Travel Protection Plan is only included if FRENCH ON LOCATION receives your group's final payment no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled departure date for your group.

   Finally, the parents of any students participating in a band or orchestra performance tour who might be taking an expensive musical instrument along on the trip, are urged to check with their insurance agents to make sure that the instruments are insured against loss or damage in their homeowner's insurance policies. This is not included in the foregoing coverage, and FRENCH ON LOCATION cannot insure such losses.

8. **The Rules of Safety and Hotel Etiquette.**

   FRENCH ON LOCATION will ask all parents to discuss the Rules of Safety and Hotel Etiquette with their sons and daughters, and, in signing the release form, the students are asked to agree to abide by them.

   The informational meeting is a good time to emphasize the importance of these rules. We find that most students are quite willing to comply with any reasonable rules, if they are acquainted with, and understand the need for them. Over the years, we have found that a reminder from parents, sometime shortly before departure day markedly improves the experience for everyone.

   **Safety.** You can inform the parents that you will have a comprehensive, FRENCH ON LOCATION Field Trip Safety Manual and that you will be delegating the responsibility for safety to a "Safety Chaperone", and you can introduce or identify the Safety Chaperone if he or she has been selected.
Please remind the parents to discuss these rules with their children.

The cardinal rules of safety are as follows:

(1) No Running, no kidding, indoors or out (because it is far less likely that your students will walk into harm's way than run into it).

(2) Cross the street only in a crosswalk.

(3) Cross the street only with a walk light.

(4) The hotel swimming pool, if there is one, is off limits.

Hotel Etiquette. In emphasizing the rules of hotel etiquette, you will give the parents a clear impression of professionalism and competence, and the parents will be more likely to believe the trip is serious and educational.

The Rules of Hotel Etiquette are as follows:

(1) No running

(2) No shouting

(3) No slamming doors

(4) No bare feet or pajamas in the hotel's public areas

The consequences of not observing the rules range from a forfeiture of privileges to (theoretically) being sent home early at the students' own expense.

We think it's a good idea to discuss the consequences of noncompliance with the rules, with the parents, in the presence of the students, because the students will conclude that their parents consider the rules and the consequences legitimate, and that you have an unquestioned right to enforce them.

Further information for students and adults is available on our website at www.FrenchOnLocation.com.


Generally, students will need only enough spending money for lunches, gifts and souvenirs.

They can keep body and soul together for $100 to $125 Dollars on any three or four day trip. An allowance for T-shirts and gifts and souvenirs would be over and above that amount.
As a rule, students will be free for lunches on their own in places where a choice of inexpensive fast-food is available, and these lunches should cost no more than lunch at a local fast-food restaurant would at home.

10. Weather Forecasts and Clothing.

We think it’s important not to let your students be fooled by weather conditions at home during the last few days prior to the trip when packing their suitcases.

Weather forecasts for the trip can be checked easily by clicking on the following links:

Montreal  Today  Five-Day  10-Day
Québec City  Today  Five-Day  Ten-Day

With or without a forecast, you can safely tell students and parents that spring (when most trips take place) means rain in much of North America, and that April showers can and do slide into May. In short, they stand a very good chance of getting rained upon for at least one day during a three-day trip.

Remember, every trip includes some outdoor activities and some walking, so group members really do need to bring comfortable shoes, a warm coat or jacket (depending on the destination and the season) and a raincoat or an umbrella.

If your trip is in the winter, between about November 15 and about April 1, be prepared for the possibility of snow. This means boots that will hold up in snow and slush.

In any case, every student should plan for the worst because most programs involve some outdoor activities. Generally speaking, students and chaperones would be wise to err on the side of too much, too warm clothing.

The need for all field trip participants to bring two pairs of COMFORTABLE SHOES bears repeating. Many of our tour itineraries require walking, especially if it is necessary to rest a bus driver after a long ride to your destination, or before a long ride home. We've seen many a blister, on many students and more than one chaperone who didn't hear about, or didn't heed, this advice.

Finally, the students may benefit from a reminder to devote some thought in advance to what they would want to wear to various special events such as a band or choral performance.

11. What the Students Will Learn.

Parents will make sacrifices to enable their children to participate in a field trip if they believe that it's a legitimate educational opportunity, but they won't if they don't. So don't hesitate to tell them about your educational objectives for the trip, and about any specific tasks that will be assigned to the students,
and generally about how the assignments relate to the curriculum. (See our Group Leaders' Manual for ideas about how to make the trip more educational).

In addition to whatever you're planning to teach them, there will be many indirect benefits. Of course, the trip can be both an incentive and a reward, and it will validate what the students have been learning in class. And, you can remind the parents that without incentives and reinforcement, the learning process simply does not work.

Students of French, for example, will learn not just a few new vocabulary words, but that the study of a foreign language is a useful tool, and not merely an academic exercise. All students will learn that their own community is not necessarily the center of the universe, and that there are people who live within a few hundred miles of home with distinctly different cultures and customs.

In short, we believe that the students may learn more during their three or four days on a FRENCH ON LOCATION field trip than in any other three or four days of the school year, and we think that you can safely assure the parents that their children will remember their trips for the rest of their lives.

www.FrenchOnLocation/Parents

12. Travel Documentation.

Students and adults arriving in Canada by air will need passports to board their airplanes.

As of June 1, 2009 students on school field trips, traveling by land with adult supervision and parental permission will only need an original or certified birth certificate. However, adults will need a passport or passport card, now being issued by the U.S. Government.

For further details, visit the following Homeland Security Department web site at:


13. Questions and Answers.

Of course, the parents are very likely to ask a few questions after your presentation. If you're stumped, feel free to invite the parents to call FRENCH ON LOCATION on our local telephone number, 603/319-0065 or toll-free at 877/456-5552, any time during normal office hours and to visit our website at


We've extended the same invitation in our "Dear Parent" letter.