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International Field Trip Application

Brookline High School

Panama City, Republic of Panama

April 13 – April 20, 2019

For review and consideration by the
Brookline School Committee

Approval Route:	Approved	Denied	*Returned
Copies to:			
TEACHING & LEARNING			
SUPERINTENDENT			
SCHOOL COMMITTEE			
MEETING DATE			
*REASON RETURNED:			

Brookline High School Field Trip Application

Brookline – Panama Floating Doctors: Medical/ Cultural Experience

Bocas Del Toro, April 2019

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Additional Documents:

Forms to be completed by parents/students

Prepared by:

Melanee Alexander, Megan Day, Chaperones

Andrew Kimball, BHS Global Trips Coordinator

Chaperones:

Melanee Alexander, Associate Dean of Students, Brookline High School

Megan Day, School Nurse, Public Schools of Brookline

Statement of Purpose Brookline -

The purpose of this trip is to expose students to both a medical experience and a cultural exchange. Students will learn, first hand, the difficulties of providing medical care to those in remote areas, while immersing themselves in Panama's rich culture and environment.

Floating Doctors program information:

This trip will be run in partnership with the non-profit organization, Floating Doctors. (<http://floatingdoctors.com/>)¹ The mission of Floating Doctors is to reduce the present and future burden of disease in the developing world, and to promote improvements in health care delivery worldwide. Floating Doctors runs mobile clinics that provide healthcare to the villages of the Ngabe indigenous people, as well as other remote villages that otherwise would not have access medical care.

Run by the founder, Ben LaBrot, Floating Doctors invites those who apply to come to their base island, Isla San Cristobal (which is a 10 minute boat ride from Bocas Del Toro) and join the mission. For a week-long trip, Floating Doctors provides students and chaperones with lodging on the island in a 9 room dormitory, food, cultural excursions, and medical experience. More than 180 volunteers from nine different countries have participated in the volunteer program. Everyone from private citizens to medical students, and even high school students, are trained for a full day on basic medical care. The four areas covered during training are: effective communication skills with patients, proper utilization of translators, the reduction of medical error due to miscommunication, and the review of common cultural issues that arise during exchanges across cultural differences. During the three days following the training, the participants accompany the doctors and travel by boat to various villages. The skills learned by students in training are utilized during the mobile clinics. After setting up the materials for the clinics, students will be assigned to different stations (depending on age-appropriateness and language ability). Some tasks that students may perform include translation for the clinic, assisting doctors in consultations, ultrasounds, house calls or procedures. They may also staff the pharmacy station, administration station, clinic intake stations, and health screening stations. Floating Doctors staff will offer explanations and context for everything that the students encounter. Alongside the mobile clinic work, students will also have the opportunity to engage with the children in the village schools. They will help teach dental hygiene, handwashing, and other health promotion activities. At the end of each day, students return the Floating Doctors base to relax and enjoy the pleasures of living off the grid. They will experience the glowing bioluminescence and watch for the flocks of parrots flying overhead. The mangroves and the jungle are beautiful, and swimming or snorkeling off the dock at the base is a great way to cool off at the end of a day out in the field.

This trip provides students with the rare opportunity to do hands-on work, assisting the doctors in providing medical care while interacting with the native Panamanian population. Participants will gain experience in international humanitarian work, global health challenges, careers in health care, jungle ecology, as well as indigenous and Panamanian culture and history in a breathtakingly beautiful region. This is a chance not just to learn about international medicine or a different culture, or how to tie up a dugout canoe at the dock, or swimming in tropical water—this is really an opportunity to learn about ourselves, to grow, and to come away changed by what we have seen and accomplished. Attached in the following link <http://floatingdoctors.com/volunteer/high-school-students/> is a detailed explanation and background for the High School student volunteer program.

Connection to mission statement:

The Brookline Schools' mission states: "To ensure that every student develops the skills and knowledge to pursue a

¹ The website has a longer explanation of the organization and its mission. It also has some videos as well that help in this explanation.

productive and fulfilling life, to participate thoughtfully in a democracy, and to succeed in a diverse and evolving global society.” This experience will not only encourage global thinking, international cultural, travel competence and a deeper understanding and appreciation of other cultures and environments, but also reinforces the value of service not only for others but for ourselves.

Highlights of the itinerary will include:

April 13th - Fly to Panama City and visit Biomuseo, a biodiversity museum.

April 14th - Receive personal training on cultural sensitivity and basic medical care on Isla San Cristobal, the Floating Doctors base.

April 15th - 18th - Visit remote villages near Bocas del Toro and work in clinics, volunteer in Casa Asilo, a government-run nursing home, and receive a personal tour of the Oreba Chocolate Farm.

April 19th/20th - Go on a hike through the Dolphin Bay Reserve jungle, go snorkeling in the Cayo Coral reef, and visit sloth island in and around Bocas del Toro

April 20th - fly back to Panama City, and then fly home.

*Between April 14th and 20th we will be in and around Bocas Del Toro

APPLICATION FOR ALL OUT-OF-STATE, OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS

TRIP LOGISTICS:

- 1. Name of Field Trip:** Panama Floating Doctors: Medical/ Cultural Experience
Bocas Del Toro, April 2019
- 2. Educator Requesting Field Trip Approval:** Andrew Kimball, Melanee Alexander
- 3. School: Brookline High School Grade Level:** 10-12
- 4. Have you reviewed the School Committee Policy for School Sponsored Field Trips?** Yes.
- 5. Have you reviewed the document "Administrative Procedures for School Sponsored Field Trips"?** Yes.
- 6. What is your destination?** Panama City, Republic of Panama; Bocas del Toro archipelago, specifically Isla Bocas del Toro and Isla San Cristobal
- 7. What is the date and time you are leaving school?** Morning of April 13, 2019. We will meet at Logan Airport
- 8. What is the date and time you are returning to school?** Evening of April 20th, 2019.
- 9. Do the dates of the trip conflict with any religious holidays or observances?** Good Friday, April 19th
- 10. How many days will students miss from school?** None.
- 11. How are students being transported (school bus, chartered bus, plane, rail, etc)?** We will travel by plane from Logan Airport to Panama City. We will travel by taxi around the city. Then, we will take a plane from the regional airport in Panama City to Isla Bocas del Toro, followed by a 10 minute boat ride to get to Isla San Cristobal. Travel to villages will be conducted both on foot and on the water by boat. Additionally, occasional trips will be taken in to Bocas del Toro, by boat.
- 12. How many students will be participating in the field trip?** 16 students.
- 13. What members of the student body are eligible for the trip?** Any 10-12 grade students.
- 14. How are students selected to participate in this field trip?** Students will be selected based on the following criteria:
 - Solid academic record (good study habits, participation, attendance)
 - Interest global health, medicine, and global leadership ; Latin American culture ; anthropology
 - Ability to speak Spanish is a significant plus but not required
 - Willingness to be flexible in unpredictable and new situations
 - Ability to serve as an ambassador from Brookline and the United States ; Sensitivity to other people and cultures
 - Successful completion of the application
 - Perceived potential for personal growth
- 15. Where will students be staying?** Students will stay in a hotel when in Panama City and in a nine room dormitory on the island of San Cristobal.

16. What are the names and cell phone numbers of the primary staff chaperones on the trip?

Melanee Alexander 617-999-5805

Megan Day 857-222-5381

17. Other than those listed in #16 above, what are the names and roles (teacher, parent, etc) of other adult chaperones who will be on the trip?

EDUCATIONAL RELEVANCE

18. What is the purpose of the trip and how does it relate to Brookline's Learning Expectations (K-8) or BHS Course Syllabi?

In the Global Leadership program, students study the challenges of cross cultural understanding, economic development, and healthcare delivery. Students examine cross cultural work and become sensitive to different cultural practices and norms. Students observe economic development through multinational companies, government efforts (such as USAID), and smaller microloan organizations such as Grameen Bank. During the Global Health unit, students research a health challenge in a low-income country and propose an intervention. They are encouraged to make connections and talk to international health experts at international NGO's. In the remote villages surrounding Bocas del Toro, they will be able to see first hand some of the challenges and successes in providing healthcare to developing regions, as well as participate in the solution themselves.

19. Describe activities planned before the trip to prepare students:

Students admitted to the trip will meet twice a month, starting in January 2019. At these meetings, they will learn about the Panamanian culture and the Floating Doctor mission, as well as simple steps required for preparation (going over itinerary, packing, vaccinations, documents). Students will also participate in discussions and lessons on cultural leadership and global health. At a few of our meetings, students will have the opportunity to Skype / conference call with Doctor Ben LaBrot, the leader of the trip and founder of Floating Doctors. On these calls, Labrot and other members of the Floating Doctors team will share their experiences working in the field, and talk to students about preparation for the trip.

During these orientation meetings, students will hear from Ms. Alexander, who lived in the Bocas region for five years. She might cover topics such as cultural sensitivity, history of the people of Bocas, basic vocabulary, and safety.

20. Describe activities planned after the trip for students to wrap-up/reflect:

Floating Doctors recommends volunteers write a 1-2 page essay detailing the key experiences each person may have, and encourages self-insight. They suggest that participants focus on their expectations or preconceived ideas prior to coming, their experience on site, and any details about how the experience impacted them. They will also assemble a blog for the school that will include photos and possibly videos.

ACCESSIBILITY AND STUDENT SAFETY

21. To what extent does the field trip group reflect the diversity of the school population? What efforts will be undertaken to ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, the participants in this field trip reflect the diversity of the school population?

The group of students attending the trip will reflect the applicant pool. Students will raise money for financial aid.

22. What measures are planned to ensure student safety on the trip, including chaperone coverage, student behavior contracts, etc? There will be two chaperones with students: Melanee Alexander and Megan Day, who are faculty members at Brookline High School. Each chaperone on the trip will have a cell phone that operates in Panama and can be used to call the United States. Students will be with chaperones at all times. In addition, all students will be insured with travel insurance.

23. What is the name and location of the medical facility closest to your destination? We will be traveling with trained medical professionals from Floating Doctors for the majority of the trip. The closest hospitals to Panama City are Bay Medical Center, located in the heart of the city, as well as Bay Medical Sacred Heart. Hospitals within Bocas del Toro include Isla Colon Regional Hospital, Hospital del Almirante, and Hospital Regional de Chiriquí Grande. Private clinics in Changuinola are also accessible on a non-emergency basis.

24. Will students be swimming? (please note: if swimming is planned, parents must give explicit written permission for their child to swim; students who do not have this express written permission will not be allowed to swim)

Yes, we will include a permission slip specific to swimming in the packet of forms students must submit. We will be snorkeling in Cayo Coral reef, and will have the opportunity to swim in the waters surrounding Isla San Cristobal.

25. If travelling outside of the United States, please attach the appropriate Department of State Advisory Review and Notification and a copy of Consular statement. U.S. Embassy information concerning travel in Panama -

U.S. State Department Information about travel in Panama

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/Panama.html>

U.S. State Department webpage with information about Panama

<https://www.state.gov/p/wha/ci/pm/>

History of U.S. relations with Panama <https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2030.htm>

FUNDING - Projected Costs

26. What is the total cost of the trip? Please detail the major components of the trip below and provide a total. These costs are based on 2 chaperones and 16 students.

Room and Board: Floating Doctors (6 days) Chaperones free	1,150
R/t airfare Boston to Panama City	900
R/t airfare Panama City to Bocas	115
Hotel for two nights in Panama City	60
Taxi fare	25
Activities (museums, snorkel, bike, etc.)	50
Food in Panama City	50
Cost to cover 2 chaperones, items #2-7	150
	\$2,500

27. How will the field trip be funded? Students will fund the cost of the trip themselves. Students will organize and run fundraisers.

28. What accommodations are made for students who cannot afford the expenses of this trip? Are partial and/or full scholarships available? Yes, we will use the funds that have already been raised, in combination with those we raise through fundraising activities through the year.

29. If fundraisers are planned to help lower the cost of the trip for all students, please describe those plans here:

Contacting donors to support this trip. We have done this successfully for other Global Leadership Program travel and it has been effective.

Itinerary

Day 1 (Saturday 4/13): Fly in and explore Panama City

- Fly from Logan Airport to Tocumen International airport
- Night in Panama City

Day 2 (Sunday 4/14): Arrival in Bocas del Toro

- Visit the Biomuseo (biodiversity museum)
- Explore Casco Viejo (historic Panama City), UNESCO World Heritage site, shopping and lunch
- Arrive in Albrook Airport for afternoon flight to Bocas del Toro
- 6:00 pm: travel with Floating Doctors staff from Bocas del Toro to base on Isla San Cristobal
- 6:30-7:30: dinner
- 7:30-8:30: "Cultural Competency" training lecture by Dr. Benjamin La Brot

Day 3 (Monday 4/15): Training

- 7:30-8:30: breakfast
- 9:00-12:00: volunteer orientation and training
- 12:00-1:00: lunch
- 1:00-3:00: volunteer orientation and training
- 3:00-6:30: trip to town to get snacks; free time at Floating Doctors base
- 6:30: dinner

Day 4 (Tuesday 4/16) and day 5 (Wednesday 4/17): Clinic and cacao tour

- 6:30-7:30: breakfast
- 8:00: depart by boat for clinic deployment
- 9:00: arrive at destination and unload boat
- 10:00-5:00: clinic is underway
 - Visit Oreba Chocolate Farm
- 5:00-6:00: travel back to base
- 6:30: dinner

Day 6 (Thursday 4/18): Nursing home services and free time

- 7:30-8:30: breakfast
- 9:00-12:00: visit Casa Asilo nursing home
- 12:00-1:30: lunch in Bocas del Toro
- 1:30-5:30: free time to enjoy the town 6:30: dinner
- 7:30: participate in weekly Floating Doctors discussion

Day 7 (Friday 4/19): Guided jungle walk and coral snorkeling:

- 7:30-8:30: breakfast
- 9:00-1:00: Dolphin Bay Preserve guided jungle ecology tour
- 1:00-2:00: lunch
- 2:00-5:00: snorkeling at Cayo Coral Reef (plus a visit to Sloth Island)
- 6:30: dinner

Day 8 (Saturday 4/20): Departure day

- Travel back home, from Bocas del Toro to Boston via Panama City and other connecting hub airport

Signatures:

Educator Requesting Field Trip Approval: _____ Date: _____

Andrew Kimball

Signatures:

Educator Requesting Field Trip Approval: Andrew Kimball Date: 9/27/18
Andrew Kimball

Educator Chaperone: Melanee Alexander Date: 9/27/18
Melanee Alexander

Educator Chaperone: Megan Day Date: 9/27/18
Megan Day

Social Studies Coordinator: Gary Shiffman Date: 9/28/18
Gary Shiffman

Principal: Anthony Meyer Date: 9/27/18
Anthony Meyer

PROPOSED TIMELINE APPLICATION & RECRUITMENT TIMELINE 2018-2019

September	Planning meeting among Coordinator and chaperones Approval by Department Chair and Head of School
October	School Committee approval
October	Publicize trip and visit special programs at BHS to recruit Distribute application
November	Applications due Group selected Deposit/First payment of \$800 due, purchase airfare
December	First group meeting Discuss fundraising ideas
January	Parent meeting discussing agenda more formally, slide show of Bocas del Toro, answer Qs from parents about the specific activities of the trip. Provide information for immunization list needed for the trip. This meeting will also include packing list for the trip.
March 1	Final payment for the trip is due \$1100 - this will cover room, board, and activities for the trip.
February - March	X-block meetings for Spanish activities with students, talking to medical professional and Skype with Ben LaBrot
Early April -	Final morning meeting to go over itinerary, packing list, questions about activities, and any remaining questions about individual costs.
April vacation	Travel to Panama

Student Guidelines and Contracts

Students participating in the 2019 Floating Doctors trip to Bocas del Toro, and Panama City, Panama, will abide by Brookline High School rules and regulations as stated in the Handbook, as well as those enumerated in this document.

1. Students and parents/guardians will agree to and sign the rules explained in the STUDENT BEHAVIOR CONTRACT (see attached).
2. Students and parents/guardians will agree to and sign the information and rules explained in the HEALTH INFORMATION SHEET FOR FIELD TRIPS (see attached). Students on medication must be able to self-medicate or give early notification if a parent/guardian must accompany the trip.
3. Parents/guardians must agree to and sign the information explained in the PERMISSION AND RELEASE FORM FOR PANAMA TRIP (see attached).
4. Students must be in good academic standing to participate in the program.
5. Students must be aware of and follow airport and terminal procedures.
6. Students are responsible for their own spending money. The chaperones will be responsible for the group expenses.
7. Students are responsible for acquiring or renewing their own passports. They must make five copies of their passport and give them to Ms. Alexander and ____.
8. Students must honor all deadlines and attend all student and parent/student meetings. If this is not possible, they must see Ms. Alexander and ____ in advance to receive the information.

In addition, the student and his/her parent are advised that School Committee and the Superintendent may cancel a trip at any time, including up to the day of departure, if that it deemed necessary for student safety.

I, (print student name) _____, have read the packet and agree to the information listed above.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

I, (print parent name) _____, have read the packet agree to the information above.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

STUDENT BEHAVIOR CONTRACT

CODE OF CONDUCT:

1. I agree that while I am traveling with the Brookline High School Exchange Trip to Panama City, Bocas del Toro, the Floating Doctors campus, and any other excursions we may take, I will not use or possess non-prescription drugs, tobacco or alcohol, nor will I be present while someone else is using or possessing non-prescription drugs, tobacco, or alcohol.
2. I agree to and will abide by the curfew. At the appointed time, when staying in hotels with the group I will go to my room and observe quiet. Bed checks will occur after curfew to ensure that the students are where they are supposed to be.
3. I agree to uphold all laws and regulations as dictated by local, State and Federal governments (i.e. under age drinking, assault, shoplifting). I agree to respect the property of others and to pay for any losses and/or damages for which I am found responsible.
4. I agree never to leave the hotel without permission from my chaperone. Should I be granted permission to leave, I will be accompanied by other members of my group.
5. I understand the responsibilities of traveling in a group and will respect meeting times and places.
6. I understand that I am under the direct responsibility and authority of the assigned chaperones, and I will follow and abide by any rules and/or decisions made by these persons.
7. As an ambassador for the Town of Brookline and for Brookline High School, I understand that my interactions with the communities in Panama, particularly on the Floating Doctors campus, reflect not only on myself, but my school and my own community. During the trip, I will do my best to ensure that my actions and interactions will reflect positively on all those I represent.

I am signing this Contract, and hereby giving my word of honor that I will follow the above Code of Conduct while traveling in Panama with Brookline High School from April 13th – 20st, 2019. As a representative of Brookline High School, I understand that my behavior is critical to the success of the trip and as a precedent for future exchanges. Any violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action (i.e. being sent back to the United States at my parent's expense, or being suspended from a performance or activity).

Student's Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have read the above contract signed by my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____