

Cross Country Families,

I wanted to share an update about this year's Cross Country travel trip. In my 23 years as head coach at Reservoir, we have been fortunate to take the team on a travel trip almost every year. These trips have created meaningful opportunities, lasting memories, and important team experiences for our athletes.

This year, we are working through a unique challenge. In most years, 40–45 student-athletes attend the trip; this year, we currently have 32. With fewer athletes attending, the cost of transportation, hotels, and other expenses has become significantly more difficult to manage.

Several of our student-athletes are also balancing important commitments with fine arts programs, including band, marching band, orchestra, and other related classes. Because these performances and events are required as part of their coursework, ten student-athletes are unable to attend the North Carolina trip on September 18–19. Additionally, several (8) other athletes are unable to attend for various reasons as well.

I want to be very clear that no blame should be placed on any student, family, program, or commitment. Everyone is doing their best to meet the responsibilities in front of them. My goal is simply to preserve a meaningful team opportunity for as many athletes as possible.

With the Marching Band conflict on September 18, I looked into another travel option that might allow more athletes to participate. As of this weekend, I believed we had a Plan B in place: a team trip to New York on October 9–10. Today, however, I learned that the Fine Arts Concert on October 9 may create a similar conflict and prevent a significant number of athletes from attending. At this point, that leaves us with no options for a team travel trip.

There is still one possible path forward. I spoke with Dr. Shortridge, who understands the situation and wants to help if possible. He is willing to supplement part of the cost of the trip. With the current cost of the bus, hotels, and other expenses—and with 32 athletes attending—we are short approximately \$1,000. If there is a way to reduce that gap to around \$500–\$600, I believe Dr. Shortridge may be able to help cover or defray the remainder.

I am never comfortable asking families for financial support, and I do not take this request lightly. At the same time, I believe this trip would be a valuable opportunity for this group to travel, compete, and continue building together as a team.

If you are willing to help close this gap, or if you know of a business that may be interested in sponsoring part of the trip, please contact me directly.

I need to make a decision by 9:30 a.m. Tuesday so that we can cancel the hotels, if necessary, without a penalty fee.

Thank you for your understanding, generosity, and continued support of our athletes.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'H. H. B.', is located at the bottom left of the page.