To:                   Members of the Hardin County Board of Education

From:               Nannette Johnston, Superintendent

Re:                   Request for permission to use airlines to go to France and Spain in June 2014

Request:           To use airline transportation for the John Hardin French & Spanish students to participate in the trip to France and Spain with EF or Explorica, around June 10, 2014.

Facts:

Board policy requires prior approval for use of airline travel for transportation. The French teacher, chaperones and about 25 students will be traveling around the time of the date above. There will be a minimum of one chaperone for every six students going.)

**The cost is about $3250 all inclusive. Both travel companies are offering us the following discount for early enrollment:**

**Lock in the price of 2012 for 2014 departure as well as $250 dollar discount. Please respond promptly**

Description of the trip and itinerary:

   Day 1: Start Tour

 Day 2: Bonjour Paris Meet your Tour Director and check into hotel Paris City Walk  Ile de la Cité, Notre Dame Cathedral visit, Ile St. Louis, Latin Quarter visit Musée d’Orsay visit Dinner in Latin Quarter

 Day 3: Paris Guided Sightseeing Tour  Arc de Triomphe, Champs-Élysées, Eiffel Tower,  Champ de Mars, École Militaire, Les Invalides,  Conciergerie,  Tuileries,  Place Vendôme, Opera House, Louvre guided tour Seine River Sightseeing Cruise Dinner at a crêperie

 Day 4: Chartres & Loire Valley Optional  Chartres & Loire Valley Excursion  Chartres Cathedral visit with Whisper headsets , Château de Chenonceau visit, Clos Lucé visitDinner in Montmartre Tour Director-led sightseeing of Montmartre

 Day 5:  Paris-TGV to Avignon-Provence Walking tour to the Louvre Museum. Board TGV train bound for Avignon. Overnight in Provence.

 Day 6: Provence-Nimes-Pont du Gard-Les Baux-Provence Visit Roman Ampitheatre in Nimes, the Roman aqueduct at the Pont du Gard, and ruined castle of Les Baux

 Day 7: Provence-Carcassonne-Barcelona Visit Carcassonne en route to the Catalonian capital of Barcelona

 Day 8: Barcelona-(Montserrat) Guided sightseeing tour of Barcelona. Visit Gaudi’s Church of La Sagrada Familia and Guell Park.

 Day 9: Barcelona-Zaragoza-Madrid En route to Madrid, stop in Zaragoza.

Day 10: Madrid Explore Madrid with local guide. See the Plaza de Espana, the Cervantes Memorial, Retiro Park, Oriente Square, the Alcala Gate and the Parliament. Visit Prado Museum

Day 11: Departure

The cost of this optional trip will be about $3250 which includes everything but lunch: airfare, all ground transportation, hotels, breakfasts and dinners, guided city tours, museum visits, etc. This is a great package and great value for the dollar. By starting early, the students/parents will have more than 16 months to make payments toward this trip. My students and I usually do several fundraising activities to help pay for other additional activities such as Eiffel Tower visit, Seine river cruise, metro tickets, etc. In the past we have worked at Saint James Art Festival, Thunder over Louisville, and we did other fundraising activities in school as well. We will do the same thing this year and next year to raise money. By starting early, this gives us more time to do more fundraising activities. The more money we raise for the trip, the less money travelers pay from their own pocket. Chaperones get a deep discount which varies from 30% to 50% depending on the number of travelers. The approximate number of students traveling is 25.

**Reasons for the trip**:

I am a firm believer that everything we do as professionals is a learning experience and everything we do for our students engages them in the learning process. During this trip, students will experience culture, language, art, and cuisine like never before. It is meant for students who are interested in discovering new cultures. This trip is organized for the students in our school because they and their parents ask for it. It is carefully planned to satisfy their needs and fit their budget, and is also carefully planned for students who otherwise cannot afford, or do not want, to travel on their own. For many of these students this is a chance in a life time to travel aboard worry free. On this trip, the students will get the opportunity to visit France, home to the Louvre, the world's most famous museum, which, in turn, is home to over 30,000 priceless works of art. Its collection of paintings is the most impressive, containing masterpieces from artists such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Raphael, Caravaggio and Rembrandt. It also has various sculptures and artifacts from ancient Egypt and Greece. Aside from the Louvre, students will visit the Musee d'Orsay, which houses Monet and Renoir masterpieces among others, as well as the Musée National d'Art Moderne at the Centre Georges Pompidou. They will also view exceptional works of art at the Palace of Versailles. By experiencing the arts of various cultures, students can actually gain insight into the beliefs, feelings and ideas of those cultures.

A reproduction never does justice to the original art work.  To see for yourself the elusive smile of “Mona Lisa”, or feel the life- affirming light magically emitted from a Monet can change how you feel about art for the rest of your life.  It took science a long time to figure out what caused the sensations mentioned above, that artists were using so readily in their work. A student must experience these pieces for themselves to begin to understand the “magic” that is happening on a two dimensional surface.

 From Paris to Madrid, students will be exposed to history, music, language, and arts in all of its forms. With a culture that stretches back more than 2,000 years and plenty of awe-inspiring architecture to prove it, Spain is a destination that not only provides historical sights but plenty of educational opportunities as well. Spain has a unique Moorish culture, architecture, and heritage.

International travel had and continues to have a great impact on the French program at John Hardin High School. Since I have started taking students abroad, enrollment in the French program in our school has been increasing steadily while in many schools statewide, including Jefferson County, the French program has shrunk substantially or disappeared completely. One of the most common questions I get at each and every parent-teacher conference and open house is: "When are you planning a trip overseas next time?" For most students and parents, this is perhaps the only chance for them to travel overseas at a great price and with a piece of mind knowing that all the planning is done for them. And for many others, this is the most memorable experience of their lives: imagine walking in the Latin Quarter to visit the Sorbonne University where many famous writers, artists, and heads of states studied, standing in Place de la Bastille where the French Revolution took place, sitting in a café where Jean Paul Sartre, Ernest Hemingway and others discussed politics and social issues. This experience is simply priceless. I still get e-mails to this day from former students who traveled with me many years ago remembering exactly how they felt when they stood in many historical places where others stood before them hundreds and thousands of years ago. This experience is indeed unforgettable.

**Connection with core content areas**

 As its name indicates, Artists of France and Spain, this trip provides a solid connection with content areas such as social studies, sciences, and with art and humanities. From Paris to Madrid, and everything in between, students will have ample opportunities to experience the link between what they study in the classroom and what they actually see and do, it is a real life experience. Guided tours of various cities, museums, cathedrals, and castles from Paris all the way to Madrid, will give students the chance to see and understand how the arts reflect the beliefs, feelings, and ideals of those who create them. They will understand that the arts play a major role in the creation and defining of cultures and building civilizations. (**AH-HS-HA-U-3**). They will understand that the arts have value and significance for daily life. They provide personal fulfillment, whether in vocational settings, vocational pursuits, or leisure.(**AH-HS-PCA-U-2).** Students will understand that the arts help us understand others' (often very different ways of thinking, working, and expressing ourselves.) **(AH-HS-HA-U-2)**. Students will understand that the arts provide forms of nonverbal communication that can strengthen the presentation of ideas and emotions. **(AH-HS-PCA-U-3).** Students will understand that an appreciation of the diverse nature of cultures is essential in our global society. **(SS-H-CS-U-6).** Students will understand that a variety of factors promote cultural diversity in a society, a nation, and the world.  **(SS-HCS-U-5).** Studying the historical and cultural stylistic periods in the arts in a real life situation will offer students a unique engaging experience.

**Recommendation:**

Approve the use of airline transportation for the John Hardin students leaving around June 10th 2014 for ten days. (These dates may change due to availability of the dates with the tour company.)

**Recommended Motion:**

I move to approve the use of airline transportation for John Hardin students to travel to France and Spain over the summer break of 2014, around June the 10th.