

Dear New Band Members and Families,

We understand that making the transition to high school can be a little overwhelming, especially considering that you will be joining one of the largest marching bands in the country. We have found that many students and families have the same concerns and questions as they prepare for Shaker Heights High School and joining the band program, “The Pride of Shaker Heights.” Working with our Band Boosters, we have put together the most frequently asked questions from new members. Please be sure to read these questions, their answers, and the information packet well, and we hope that you feel informed and prepared for the coming school year.

Does everyone participate in marching band? Do I have to come to marching band camp?

Yes, all band students participate in marching band and therefore must attend marching band camp before school starts. Percussionists and Raiderettes begin camp the week of August 7th at the High School. **All freshmen and students who are new to the program attend “Rookie Day” on August 11 at the Middle School.** *All band members attend Band Camp Monday August 14 – Thursday August 17 at the Middle School and Friday, August 18 at the High School.*

When and where is marching band camp?

All camps are from 8:30 to 3:00, Monday through Friday. **Percussion and Raiderette camp** is at the **High School the week of August 7-11.** Rookie Day (August 11) and Band Camp (1st 4 days) are at the **Middle School**, and we will meet in the Middle School Auditorium to begin “Rookie Day.” Friday, August 18, the Preview Show Day, is held at the **High School.** All members will meet on the High School practice field. The call time will be announced during marching band camp, and the Preview Show will be held in the Stadium at 12 Noon. Families and friends are welcome to attend the Preview Show.

What do I need to bring to marching band camp?

You need to bring your instrument, your lyre and flip folder, a lunch, comfortable shoes (no flip-flops), water, and sunscreen. There is an order form from Academy Music included in the information packet where you can order a lyre and flip folder and they will be delivered to you at Rookie Day, August 11. Music for much of the season will also be passed out at Rookie Day. There will be a forty-five minute lunch break every day, along with water breaks on the field during rehearsal. Lunch will be provided by the Band Boosters on Friday, August 11 during Percussion/Raiderette Camp and Thursday, August 17 during Band Camp.

I play a fall sport; can I do both a sport and marching band?

Absolutely you can do both. We have a policy in place for students who participate in both a sport and marching band. Communication between students and their coaches and directors is a key component, so please communicate early and often when resolving conflicts. **Fill out an absence request form with dates of conflicts.** Generally, we contact the coaches and work out a schedule so that students will miss some of their sports practice and some of marching band camp if there is a conflict during the camp weeks in August, but ultimately it is your responsibility. During the football season, those students on sports teams are expected to participate in as much of the marching band performances as possible, including coming late or leaving early as necessary, but are excused from marching band performances to participate in the games for their sport. There is a “**Fall Sports Team Members**” page in the information packet that you can read for more information and fill out which sport, if any, students will be participating in during the football season. *This informs Mrs. Tyrrell and Mr. Clemens if you are planning on participating in a fall sport.*

When does marching band practice during the school year?

All band students have band first period during the school year, and we use that time during football season for marching band rehearsals. We also rehearse before football games. Call time is typically 11 AM for a 1 PM home game and 5 PM for an evening away game. There are no practices for marching band after school. Rehearsals during first period may be inside or outside, so students should come with attire that is appropriate for the weather. **Flip-flops may not be worn** during outdoor marching rehearsals, so be sure to have shoes with you or in your music locker.

When does the marching band perform?

The marching band performs at all football games, home and away. The football games are included on the enclosed band calendar. Call times for football games are announced on the Wednesday before the game, along with the uniform that needs to be worn for the performance (summer or full formal uniform). Call times are also communicated by text (sign up for REMIND texts). Be sure to sign up yourself and your student to receive these updates. **Remind-** Receive reminder text messages(to sign up send message: @mrsoty to 81010)

What is a “pep band?” Who has to go?

A pep band is a game where we do not take the entire band to an away game for a variety of reasons. Our only pep band game is on September 28th at Elyria. This game is also labeled as “College Visitation” so that upper classmen can have a weekend to schedule college visits. This pep band will serve as a make-up opportunity, and is open to any student in the band who wants to perform (extra credit is offered to those who attend). We will put up a sign up sheet early in the week of a pep band game, and freshmen and sophomores without sports or other school related conflicts should plan on attending and will be asked to go if we need more participants.

What are the uniforms for marching band and where do I get them?

We have two uniforms for marching band. The first is our summer uniform. The summer uniform consists of the band polo shirt, full-length white pants with belt loops (bright white (not khaki/off-white) and white jeans are fine as long as they do not have holes in them), black shoes, black belt, and black socks. You need to **order the polo shirt** from on the band fees sheet of the information packet. **White pants can be purchased at a variety of uniform stores.** Shoes need to be **all black**, no other colors or writing of any kind, and socks need to cover the ankle (no athletic or “no show” socks). See the “Checklist” in the information packet for recommendations. The full formal marching band uniform will be issued to you at your uniform fitting, after band camp in the Multipurpose Room at the High School. Fittings are organized by class and Freshmen will be fitted during the week of band camp. See the band calendar for exact dates. If you miss your fitting, there will be a brief fitting session following the preview show on Friday, August 18. Along with the full uniform, you will also need to wear white gloves, which you will receive at your uniform fitting. You can wear the same black socks and black shoes as you would with your summer uniform.

Should I insure my instrument? What instrument should I play?

An instrument is a significant financial investment, so insurance may be appropriate for you. You can add a rider on home or renter’s insurance. Many students who have upgraded their instrument for concert season play their “beginner” instrument during marching band to avoid damaging their more valuable instruments. Students who play

French horn, baritone, and tuba will need to come to the high school after August 2 and before August 11 to sign-out a marching instrument.

What are “squads” and “squad leaders?”

During marching band, we divide the band into four to five person squads. Squads are generally made up of students who all play the same instrument. In each squad, there will be “Squad Leader,” an upper-classman (typically a Junior or a Senior) who has experience in marching band and has filled out an application listing their qualifications and leadership experience. That squad leader is responsible for reading the drill sheets and directing the squad when learning the marching drills, as well as keeping an account of the squad to let the directors know if there are any problems. The squad leader is the first person to go to with any questions. There will also be an assistant squad leader in each squad to help if the squad leader is absent. After marching band season, the squads are dissolved.

When do concert bands begin and how are they decided?

Concert bands begin daily after the final regular season football game. There are five total concert bands. The Wind Ensemble, our OMEA Class AA group, holds auditions first in mid-September. Once the Wind Ensemble personnel is decided, Symphonic Band, our OMEA Class A group, auditions will be held in the end of September. Once Symphonic Band is decided, the three remaining groups, Concert Band, Concert Winds, and Concert Ensemble, are selected from the remaining players on a draft basis. All three concert groups perform OMEA Class B level music.

Do I have to audition, how does the process work?

Students are not required to audition for Wind Ensemble or Symphonic Band, but they are certainly encouraged to. First-hand experience of the audition process is a great teacher and makes future auditions much less intimidating. The auditions themselves consist of three parts.

1. The first part is scales. Students will be asked to play two major scales of the director's choice and their chromatic scale. All scales should be played in two octaves on woodwind and percussion instruments, and one or two octaves when appropriate on brass instruments. The chromatic scale can be played from any starting pitch, but must be two octaves on all instruments.
2. The second portion is the required excerpt, made available at the back of the band room about two weeks before auditions. Students are expected to play the excerpts at the indicated tempos. Excerpts will be available in the band room and on shakerbands.org.
3. The third portion is a one-minute, selected solo of your choice. The solo piece can be a portion of a larger work or a full piece, but must be an appropriate difficulty level for the audition. Solos can be pieces that students have been working on over the summer or with a private lesson teacher, and students may play the same solo at both the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band audition.

How are jazz bands organized? When does jazz band start?

Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Band will begin after the marching band season has concluded. Jazz Ensemble is an auditioned group that meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 4:30. Jazz Combo is an auditioned group formed from members of the Jazz Ensemble. Audition music will be available after Wind Ensemble auditions are completed. Jazz Band is open to traditional jazz instruments and students who would like to double on a jazz instrument, not their main instrument. Rehearsals are two days per week from 3:15 to 4:15. Students will receive Honors Credit for Jazz Ensemble and CP credit for Jazz Band.

How is band graded?

The band grade is made up of weekly participation points as well as points for performances. The full grading policy as well as the Shaker Band guidelines can be found on shakerbands.org.

What is Honors Credit?

Honors Credit is an option for students interested in taking band as an **Honors Class**, making an "A" worth 4.5 points towards your GPA as opposed to only 4.0. To receive honors credit, students must sign up and then fulfill extended requirements as outlined in the honors credit guide. Forms for honors credit are not due until **mid-September**, so feel free to ask the directors and your guidance counselor any questions you may have once school starts. Wind Ensemble is a 5.0 credit class (AP credit), and more information will be made available to those who are selected following the auditions. You can download the **Honors Credit form** from the High School Band page of our shakerbands.org website.

How do I stay informed?

We have a several ways for parents and students to keep up with events:

1. The Band Boosters have set up the shakerbands.org website where we have a blog that is regularly updated with information.
2. You can sign up to receive **reminder** text messages(to sign up send message: @mrsoty to 81010)
3. There is "The Official Shaker Bands Group" on Facebook, and we have a Twitter account @TheShakerBands.

If you have further questions, you can email Mr. Clemens at clemens_j@shaker.org or Mrs. Tyrrell at tyrrell_g@shaker.org or call the High School band office at 295-4233. All emails and voicemails are checked regularly throughout the summer, so feel free to call or email but please be patient for your answer.

Band Boosters co-presidents can also be reached for any questions: Sharyn Lowenkamp at 216-544-3719 and Laurie Silver at 2016-536-9342 and uniform questions can be directed to Maria Hunter at 896-0034.