

Dear Band Members and Parents,

Welcome to the new year of the Rocky River High School Bands. I look forward to working with the veterans again, and bid a sincere welcome to all of our new members. We just completed a very busy and interesting year (continued construction) and I'm sure you are all anxious to know what is in the works for 2013-14. Please read this entire letter carefully -- **Write all dates from the downloadable calendar list on your personal, as well as a family, full-year calendar** now! Please note that all events are also posted on the calendar tab of the website. Let's have a great year.

This letter is being posted and is intended for members and families of the 2013-14 RRHS band program. By posting this letter to the website, mailing costs have been reduced by 75%. Please talk to each other to make sure everyone received their single page letter via US mail inviting them to visit the band website to view this. Also, make sure this letter is shared with parents.

As you all know from correspondence at the end of last school year, Band officially begins on Monday, August 12. The first day schedule includes school-owned instrument check-outs, a session for captains, select squad leaders, and officers, and a session for all new marchers. A new member is defined as anyone (pom, flag, clarinet, triangle) who did not march in the 2012 RRHS Marching Band.

Squad leader selection will be much the same as last year. Mr. Hudec and I have selected a very small group (1 or 2 people from each section) to attend the August 12th morning session and assist with the new marchers. These persons represent only part of the squad leader corps and are being contacted individually. The actual squad leaders will be determined by the number of squads needed that will be determined by the instrumentation established during the first week of band camp. If asked to be a squad leader, please remember that squad leaders (along with instrument switchers and Marchers-At Large) are active positions and those that fill them must go above and beyond. Remember that squad members are valuable positions as well – we're all on the same team.

The summer schedule is similar to last year as **our camp location is again at RRMS**. We will be taking a 90-minute lunch break rather than the traditional 60 each day. Also, note that I have again scheduled a morning "OFF" so that you may plan and perhaps schedule those last minute doctor appointments or driving tests.

Once the school year officially begins, we will continue with our traditional 1st period time slot. Band members must be at the daily posted rehearsal location by the start of rehearsal. The class bell rings at 7:55. You have 3 minutes to get your instrument, shoes, etc. and begin heading toward the rehearsal location. Inside rehearsals begin at 7:58 in the band room; outside rehearsals will be at the stadium beginning at 8:00 a.m. This may necessitate arriving at school several minutes before the 7:50 warning bell. Our once a week evening rehearsal will remain on Tuesday nights (poms and flags Monday after school as well). This rehearsal begins at 6:30 p.m. meaning you

need to be in the room at 6:33 or on the field at 6:35. It would be best to arrive @ 6:25 p.m. It may be best to plan on a 6:00 pm arrival as this is a convenient time and many squads do music play-off checks before TNP. These rehearsals will again end @ 8:45 p.m.

Mr. Hudec and I are well aware of the unique issues that the continuing construction has brought and will bring. However, if 170+ are in the correct place at the correct time – and you are not – construction is not the issue.

Prompt attendance is required at all events. If for some reason you absolutely must miss any event (illness, weddings, etc.), I must have a note from your parents. Please understand now that certain absences will not be excused (e.g. work, professional athletic events, rock concerts, parties, dances, etc.) Obviously, I cannot write a complete list, but you get the idea. Each new band member was provided the summer schedule and all veterans were reminded to check the website before the conclusion of last school year so that you could schedule these other items around your band class commitment. A superior or even excellent band member demonstrates an understanding of commitment. Band is a performance/participation class. Thus, missing an opportunity to perform/participate due to absences must have an impact of the grade received.

Our Team/Group Picture Day has been scheduled for Friday, 8/23. We will take the full group shot as well as small groups (e.g., officers, flag corps, etc). This will also be the photo day for anyone interested in doing "Memory Mate" package type photos. I will distribute Memory Mate forms and information a few days before the photo.

At the conclusion of the marching season, the instrumentalists will form 2 concert bands. Auditions for seating within the 2 bands will be conducted evenings 11/11 – 11/13. Once the personnel for the split is announced, students report to their new rehearsal location daily. Tuesday night practices cease, but a Wednesday morning sectional schedule (PLC time) starts. The PLC sectional time is more geared toward members of the concert band as Mr. Hudec is more available during the PLC time slot than Mr. Taylor. The PLC sectionals are required and work around various other required PLC meeting events (e.g., freshmen class mtg.).

There has been a great deal of discussion regarding Fall sports and Marching Band participation. While many options have been looked at, no new policy has been implemented. The administration, athletic staff, and I continue to study the situation trying to make it work more smoothly. As we have done for the past couple years, some athletes may be excused from select Tuesday Night Practices. Please remember that extra team events (e.g., team dinners) are not accepted as excused absences from scheduled band events. Currently, only those members who play varsity football or are varsity cheerleaders have the option of marching or delaying participation in band one quarter [Note - Pom and Flag participants can not play a Fall sport as, among other issues, there are more schedule conflicts than with instrumentalists]. Please let me know your intentions by August 8. If you do not march, there is a loss of .25 credit for band so watch your total credits towards athletic eligibility.

Uniforms are a major part of who we are at performances and this year we have **brand new uniforms**. The students are issued certain parts of the uniform (instrumentalists -- coat/pants/hat/raincoat; poms & flags--vest/skirt/raincoat; jazz--shirt/tie/cummerbund/pants.) To make the uniform complete, the students must provide the additional items (instrumentalists--black socks/gloves/suspenders/shoes (percussion, Sousaphones, some years bari saxes--berets; poms & flags--dance tights/body suit/gloves/spankies/boots/jackets; jazz--black socks or hose/ black shoes/black skirt). This letter gives a general idea of what you need to complete your uniform along with the associated cost. You will receive your exact "bill" for band fees and charges in writing during band camp. Complete fittings will be during the first two weeks of camp.

Regarding uniform fit . . . The uniforms are fit to go over other clothes. For the warmer weather events, this usually means a pair of shorts and a T-shirt. For the colder weather events, pants are substituted for the shorts and a sweater or non-hooded sweatshirt for the T-shirt. In all cases, the shirt must have sleeves approaching the elbow. The shorts/pants are to be athletic in nature (i.e., a non-bulky waistband). We had a run on broken clasps and zippers in the band pants and we traced the problem to the phenomena of students wearing bulky pants (e.g., jeans, cargo pants) under the uniform. There should be no zippers or belt loops in the pants. Pajama-type pants or elastic sweats/shorts work the best.

Sometimes the full uniform of a group is neither appropriate nor feasible for a selected performance. In these circumstances, the band shirt has become the standard uniform for instrumentalists, and the jacket/sweatshirt/squad shirt has become the standard for the auxiliary group that is performing. Payment for these items will be in association with the band fees.

Please plan to pay the necessary fees/charges during the morning rehearsal on Thursday 8/22. We will have additional staff on hand on this day. Payment on the 22nd ensures that you can be issued your equipment for our performances the following week. The regular high school fees are invoiced directly home later in Sept. or into Oct. After much discussion, the school personnel decided that the band fees and charges were unique and would not fit into the invoicing process. Thus, we keep them separate.

You are asked to write your name/initials on your personal equipment (e.g. shoes, gloves). It is almost comical how members misplace items and then expect the staff to magically know which of the 160 identical pairs of shoes or 24 identical pairs of boots happen to be theirs. Along these lines, people are finding out the hard way that we enforce personal responsibility. Lost/left out/misplaced equipment, shoes, gloves and music have resulted in fines and replacement fees to the owners. Things also get thrown out if they are in the wrong place at the wrong time. Keep track of your things.

A big thank-you to all of our volunteers! All of our chair-people are willing and waiting to hear from volunteers. You can call them or catch them at the August Picnic. Uniforms – Martha Taylor (356-9091) [We have 180 uniforms to fit and adjust];

Chaperones – Sharon Armstrong (331-7333) [Every time the band moves, we need about 12 adults to move with them]; Hospitality/refreshments – Krim Danzinger (216-905-6220) [every home football performance, we feed anywhere from 250 - 350 students]; Honeybaked Ham Sales –Ann Stemen (333-8371) [this event has been an incredible help with the purchase of odds and ends like batteries, lights, etc.]and Fundraising Dinner Jennifer and Michael Hammarlund (356-5024) [this is our major source of funding – equipment, uniforms, etc.]. Please give these folks a call for immediate volunteer opportunities. As with anything else – the students and families that put the most into the band program, definitely get the most out of the band program.

A special note to parents concerning Boosters. Please consider joining this group where 100% of your money is returned to our school programs. The bands are greatly supported by this group as they supply uniform needs such as gigbags, raincoats, jackets, pants, ties, tuxedo shirts, etc. We owe the Boosters a huge thank you. For those of you who attend many home events (I certainly hope that many of you do/will), the membership can actually be a savings. By the way, there are many volunteer opportunities for this group as well. Please consider doing concessions at some school event and make sure to mention that you're a band parent. It really is a great and painless way to get involved and meet people.

Many veterans may be tired of reading this section -- but...As mentioned each year, the school district is studying the addition of a nominal fee to help defray the cost of upkeep for the school owned instruments. Every school owned instrument costs approximately \$50 per year to maintain (clean, flush, oil, pads, adjust) --sousaphones cost \$150. Personal instruments should be receiving yearly maintenance in the \$25 - \$50 range. The student playing on a school owned instrument in most cases does not need to maintain his/her personal instrument; we are looking at whether the individual should be helping to maintain the instrument being used. There are many facets to this situation that I have not covered. The music dept. and administration continue to discuss this issue --I'll keep you informed.

The fees and charges for 2013-14 have been adjusted. Everyone pays the fees each year and the charges are one-time costs unless the item becomes lost or unusable. As mentioned before, you pay your band fees and charges separate from your other school fees. Please do not pay the fees until you receive the band fee invoice after the August fittings.(8/22) Below is a list of the minimally required items and the cost as of this posting.

Fee	Uniform Cleaning Fee	\$25
Fee	Transportation Fee	\$52
Charge	White Band Shoes	\$30
Charge	Maroon Band Shirt	\$16 (XXL - \$17.50)
Charge	White Gloves	\$4
Charge	Suspenders	\$5

Charge	Pom & Flag Boots	\$45
Charge	Pom & Flag & Percussion Gloves	\$5
Charge	Percussion & Tuba Beret	\$10
Charge	Pom & Flag bodysuit	\$28
Charge	Pom & Flag tights	\$12
Charge	Pom & Flag spankies	\$10
Charge	Pom & Flag Jacket	\$85
Charge	Flip Folder	local merchants
Charge	Music Lyre	local merchants
optional	Parent Band Shirt	\$16 (XXL - \$17.50)

(Poms and Flags will need to bring their \$150 private camp fee to band camp on Tue. 8/13.)

All members must have working equipment and proper maintenance items such as valve oil, reeds, sticks, a flip folder, and a functional lyre. If you don't already own a lyre (many instruments come with one), it would be best to wait until after the new marcher orientation so the veterans can explain what types work best (e.g., trombone bell lyres, flute arm lyres). Pencils are a must to be placed in the flip folder. (rubber bands and paper clips are a good idea as well) These supplies will be checked the first couple days of band camp.

Proper footwear is required for Marching Band. A person cannot march in a proper style while wearing flip-flop type footwear. In order to march properly and avoid ankle injuries, proper footwear (a closed heel – athletic type shoe) is required at all marching band events -- rehearsals and performances. The only exception to this rule is for certain, indoor auxiliary rehearsals where the groups are focusing on dance type steps.

We will be checking out school instruments on Monday, 8/12. Please plan to be here on the 12th to complete this. Even if you "already have" your school instrument, come in for the contract process. Mr. Hudec and I are not able to check out instruments while we are running rehearsals.

As part of your participation requirement, every member of the ensemble will haul equipment and/or sign up for 1 work detail each semester (uniforms, set ups, tear downs, loading, etc).

Tardies, gum, candy, improper uniform or instrument care and other violations accumulate and can result in lost privileges and/or lowered grades (e.g., 3rd quarter and/or 3%). Violations may need to be "worked off" with extra work duties as well.

The list of officers is at the end of this letter. They are ready to answer whatever questions you have from a student perspective. We will select class representatives during band camp.

When you finish reading this letter, please download the Athletic/Activities Signature Form and the Emergency Medical Authorization form from the website. [Athletics/Activities Tab: Downloads on right of screen].

The Athletic/Activities Signature Form asks you to check 3 boxes dealing with rules for athletes and activity participants. Before checking the boxes, you are to read the Athletic Handbook (available to read from the uppermost left tab "Athletic Handbook"). As you read the handbook, please take note of which rules and guidelines are in place for activities versus those in place for athletics. Admittedly, most of this handbook is geared toward athletics, but marching band is a physical activity and certain injuries can occur. Also, note that many of the guidelines specify "non-academic activity." Marching Band is an academic activity so most violations of rules in this handbook go directly to the administrative process. Please indicate "Marching Band" on the line that asks for the "sport."

The Second form, Emergency Medical Authorization, is the same form that will be completed for the opening of school. The band travels and therefore must have a separate copy. In the signature section, please be aware that the band is a publically performing entity, and by allowing his/her participation, you automatically consent to the photo question about your child.

You must complete and bring one copy of each form along with the signed tear-off portion of this letter (last page) to band the first day of scheduled practice.

This is NOT a trip year for the RRHS bands. However, please continue/[start] to save for the 2014 – 2015 trip. These trips are very educational, very fun, and frankly, very expensive. With the current economics we can easily be looking in the \$700 - \$900 range. The most successful fundraisers can only scratch the surface. Think about setting \$\$ aside each week to better prepare for the upcoming payment schedule.

I realize that this letter is very dry and contains a great deal of do this/do that type of information. Please know that I am honored to work with you and are looking forward to another successful year for the entire RRHS Instrumental Music Program.

See you soon!

Mr. Taylor
Director of Bands, RRHS

President: Anna Stanton (trumpet) 356-0080

Vice Presidents on the Senior Executive Council:

John Anderton (Percussion) 895-0323

Natalie El Dabh (Alto Saxophone) 895-1777

Will Spallino (Trombone) 331-4803

Victoria Sullo (Clarinet) 292-7176

Open other downloads on this page for:

Full Year agenda-style Calendar

Route to the Athletics & Activities Homepage for:

Perusing the Athletic (Activities) Handbook

Athletic/Activities Signature Form (Required 8/12 or 8/13)

Emergency Medical Authorization (Required 8/12 or 8/1

(print this page - separate here and bring to your 1st scheduled rehearsal 8/12 or 8/13))

We have read the 2013-2014 band letter and we have reviewed all dates on the calendar. We have a known, excusable conflict on the following date(s): (please write None if none)

_____ Student Signature [Print Name _____)

_____ Parent Signature