

“Newbie News – Welcome 2009”

Welcome to the Gateway Marching Band! You and your child are embarking on an exciting journey *together*. You will be sharing lots of new experiences, and you will *all* be making many new and wonderful friends. My name is Robin McMasters, and I will be your “Band Buddy” for the year. I have had 3 children in the Gateway Band. Two are alumni, and one is a current member (Kelly, snare drum). My job is to help you make a smooth transition to the Marching Band. Please check the “Newbie Newsletters” posted on the website for info regarding various band topics. I am also available to answer any questions you may have during the season. Remember: there are no dumb questions! The following is some information you may find helpful as you get started on your journey.

Band Boosters

The Band Booster organization is responsible for making sure the resources needed to provide our children with a first class band program are available. The Boosters are involved in many activities to support the band, including fundraising, chaperones, social events (esp. the band banquet), moral support, and many more. Meetings are held monthly. Check the website calendar for dates, times and locations.

Money

Marching Band takes \$\$\$\$. Every band member must pay their “fair share”, and participate in general fundraising for the band. Details about financing will be provided by the Booster Board. Please do your part!

Volunteering

Marching Band needs volunteers. We need the cooperation of every band family. Volunteer opportunities include: chaperones, concession stand, fundraising, uniforms, and many more. Each family is required to earn a certain amount of “points” for volunteer work. Details will be provided by the Booster Board.

Clearances:

- Any adult having contact with students (chaperone, pit crew, etc.) needs to have child abuse/criminal clearances.
- Address any questions to Mr. Read either in person or via e-mail (see contacts on website).

Summer rehearsals

Rehearsals take place throughout the summer (Tuesday evenings and one “Mini Camp”). Please make sure your child has plenty of water! You can refer to the Newbie News regarding Band Camp for tips that also pertain to Mini Camp. There are two important exceptions. The hours for Mini Camp are 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM (winds and percussion) or 5:30 PM to 9:00 PM (guard) except for Friday when the full ensemble rehearses from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. And, **lunch is NOT provided during mini-camp.**

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Fall rehearsals

Fall rehearsals are scheduled both in the evenings and after school. A bus is provided to take members from Gateway Middle to rehearsal when their school day is over.

PLEASE REFER TO THE REHEARSAL SCHEDULE PROVIDED BY MR. READ!

Band camp

Band camp takes place for two weeks in August. This is where the show comes together. Attendance is mandatory. Please refer to “Newbie News – Band Camp” for more info.

Activities

Some of the activities the Marching Band will participate in this year will be:

- Football Games – Friday evenings throughout the fall.
- Competitions – Saturdays throughout the fall. The band will be involved most of the day with rehearsal, travel, and competition.
- Parades - July 4th (Monroeville), Memorial Day (Monroeville and Pitcairn), Fort Ligonier Days (October 10th) and Kennywood Fall Fantasy (August 15th).
- Special performances – Celebrate Monroeville (September 17th). Others may be announced at a later date.

Pick up/ drop off

When picking up and dropping off students, please park in the student parking lot (adjacent to the stadium), and have your child walk up and down the hill to the band room. Do not park in the fire lanes next to the school. You may be ticketed!

It is a post-competition tradition is for parents to line their cars up in the student parking lot and honk their horns as the buses return. Just follow the lead of the experienced parents!

Important: Please pick your child up promptly after events. Chaperones should not have to wait for you!

Uniforms/general

In addition to the uniform pants and jacket, members are required to wear black socks, black marching shoes, gloves (except percussion), and black “compression” shorts (“Under Armor” type) or other snug fitting under garment that will not “bunch up” under the uniform. Shoes and gloves are purchased *by the parents* through the band; parents must supply socks and shorts. T-shirts are to be worn under the uniform, usually the official “theme” shirt provided by the Boosters. Mr. Read will instruct the band which shirt he wants them to wear for each event.

The Color Guard staff will inform members about their uniform needs for the season.

Exception: Uniform for the July 4th parade consists of an official band t-shirt (provided) and PLAIN black shorts with black socks and marching shoes.

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Uniforms/cold weather

During cold weather, members may wear plain black jackets. Official satin band jackets will be available to purchase later this summer. Upperclassmen also have the opportunity to purchase “letterman” jackets. The band also provides rain/overcoats to be worn in inclement weather. Long underwear may be worn, just remember that it can’t “bunch up” for competitions. Hats and gloves may be worn in the stands.

Student leadership

Student leadership in the marching band consists of 3 drum majors, captains, and section leaders for each instrumental section/color guard. These students are chosen by the staff for their musicianship and leadership abilities. They should be your child’s first contact for help and information.

Information

The Gateway Band has many avenues of communication available to you. These include:

Web Site (www.gatewayband.org): There is New Band Parent information posted on the band website which I hope will help answer many of your questions about camps, games, competitions, etc.. Just click on the “Documents” link. You will also find a message board, calendar, contact information for Booster Board and staff, fundraising news, important forms, and many pictures of the band in action.

Folders: Each band member has a folder located in the brown filing cabinet in the band room. Check this regularly for printed information and fundraisers.

E-mail: E-mail updates about band activities are available if you desire. Please e-mail the webmaster at webmaster@gatewayband.org to be added to the list. I will also send out updates to new parents from time to time. Please make sure we have your address.

Band Buddy: Please feel free to contact me at any time for help, info, or concerns.

Robin McMasters

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