

# Frequently Asked Questions about being in the Winter Park Band Program

## Why should I be in the Winter Park High School Band?

The Winter Park High School Bands have a long tradition of being one of the most outstanding band programs in the state of Florida. For 77 years, the Bands have represented Winter Park High School with excellence at regional, state, and national performances. In addition, the Florida Department of Education has recognized Winter Park High School as a "Music Demonstration School."

Along with the musical experiences that come with being a part of the Winter Park Bands, this organization attracts some of the most outstanding individuals in the school. Over the years, some of the leaders among our students, including valedictorians, have been part of the Winter Park Bands, and being a part of the Band Program has an extremely positive impact on a student's high school experience. Life-long friendships are developed here, and this band is truly a family!

And the benefits of participation in a high school band program go far beyond the social and musical aspects:

Students of the arts continue to outperform their non-arts peers on the SAT, according to reports by the College Entrance Examination Board. In a recent report the College Board found that students in music performance scored 57 points higher on the critical reading, 43 points higher on the math and 58 points higher on writing than students with no arts participation.

- *The College Board, Profile of College-Bound Seniors National Report.*

The very best engineers and technical designers in the Silicon Valley industry are, nearly without exception, practicing musicians. - *Grant Venerable, "The Paradox of the Silicon Savior"*

Physician and biologist Lewis Thomas studied the undergraduate majors of medical school applicants. He found that 66% of music majors who applied to medical school were admitted, the highest percentage of any group. 44% of biochemistry majors were admitted. - *As reported in "The Case for Music in the Schools," Phi Delta Kappan*

At perhaps no other time have music and arts education been more important. Apart from their obvious benefits, music and the other arts produce critical thinkers, people who are decision makers. In the information age, our company needs people with these critical thinking skills.

- *Susan Driggers, Bell South Corporation*

## Can I be in sports and Band?

**Absolutely!** Most of the coaches at Winter Park High School are very accommodating of the Band schedule, especially if they know in advance of potential conflicts, and we have several different sports represented throughout the Program. In addition, it is the policy of the Winter Park Bands to be as flexible as possible with students juggling an extra-curricular activity and the Band schedule. **We strongly believe that students learn incredible life skills by being in both activities, and experience has shown that Band athletes tend to be some of the strongest musicians.** There are rarely events that occur outside of the school day that would conflict with an athletic event, and **exceptions are made for fall sport participants when it comes to the marching band requirement.**

## Band seems to take up a lot of time. Will I have time to study?

**Nearly all students in Band are in the top of their class taking Honors, AP, and IB classes.** Band students learn to manage their time. The marching band generally only rehearses 2 days each week immediately after school during the first 12 weeks of school. **You can get your homework done if you manage your time appropriately!**

Following the first 12 weeks of the school year, the obligations outside of the school day decrease dramatically. There is the occasional evening rehearsal, especially when we have a guest clinician or conductor working with the Band, but these are kept to a minimum, and are scheduled well in advance.

It is important to understand that most students adjust to this schedule, and they enjoy the daily *break* from the traditional academic coursework. It doesn't mean that there isn't work to be done (practicing, sectionals, etc.), but it is a "different feel" from the rest of the school day. It is also important to realize that, just about any activity in high school requires some time commitment, and this time management discipline pays off great dividends for the students as they prepare for life outside of high school!

## **How Expensive is it to be in the WPHS Band Program?**

Every effort is made to keep participation in the Band Program affordable. The typical student pays between \$300 and \$400 **spread over the school year** (Guard fees are higher). The incoming freshman students have slightly larger fees because of some first-time purchases, however, this decreases for the last three years. **And, again, these payments are spread across most of the school year – they are not all due up front!**

**The WPHS Band Boosters hold several fundraisers that allow students to earn credit toward their Band fees.** With active participation in these fundraisers, it is possible to cut the Band fees by 50% or more. **In fact, there are many students who have 100% of Band fees covered through their fundraising participation!** These credits "roll over" from one year to the next until they graduate. **Most importantly, we never want a student to be kept from participating in the Band Program due to a financial limitation, and we can work to accommodate just about any situation.**

## **What Band classes are offered at Winter Park High School?**

There are 7 Band classes offered at Winter Park High School. Some are exclusively for freshman Band students, and others allow all grades to enroll.

There is the **Concert Band** (ninth grade only), **Symphonic Band** (grades 10 – 12), **Wind Ensemble** (grades 9 – 12 by audition), **Jazz Ensemble I** (grades 10 – 12 by audition), **Jazz Ensemble II** (grades 10 – 12), and **Freshman Jazz Band** (ninth grade only). In addition, for those students who also wish to be part of the Color Guard and Winter Guard, there is a **Guard** class offered as well.

Freshman who are enrolled in the Concert Band and/or Wind Ensemble, are shuttled each day from the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center to the Main Campus for these rehearsals. Similarly, those enrolled in Guard are also shuttled over to the Main Campus for that class.

There is no audition for Freshman Jazz Band, however, students do need to be in Concert Band or Wind Ensemble to enroll. **Students enrolled in the Freshman Jazz Band can be exempted from taking the Study Skills class required of all non-IB students.**

**Listed below are the 2017/2018 Band class offerings with locations, period, and general information:**

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b>
<b>Concert Band</b>	Main Campus	7	Open to Freshman. There is no audition.

<b>Symphonic Band</b>	Main Campus	2	Open to Band students in grades 10, 11 & 12.
<b>Wind Ensemble</b>	Main Campus	6	Open by audition to Band students in grades 9, 10, 11, & 12. Freshman must also be enrolled in Concert Band unless they are in the Freshman Jazz Band.
<b>Jazz Ensemble I</b>	Main Campus	4	Open to Band students in grades 10, 11, & 12 who have passed an audition. Students must also be enrolled in either Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble.
<b>Jazz Ensemble II</b>	Main Campus	3	Open to Band students in grades 10, 11, & 12. Students must also be enrolled in either Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble.
<b>Freshman Jazz Band</b>	Main Campus	5	Open to only Freshman, and there is no audition. Students must also be enrolled in either Concert Band and/or Wind Ensemble.
<b>Guard</b>	Main Campus	6	Open to students in grades 9, 10, 11, & 12. Guard is a full year class with a mandatory Winter Guard component in the second semester.

## How Do I Audition for High School Band?

There is not a formal audition to be a member of the Winter Park Band Program unless you are seeking a position in the Wind Ensemble or Jazz Ensemble I. **There are no auditions for Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Jazz Ensemble II, or Freshman Jazz Band.** Students do need to have successfully completed participation in a middle school band program.

## Can Freshman Audition for Wind Ensemble?

**Yes!** The auditions for Wind Ensemble take place in the spring for the following school year, and information will become available prior to spring break. There are usually some freshman students in the Wind Ensemble; however, those who successfully audition into the Wind Ensemble do need to be enrolled in *both* the Wind Ensemble and Concert Band (both take place at the WPHS Main Campus during 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> periods, respectively). The only exception to this is those students who enroll in the Freshman Jazz Band. **And do not worry, the IB and AP schedules will allow for students to do both.**

## What is Marching Band?

The “Sound of the Wildcats” Marching Band is made up of all Winter Park Band students in grades 9 through 12. They perform at varsity football games, two local marching band invitationals, Marching Band Music Performance Assessment (MPA), three local parades, and, based on invitation, Epcot Center. There are a few circumstances where the OCPS marching band requirement may be waived. If you have questions about this, please contact Mr. Blackmer directly!

## What is My Time Commitment for Marching Band?

Marching Band can seem overwhelming at first, but the schedule is **designed to allow students to maintain an academic focus**, while still producing one of the finest marching bands in the state of Florida. Most of the Winter Park Band students are enrolled in the IB or AP programs, as well as other activities outside of the school day.

The marching season begins with a required 2-week marching band camp prior to the start of the school year. After that, the weekly rehearsal schedule are Tuesdays, 3 PM – 5 PM, and Wednesdays, 2 PM – 5 PM.

## What is Color Guard and Winter Guard?

Color Guard is a class within the Band Program that uses props, flags, rifles, sabers, and movement, to express dynamic passages in music. Equipment choreography is layered over dance technique to create a new form of theatrical expression. Color Guard is separated into two areas: “Color Guard” takes place during the summer and fall, and performers

are a section within the Marching Band, adding visual interest and helping to portray show themes and theatrics. "Winter Guard" rehearses during the winter and early spring, and they perform to prerecorded music in an indoor setting.

Along with the Marching Band rehearsal and performance schedule, the Color Guard also meets as a class for credit during the school day, and members are required to participate for the entire school year (not just the fall marching season). Wind players and percussionists can be in both Band and Guard.

## **How Important are Private Lessons?**

Private lessons are essential for taking a student to that "next level" of learning their instrument. Most of the finest high school musicians, especially those in Wind Ensemble and the All-State/All-County programs, study privately on their instrument. If a student really wants to excel on their instrument and perform at their fullest potential, weekly private lessons are important! We can provide names and contact information for great teachers if needed.

## **When is Band Registration?**

Current 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will "sign-up" for Band through their guidance counselor sometime in mid-Winter. **The official Band Registration takes place on Tuesday, May 1, 2018, in the High School Main Campus Band Room.** During this drop-in registration night, various information and health forms will be turned in, along with the initial Band Fair Share payment. In order for us to make plans for the following school year, we must know in advance who is going to be in Band. Our marching shows are designed far in advance and are charted for only the students who can be counted on to be in Band. An exact number in each section is necessary to design the show, therefore, we must require a commitment from each individual student who will participate.

## **Who Should I Contact if I have Additional Questions?**

For students or parents with additional questions, please contact one of the following people:

- **Christopher Blackmer**, *Director of Bands* / Christopher.Blackmer@ocps.net (general questions)
- **Michael Clemente**, *Associate Director of Bands* / Michael.Clemente@ocps.net (general questions)
- **Maureen Dufresne**, *Band Booster President*, mdufresne5@embarqmail.com (questions related to financial, fundraising, and volunteering)

# **FUTURE EVENTS for INCOMING FRESHMAN BAND STUDENTS & PARENTS**

**INFORMATIONAL MEETING**  
**Thursday, January 18, 2018**

**WPHS Main Campus Band Room**  
**7 PM**

An informal opportunity for new parents and students to meet the Band directors, current Band students, and our Band Booster parents, and to ask questions about the WPHS Bands. **All current 8<sup>th</sup> grade Band students and their parents are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting even if participation in the Winter Park Band is uncertain!**

**INCOMING FRESHMAN  
ICE-BREAKERS &  
NEW PARENT MEETING**

**Wednesday, April 25, 2018**

**WPHS Main Campus Band Room/Auditorium  
6 PM – 8 PM**

All incoming freshman Band students (and their parents) are asked to attend. Students will meet current WPHS Band leadership, and parents will meet with the directors to go over the specifics of Band Registration and the “nuts and bolts” of being a WPHS Band parent.

**BAND REGISTRATION NIGHT**

**Tuesday, May 1, 2018**

**WPHS Main Campus Band Room  
6 PM – 9 PM**

Registration night for all new and returning Band students.

**MARCHING BAND MINI-CAMP 1**

**Saturday, May 19, 2018**

**WPHS Main Campus Band Room  
12 PM – 6 PM**

For all new Band students and Leadership.

**MARCHING BAND MINI-CAMP 2**

**Sunday, May 20, 2018**

**WPHS Main Campus Band Room  
2 PM – 8 PM**

For all new and returning Band students.

**MARCHING BAND CAMP WEEK 1**

**Monday, July 30 – Friday, August 3, 2018**

**WPHS Main Campus Band Room  
9 AM – 5 PM**

For all new and returning Band students.

**MARCHING BAND CAMP WEEK 2**

**Monday, August 6 – Thursday, August 9, 2018**

**WPHS Main Campus Band Room  
9 AM – 5 PM**

For all new and returning Band students.