

OE Band Update 9-12-21

1 message

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To: jennbillam@gmail.com

Sun, Sep 12, 2021 at 9:55 PM



Message sent from Olathe Public Schools

Parents and Students:

For the first time in a long time we are entering a very busy time for the Olathe East band program. Included in this email is a lot of information. Please take the time to read through any section that applies to you or your child. Thanks to all the parents and students who have filled up the slots for concessions and spent their afternoon working on the props for the show today!

Concert Band 3rd hour

Last week we did our first playing test of the year. We were a little more thorough with our follow-up conversations with students since this was the first time that we heard many of them play by themselves so it took two days to get through everyone. In the future, when we are more familiar with each student's playing level we should be able to progress through it much quicker. Both Mrs. Creek and myself were truly impressed with the level of playing from many of the students! There are some very talented students in this class and we are excited to watch them grow as musicians this year!

Jazz Band 4th hour

Students continue to improve on improvisation and confidence. We will be moving into chord changes soon which will add a significant layer of demand to the process.

7th Hour Percussion Class

This class has also really impressed me with their playing in their two playing tests. We will be moving towards learning four mallet technique in October. In preparation for this students will need to purchase some mallets. Most high schools require percussionists to purchase a lot of sticks and mallets at the very beginning of their freshman year. My approach is to spread the expense out across the first couple years and have them purchase them as they need them. They will each need four matching mallets (two pairs). The mallets I would like them to get are Vic Firth Robert Van Sice M114. The quickest place to order those would be through this website: <https://www.steveweissmusic.com/product/vic-firth-m114-marimba-mallets/vic-firth-drum-sticks>

If you are in a financial position where you can't afford to purchase two sets of those mallets please let me know and we will come up with an alternate plan.

Marching Band/Drumline class

Here are the details about the upcoming Parent Preview/Stadium Rehearsal. The show is really coming together! I am excited about the potential this show has if we can get it to a high level of execution.

- Saturday, September 18th we will have our first real marching band performance in two years! The kids have worked so hard and I am so excited to share their hard work with you. This is open to anyone that wants to attend (parents, grandparents, friends, etc.).
- Report time will be noon and students should eat before they come. Everyone should bring a water bottle as we continue to have above average temperatures for this time of year. We will bus to the stadium and arrive at 1:00. From 1:00 to 3:15 we will rehearse the show. After the performance we will load up and head back to East.
- At 3:30 I will explain what the impact moments of the show are and how every member of the audience can help us score better at contests! After that we will do a full run of the show. The entire rehearsal is open to parents if you would like to see how we put all the pieces of the show together.
- We will wear our black show shirt and our marching shoes with any dark shorts they already own for this rehearsal. Students who ordered marching shoes will receive them next week but they need to pay for them before they can pick them up. Marching shoes are \$35 and gloves are \$5 and checks should be made out to Olathe East. If you are not sure if you have paid please email Mrs. Creek at jcreekoe@olatheschools.org. Students need crew length black socks that they purchase themselves for their uniform. They must be tall enough that they don't show skin when wearing their uniform pants. You do not need to wear them for this rehearsal since we will be in shorts, but we will need them for the performances next week.
- A reminder that this will be considered a performance so an unexcused absence will be a loss of 21% of their grade for the quarter. Students who have made arrangements in advance to miss the performance will need to see Mr. Smikahl about how to make-up those points for their grade.
- For those of you that are not familiar with marching band competitions, we are timed on our entry and exit of the field. If we go over time some contests will give a time penalty and deduct points from our score. These contests are very competitive and often come down to a tenth of a point between places, so it is important that we don't receive a deduction. With this in mind, if you want to help move front blinds and front ensemble equipment onto the field we plan to take some of this rehearsal to practice a timed field entry so that we are prepared for our contest at Blue Springs South. Please contact Chris Prather cprather27@hotmail.com if you haven't already signed up for the Orange and Blue Crew but you want to help with equipment at performances. We have 19 props and 18 front blinds to setup in 3 minutes so we could use a big crew this year. You don't have to drive the trailer or ride a bus, you just need to be available at the performances early and be willing to watch from the front sideline instead of up in the stands.
- We still have some students who have not turned in their forms. They will not be allowed to perform at any performances and will lose those performance points if they haven't turned in their forms.
- As we enter the performance stage of the year please refrain from posting videos of the show to social media or YouTube. We will post a video on the members only side of the band website at the end of the season. Posting videos is a violation of copyright and you can actually get sued. To post online you need to obtain Synchronization Rights and those can be quite expensive.
- If you take pictures at events (especially competitions) we have historically posted them on the private Facebook page. That is still a good option, but this year I have created a google drive folder. It would be great if everyone shares their pictures to that folder so that everything is all in one place and parents have access to pictures of their kids taken by other parents! I am always looking for good pictures of the entire group as well so please try to take some of those as well! A reminder when taking pictures out of the folder make sure you download a copy and leave the original in the shared folder for other people to access it. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15S9wZWqQQJQEBwWro-CzfKa2P67j1Un?usp=sharing>
- We are in need of parents to shoot video of events. The videos of the marching band performances are particularly important. I have a camera the school has purchased that I could check out or you could use your own. We use these videos to make rehearsal plans so the videos are very important to our continued development. The parents that held down this position the last couple years had students that graduated. It is best if we have a group of 2-3 people so that we have someone for every event. Please email Mr. Smikahl if you can help out!

I will send out a separate email next weekend that will cover our first game and contest next week. A quick reminder that when a student needs to miss a marching band rehearsal I ask that they email me. It is great if they also let their section leader know, but it is more important that I am aware. It is really helpful as we try to keep track of absences but it is also helpful as I plan rehearsals. We have had some students that are consistently late to rehearsals or missing morning rehearsals but attending other classes. I want to be helpful if students have issues they are dealing with, but the key to us being able to help with the situation is communication. A reminder that a large portion of the grade for marching band is daily participation points. We are entering the most important stretch of rehearsals for the season and need great attendance or we will not reach our potential. We are almost ready to move from the learning drill phase to the cleaning phase and it is impossible to clean the show with a lot of absent students.

Thanks to the parents who have brought in water and snacks. We still have some need for chaperones and food and beverage help. Please see the sign-ups below:

[Chaperone Signup](#)

[Help with Food and Beverage Signup](#)

Trip

The roster at this point should be finalized. I plan to send around a roster in class later this week to make sure everyone who thinks they are going on the trip are actually signed up. We still have a significant amount of parents who have not gone back in and switched their information over to the new payment system for Bob Rogers. Double check and make sure that the emails from Bob Rogers are not going into your spam or junk email folder. Please make sure you do that and you are current on your trip payments! My goal is to have chaperones selected by next Sunday. I will email parents individually that are selected. I appreciate so many parents being willing to help!

Thanks,
Mr. Smikahl