



***St. Charles West  
Warriors***

## *2020 Important Due Dates*

- Forms due by July 24th
- General Band Student Fee Due by August 24th
- Physical Completed by August 24th
- Band Camp July 20-24

## *Reminders for Summer*

- Check Google Calendar for all scheduled rehearsal. Members are expected to attend summer rehearsals.
- Notify Mr. Meyer via email of any absences due to unavoidable conflicts.
- Check email and Google Classroom Regularly

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## Welcome

The St. Charles West Warrior Band welcomes you. The Warriors have a proud tradition of excellence, maintaining high standards and achieving outstanding results. With continued participation, support, dedication, and hard work we can be certain that the future holds even greater success.

Many challenges face the freshman high school student. New school; new teachers; back to the bottom of the seniority ladder; more serious academic expectations. While participating in band is a demanding activity that requires self-discipline and scheduling, the rewards are tremendous. Being in the band gives you instant friends who believe in you, support you, encourage you, and want to see you succeed. Upperclassmen pride themselves on being big sisters and brothers to new students, easing the transition into high school. Parents are chaperones, mentors, advisers, cheerleaders, drivers, and just about anything else you can imagine. And, of course, there's the music.

Band parents face big challenges, too. Even if you were actively involved in middle school band activities, the level of commitment and involvement at the high school level will initially be overwhelming. Unfortunately, there's no "gradual" about high school band. You're about to get dropped in the deep end. One area that causes the most stress among band parents is simply a lack of knowledge about "What is going on?" Sometimes information is given but simply doesn't find its way home. Sometimes those who have been around the program awhile take certain things for granted while new parents are left in the dark.

This book is the product of former "new band parents" who spent a good bit of time in our freshman year in various stages of confusion. In the many hours we spent watching practices, picking up our kids, and going to competitions, we have all felt confused, lost, and totally bewildered at one time or another. We hope this guide will help you make the most of your freshman year and ease you through the transition from freshman to veteran band parent. We want you to know what to expect and understand the breadth of opportunities available to you to help make your child's band experience unforgettable. It is meant to be both information and inspiration.

Despite the care given to preparing it, no book can take the place of experience. When it comes to being a band parent, "there is no substitute for being there". Get involved; come to evening rehearsals; find a veteran band parent and ask questions; tag along; attend meetings; get on the mailing list. We welcome your presence, your participation, and your passion. We welcome you to the St. Charles West Warrior Band.

## Suggestions for New Band Parents

Read this handbook. Oh, good! You're already doing that. If you can't find the answer here, ask. And then remind us to include that information in future handbooks. Also read your student's band handbook. It will have additional information specific to the band program that the director wants all students (and you) to know.

Private lessons are highly recommended. Excellence in group performance begins with excellence in individual performance. Each student being at their individual peak playing skill is crucial to achieving a high quality ensemble. Moreover, the more skilled a player is the more enjoyable the playing experience will be. While directors are skilled instructors on the various instruments in the band, there is simply no substitute for private instruction. Thirty minutes each week with a private instructor can have more impact on an individual player's personal ability than an entire week of band rehearsals. And the benefits go beyond band – a study of 113 Georgia students found that eighth grade students who participated in private music lessons for at least two years scored more than 5% higher on the math portion of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) than other school musicians who did not take private lessons. The Band Director will be happy to assist you in finding a qualified instructor.

Continue encouraging your child to practice. Mastering the basics is just the beginning. Just because a signed practice record isn't required to be turned in doesn't mean there is no longer an expectation that each band member is following an individual practice schedule. The Director wants to spend class and rehearsal time perfecting dynamics and expression, not learning the notes. Practice is band homework and really the only way to improve as an individual musician. Recommend to your band member that they bring their instrument home every day, schedule practice time (30 to 60 minutes every day), and practice with a purpose. Being consistent and achieving the desired results are more important than simply marking time. Follow the five W's of practice. Who? YOU When? At the same time each day. Where? In an area that is quiet, well lit, and free from distractions using a straight back chair and music stand. Why? It's the only way you'll get better. What? Every aspect of performance should be practiced each day through a routine that includes exercises for tone, rhythm, range, scales, sight-reading, articulation, and dynamics. Practice begets confidence; confidence begets success; success begets fun.

If your student is still playing the beginner instrument they started on in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, it may be time to consider an upgraded instrument. Music educators suggest that students might be ready for a new instrument any time between seventh and tenth grade. Beginner instruments are designed, based on their size and shape, to allow young students to produce a sound and create a recognizable tune within the first two to three months of playing. The enhancements in a professional model are going to be in the tone quality resulting from the design and manufacturing that has gone into the instrument. The benefits will include a better sound and improved playability. A simple way to upgrade a wind instrument is often with a new mouthpiece.

Go to as many competitions and home games as you can. Your child will appreciate that you are interested in sharing this experience with them (whether they admit it or not). But don't "hover". They want to know that you care but they still need their space. One day they'll appreciate your support and be glad you came. It might be the day they run out of money and realize their "traveling bank" is with them. It might be the day they have a disappointing performance and need your unconditional love to buoy them. Or it may be the day they realize they wouldn't be having the time of their life without you. Whichever it is, you'll want to be there.

Build a network with other parents. They can keep you up-to-date on band happenings even when your student doesn't. Find out who lives near you. It will make your life much easier if you can make ride sharing arrangements for practices and carpooling for competitions. Guess where the best place is to meet other band parents ... at band meetings and fundraisers!

Get to know all the band members. These are the kids your child is "hanging" with. You want to know who they are. This is a great group of student musicians – some of the top kids in the school athletically, academically, and musically. For the most part, they're driven to succeed. And usually they're a lot of fun to be around. Believe it or not, they'll value your interest. And when they get to know you they'll talk about you. It may be the first time your child witnesses you through the unbiased eyes of a peer who sees you for the wonderful person you really are.

Attend Booster Club meetings! There's a lot happening, especially during marching season. Meetings are designed to keep you apprised about what is happening and gives you the opportunity to ask questions. You'll discover things that your student has never mentioned, like upcoming fundraisers. The Band Director normally gives a status report at each meeting and speaks to upcoming events and activities. Fresh ideas and perspectives are welcome – anything that can help us to improve our ability to support the band.

Get involved! This is likely the single most important group your child will be involved in for their high school career. It is also the primary opportunity you will have to actively participate in what your child is doing in school. You'll get to see first-hand the talent, dedication, and hard work of all the band members. Your time is the most valuable thing you can give. There are many ways to be involved – find what works for you and see how big an impact you can make. No band parent has ever looked back and said, "I wish I had spent less time making my child's band experience unforgettable."

Do not wait for someone to ask you to help. Many times a small nucleus of members does the majority of the work. There may be several reasons for this: they fear rejection from other parents, don't know who is willing to help, or are too busy "getting things done" to recruit new members. New band parents are like new band students because they are not "new" by the end of the season. First year marchers are expected to learn their music and march their drill just like the seniors. First year band parents should do the same. Don't wait a year or two to get involved. The time will go by much too quickly.

Know the band's rehearsal and performance schedule. The attendance policy is firm. Absences affect the entire ensemble. Work does not constitute an excused absence nor does involvement in athletic or extra-curricular activities. Conflicts are expected to be resolved in favor of the band member's obligation to the band. Anything else requires approval from the Band Director. In case of emergency or illness the Band Director needs to be informed. Students must attend school the day of or day prior to a competition (if on the weekend) or they will be considered ineligible for that performance. Ultimately, as the parent you are responsible for ensuring your band member's attendance.

You'll find the Band Director and staff are fanatical about being on time (well, early actually) for all rehearsals and performances. Don't be surprised if your band member gets that way (about band) – they don't like doing laps or pushups. You'll also find that the director and staff don't have nearly the same concern for when rehearsal ends. Band rehearsal, marching band in particular, frequently runs late and your student often won't be ready to leave for at least 15 minutes after dismissal. Hey, perfection takes time. When picking up your band member bring a good book and a bottle of water. The book is for you. The water is your response to the first words you'll hear when they get in the car: "I'm thirsty!"

## Why Stay In Band?

If you're reading this then you and your student have already taken, or are at least still considering, the option of continuing in band at the high school level. That's encouraging.

Each year, some families choose to discontinue participation in band. A 1995 study of 800 families and 1,100 band directors examined the reasons why. The most reported reasons students gave for dropping out of the instrumental program, listed in order of frequency reported, include (a) it's too time consuming, (b) conflicts with participation in sports, (c) conflicts with other school activities, and (d) fear of failure. Directors reported five reasons why they believe students drop out of their programs: (a) lack of parental support, (b) class schedule conflicts, (c) conflicts with participation in sports, (d) conflicts with after school jobs, and (e) conflicts with other school activities.

The majority of these reasons can often be successfully overcome by working closely with the school counselors and band staff. But what about lack of parental support? Perhaps, if we do not explicitly encourage our students to stay in band, we are implicitly giving them permission to drop out. So let's consider for a few moments in what ways the question "Why stay in band?" has lifelong implications.

The medical community believes that brain development continues for many years after birth. Recent studies have clearly indicated that musical training physically develops the part of the left side of the brain known to be involved with processing language, and can actually wire the brain's circuits in specific ways.

There is a causal link between music and spatial intelligence (the ability to perceive the world accurately and to form mental pictures of things). This kind of intelligence, by which one can visualize various elements that should go together, is critical to the sort of thinking necessary for everything from solving advanced mathematics problems to being able to pack a book-bag with everything that will be needed for the day.

Students of the arts learn to think creatively and to solve problems by imagining various solutions, rejecting outdated rules and assumptions. Questions about the arts do not have only one right answer.

Middle school and high school students who participated in instrumental music scored significantly higher than their non-band peers in standardized tests. In 2001, SAT takers with coursework/experience in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and 41 points higher on the math portion than students without. University studies conducted in Georgia and Texas found significant correlations between the number of years of instrumental music instruction and academic achievement in math, science and language arts. In other words, the more years of music instruction a student has the better their grades and performance on standardized tests.

Students of music learn craftsmanship as they study how details are put together painstakingly and what constitutes good, as opposed to mediocre, work. These standards, when applied to a student's own work, demand a new level of excellence and require students to stretch their inner resources.

In music, a mistake is a mistake; the instrument is in tune or not, the notes are well played or not, the entrance is made or not. It is only by much hard work that a successful performance is possible. Through music study, students learn the value of sustained effort to achieve excellence and the concrete rewards of hard work.

Music study enhances teamwork skills and discipline. In order for an ensemble to sound good, all players must work together harmoniously towards a single goal, the performance, and must commit to learning music, attending rehearsals, and practicing. In a 2000 survey, 73 percent of respondents agree that teens that play an instrument are less likely to have discipline problems. In a 1999 Columbia University study, students in the arts are found to be more cooperative with teachers and peers, more self-confident, and better able to express their ideas. These benefits exist across socioeconomic levels.

Music provides children with a means of self-expression. Now that there is relative security in the basics of existence, the challenge is to make life meaningful and to reach for a higher stage of development. Everyone needs to be in touch at some time in his life with his core, with what he is and what he feels. Self-esteem is a by-product of this self-expression.

Music study develops skills that are necessary in the workplace. It focuses on "doing," as opposed to observing, and teaches students how to perform, literally, anywhere in the world. Employers are looking for multi-dimensional workers with the sort of flexible and supple intellects that music education helps to create. In the music classroom, students learn to better communicate and cooperate with one another.

Music performance teaches young people to conquer fear and to take risks. A little anxiety is a good thing, and something that will occur often in life. Dealing with it early and often makes it less of a problem later. Risk-taking is essential if a child is to fully develop his or her potential.

Students who are rhythmically skilled tend to better plan, sequence, and coordinate actions in their daily lives. Music teaches and reinforces rhythmic skills.

College-age musicians are emotionally healthier than their non-musician counterparts. A study conducted at the University of Texas looked at 362 students who were in their first semester of college. They were given three tests, measuring performance anxiety, emotional concerns and alcohol related problems. In addition to having fewer battles with the bottle, researchers also noted that the college-aged music students seemed to have surer footing when facing tests.

College admissions officers continue to cite participation in music as an important factor in making admissions decisions. They claim that music participation demonstrates time management, creativity, expression, and open-mindedness. Students with band and orchestra experience attend college at a rate twice the national average.

Currently less than 10% of the student population at St. Charles West is enrolled in band. We'd love to see the program flourish. But with a continuing district-wide decline in student population, it will take a higher percentage of the student body participating to realize that goal. Every student is important to the program. If you're unsure, or believe you may have a conflict, please give the Band Director every opportunity to help you resolve it in favor of your child's continued involvement in band. It's easier to decide to do something else after experiencing high school band for one year than to come back after being out for a year or two. Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of something unforgettable.

## Directors and Recent Awards

St. Charles West High School graduated its first senior class in 1976. The current Director of Bands is Ben Meyer. He will be entering his 13th year of teaching, all at St. Charles West.

### Band Directors

- Bob Spiegelman (1983/4 – 1992/3)
- Jeffrey Fuchs (1993/4 – 1994/5)
- Terry Martinez (1995/6 – 2006/7)
- Ben Meyer (2007/8 - )

### 2018 Marching Band Awards

- Murphysboro Apple Time Festival
  - 1st Place Class AA
  - Outstanding Percussion
- Carrollton Band Day
  - 4th Place Class 4A
  - Outstanding Percussion
  - Outstanding Color Guard
- Bi-State Marching Festival
  - 1st Place Class 3
  - Outstanding Visual
  - Outstanding Color Guard
  - Outstanding Percussion
  - Outstanding Drum Major
- Ste. Genevieve Marching Festival
  - 2nd Place Class 3
  - Outstanding Color Guard
  - Outstanding Visual
  - Outstanding Percussion

### **Helping Mr. Meyer create a dynamic marching experience is a high quality staff of caption directors and assistants**

Barbara Stanley-Bowlin - Band Administrative Assistant and retired teacher of 32 years at SCW

Curtis Vahle - Assistant Director

Jamie Eaves - Color Guard Instructor

TBA - Battery Instructor and Percussion Director

Hongyu Xie - Front Ensemble (Pit) Instructor and SCW Alumni

Casey Newton - Woodwind Technician and SCW Alumni

Trevor McGraw - Staff Member and SCW Alumni

## Marching Band

The Marching Warriors is an extracurricular activity where students engage in music and visual performing arts in a competitive environment. The "season" begins prior to the start of the school year with summer rehearsals and band camp. When school begins, the marching band rehearses on Tuesday and Thursday evenings through the end of October. The marching band performs on Friday nights at Varsity home football games and competes in marching festivals on Saturdays in September and October. A complete schedule of rehearsals and performances can be found on the SCW Band Google Calendar. This can be located at [www.scwestband.org](http://www.scwestband.org).

Marching band is an athletic activity. It requires strength, coordination, endurance, and aerobic ability. Participants need to be well-conditioned and prepared for the rigors of practices and performances. These unique athletes are often in formations for long periods of time, wearing heavy clothing in warm weather conditions, and carrying instruments that require dexterity and strength. The National Athletic Trainers Association has compiled a list of tips "to ensure band members march on the field fit to perform at their best." You can help by familiarizing yourself with these tips and regularly reminding your band member of his/her personal responsibility to their own health and fitness.

1. **Prepare for Activity:** Students participating in marching bands should receive a general health exam prior to activity to make sure they are fit to perform. Be sure to discuss any pre-existing conditions with the physician.
2. **Get Ready to March:** Band directors, athletic trainers and parents should ensure that students are physically and mentally conditioned for marching band activities. Encourage students to start with 20 minute walks outside and gradually increase distance and time approximately four weeks before the marching band season starts. Limber up with appropriate stretches and warm ups and cool downs after practice. Increase rigorous routines gradually so students can tone their muscles and increase strength. This will help to reduce aches and pains as well as fatigue from long practices and challenging routines.
3. **Acclimatize to the Heat:** Acclimatize students to outdoor warm weather conditions. Start routines slowly and build endurance. By working out and walking in the heat or non-air conditioned environments, students can condition their bodies to adapt and better perform in the heat.
4. **What to Wear:** Wear light or white colored shorts and t-shirts to avoid overheating during practice. This is especially important for anyone carrying heavy instruments for long periods of time. Save the formal attire heavy hats, dark clothing and shoes for dress rehearsals and get comfortable in them before game day. Be aware that the weight of the material and dark colors keep heat "in."
5. **Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate:** Establish a hydration plan that allows band members to drink water or sports drinks such as Gatorade throughout practice sessions (about 7-10 ounces every 10-20 minutes). It is important to hydrate before AND after routines. Without proper hydration, they are at risk of developing exertional heat related illnesses. Make sure that band members have sports drinks and water should always be available. Don't assume they can share with sports teams.
6. **Seek Shade:** Be smart when it comes to the sun. Stand in the shade during rest breaks or half time to cool down before and after practices and performances.
7. **Fuel for Success:** Incorporate healthy foods in the daily diet including grains, fruits and vegetables, dairy and meat/poultry/fish to give them the fuel they need to exercise. A balanced and moderate approach is always the best bet.
8. **Make Use of Musical Instruments:** Students should hold and manage sousaphones, drums, flutes and other instruments correctly to avoid ergonomic injuries.
9. **Stay Fit in Formation:** Since bands are often in formation and standing still for long periods of time especially when on parade routes or during practice students should move fingers, knees and toes slightly to keep circulation flowing and joints loose and flexible.

10. Inspect Fields and Routes: Remove debris, water, rocks and other hazards from the field or parade route. These small obstacles can lead to twisted ankles, bruised knees, scraped elbows or other more serious injuries.

***Students participating in Marching Band are required to have a Physical completed by a medical professional. You must use the Missouri State High School Activities Association Physical Packet included with your other forms.***

***Please complete and return physicals to the band office by August 24, 2020***

***Physicals do not have to be conducted by your family physician. Walk-In clinics, Urgent Cares and Chiropractors can complete these (and sometimes cheaper than a co-pay)***

## **Student Conduct Expectations**

### **Attitude**

Pride! Pride in yourself, in your fellow band members and in the accomplishments of the Marching Warriors. Band members must exert a feeling of pride and keep a positive attitude in rehearsal, performance and in their daily routine. Marching Warrior Members are ALWAYS representing our band, our school and our community. Students who cannot display a positive attitude and sense of pride will be asked to change their attitude or be removed from the Marching Warriors

### **General Conduct**

Members of the Marching Warriors are not only subject to regulations presented in this handbook, but also to the Student Code of Conduct that governs students and athletes at St. Charles West High School.

Students are expected to come prepared to each rehearsal and performance with all the appropriate equipment, including but not limited to their instrument and needed accessories, music, uniform if applicable and a pencil

All participants are expected to follow the instruction of any teacher, administrator, chaperon or staff member without question unless said instruction violates civil and moral law. If you should be displeased with said instruction please address your concerns with the band director.

Students who choose to violate the substance abuse policies of the Student Code of Conduct may be subject to immediate dismissal from the Marching Warriors. In addition, conduct that could lead to immediate dismissal will include but not be limited to assault, bullying/hazing, disrespect and threatening remarks, fighting, gang activity, misconduct of a sexual nature, or any misconduct that leads to Out of School Suspension of the first offense. A conference with the student, parents, school administrator and the band director will be held to determine whether or not the offense meets the criteria for immediate dismissal.

The Marching Warriors is an extracurricular activity. The Director reserves the right to deny any student the ability to participate in the activity based on conduct prior to or while participating as a member of the Marching Warriors.

## Band Camp

Learning the drill begins at a week-long camp held at the Camp Woodland Hills facility in St. Clair, MO, ([www.campwoodlandhills.org](http://www.campwoodlandhills.org)) scheduled **EVERY YEAR FOR THE 3rd WEEK OF JULY**. This is an essential part of the band's preseason as they will become proficient in basic marching skills, put the music with the show, and begin to grow together as a team.

Students travel to/from band camp by bus. Band camp is intensive. Some would even say grueling. The day starts at 8:30 AM and lights out is 11 PM. There are three 2-3 hour rehearsals each day. Mix in plenty of sun, heat, and mosquitoes after dark.



But the kids are well cared for. Volunteer parents ensure there is an abundance of good food and drink. Parent chaperones stay overnight in the cabins. Medical professionals are on site around the clock. Parental support is an essential part of a successful band camp.

When they aren't rehearsing there is free time for swimming as well as scheduled activities that help band members get to know one another and just have fun together. But most of the time, the kids are hard at work learning the show. Don't be surprised if they come home and want to do nothing but hydrate and sleep.

Now (May and June) is the time to start getting ready for band camp. The Band Director, staff, and medical professionals associated with the band take the health and welfare of all band members seriously. The St. Charles School District requires students in Marching Band to pass a medical physical examination prior to participation in this activity. Students should take time to get into shape physically, learn proper nutrition, and practice good hydration. This will be essential for a successful and healthy band camp.

## Marching Band Show and Season

A show consists of the music, drill, and choreography of the auxiliary. It is usually based around a theme, composer, music style, or a story. The band performs and evolves a single show during one season. After the basic drill of the show has been learned, new visual elements and improvements will continue to be introduced.

Time management is particularly important during this period. It's easy to fall behind on homework if a rigid schedule isn't maintained. Because of block scheduling students may be tempted to put Monday homework off until Tuesday, Tuesday homework off until Wednesday, etc., since classes meet every other day. That sounds reasonable until you remember that there may be conflicting evening rehearsals. Later in the season there will be Friday night games and Saturday competitions. A good rule of thumb is to do the work as soon as it is assigned.

Here are several things to remind your band member regarding rehearsals:

1. The band rehearses (even if it's called practice). Practice is what you do on your own time at home.
2. Be early to rehearsal. You'll never regret being early. You'll always regret being late.
3. Always have all necessary equipment – instrument, reeds, sticks, music, drill list, spot chips ... (If you're early you won't have to rush and likely forget something.)
4. You can't listen when you're talking. Talking during rehearsal is disrespectful to the director(s) and other band members who are trying to focus on preparing for the next show.
5. "We rehearse like we perform." Are you in step? Are you watching the drum majors? Are you carrying/aiming your instrument properly? Are you marching or just walking? Are you repeating mistakes or fixing them? Pit and Color Guard: Are you smiling? What you do during rehearsal is what you will do during performance.
6. Attitude is the single greatest factor that will determine success or failure of any individual or organization. Ability is what you're capable of; motivation determines what you will do; attitude determines how well you will do it. Go to each rehearsal and performance resolved to make it the best one yet. "Warrior proud, Warrior loud."

## Attendance Policy

The Marching Warrior Rehearsals and Performance are scheduled on the SCW Band Google Calendar

All students will meet with their teams in the commons at 6:00pm on rehearsal nights.

Please be aware that once rehearsal concludes, students will not be prepared to leave campus for at least 15 minutes (after they have returned equipment to the band room, visited their lockers, etc.). Unlike many athletic teams, we have no "second string" players. Everyone is vital to our success. When a member is absent, we cannot effectively "run our plays." Your child's position on the field is determined by adjacent students.

All Parents have been requested to inform the directors, **IN WRITING VIA EMAIL**, of any prior obligations that conflict with the schedule. At the discretion of the directors, students who provide written information concerning conflicts will be excused from rehearsal. Written conflict requests must be submitted **2 weeks in advance of anticipated absence. WORK IS NEVER A VALID EXCUSE TO MISS A BAND EVENT.**

It is imperative that we have every member in attendance for each summer rehearsal. Students will not be excused from summer rehearsals unless there is a family emergency, illness or prior arranged conflict due to a trip or conflicting activity such as a sports camp, church retreat or game. Color Guard and drumline may have additional rehearsals supplemental to the dates already scheduled. The instructors for these groups will schedule additional rehearsals with the students.

**In an effort to maintain consistent rehearsal attendance during the season, please make every attempt to schedule dentist/doctor appointments on our days off. Also, please make every attempt to avoid making appointments during rehearsals and performances.** If a student is well enough to be in school all day, he or she is expected to attend rehearsal. If a student becomes ill during the course of a rehearsal, necessary steps will be taken to ensure the student's safety. Students who have been excused from school due to illness will also be excused from marching band rehearsal.

Academic success is a priority for the Marching Warriors in that all members are required to maintain academic eligibility and manage their time to maintain their studies.. No student will be excused from rehearsal to do homework. **Having an unexcused absence from a rehearsal will result in the student standing at attention on the sideline during the next performance.**

Students are required to attend all scheduled performances (i.e. Football games, competitions, etc) through the completion of activities. Completion includes warm-up, performance and clean-up. Students will not be dismissed early. An unexcused absence from a performance may result in dismissal from the Marching Warriors.

Students involved in multiple school organizations may have conflicts arise with rehearsal and performance. It is expected that those students will make every effort to minimize absence. If there is a conflict on a Saturday, it may be necessary for a parent to drive their student from one activity to the other. This requires coordination between Mr. Meyer, other activity sponsors, parents and the principal. If private transportation is going to be necessary because of a conflict with another school activity, please make every effort to notify Mr. Meyer within a reasonable amount of time so that necessary permissions can be granted. The principal must sign off on any special transportation arrangements. Simply contact Dr. Voelkl at [svoelkl@stcharlessd.org](mailto:svoelkl@stcharlessd.org) requesting to provide transportation to and from school events. Be sure to CC Mr. Meyer on the email. The same applies if it is necessary for a student to be transported home early from an event due to a conflict.

**Students are expected to display proper conduct and behavior at all rehearsals and performances. If a student's behavior becomes detrimental to the goals of the band, that student can be sent home and charge with an unexcused absence.**

## Communication

The Band Director has met communication responsibilities when the the students have been informed. As a courtesy, a weekly blog of events can be found at [www.scwestband.org](http://www.scwestband.org).

Team leaders will establish a buzz list with their team members for important information such as reminders, schedule adjustments and various other band specific communications.

The SC West Band utilizes a Google Calendar for communicating all rehearsals and performances. Parents and students are responsible for going to the website and accessing the Google Calendar. Students are required to link the Google Calendar to their student Google Calendar provided with their student Gmail. I highly encourage parents to do the same. I also encourage all students and parents to download the latest Google Calendar app to their smart devices as well.

Itineraries and performance needs will be posted on the bulletin board in the band hallway. In addition, itineraries and performance information can also be download off the website as they will be included in my weekly blog. Email will be used in limited capacity.

## Band Uniforms

Both on and off the field the band represents the school, their director, and the community of St. Charles. Oh yeah, and you, their parents. To the end that they properly look the part, the Band Director has instructed members to dress in the following uniforms:

At times, students will be asked to dress in a specific manner. For performances, they will be issued uniform to wear. Each student will also receive a Show Shirt and a Practice T-Shirt called a "Property

of" shirt. The Show shirt is a t-shirt with the graphic logo representing the marching band show. The "Property Of" shirt is a t-shirt that says "Property of the Marching Warriors." Each shirt will be used in different situations where the director requires the students to be in a casual uniform. All students should have a pair of black dress shorts. These should be bermuda style (golf shorts). They should not be cargos with exterior pockets nor should they be black denim. Boys should have shorts with a 9-inch in-seam and girls should have shorts with a 7-inch in-seam. Boys should also have a black belt to wear with their shorts.

Marching Uniform: Each student is fitted for a marching band uniform. In addition to the standard issue uniform, the marching band show may call for the use of a theme based uniform. In any case, students are expected to maintain these items by following proper procedures for wearing and storing them. Team leaders will guide them in this process. Students will be responsible for replacing uniform items that are lost or damaged through any means other than normal wear.

### ***Replacement Costs of Marching Uniform Items***

- Marching Band Uniform - \$400.00
- Black Marching Shoes - \$30.00
- Gloves - \$10.00
- Black Socks - \$5.00
- Volunteer T-Shirt - \$10.00
- Show Shirt - \$10.00
- "Property of" T-Shirt - \$10.00
- Additional Items TBD when distributed (example would be uniforms that match the theme of the show).

## Performance Schedule

The marching band performs a half-time show at all home varsity football games. The typical schedule will include five to six game performances. The band also plays in the stands during both halves. They make noise, play the fight song and other musical arrangements, cheer, applaud, groan, yell, whistle, and generally encourage the team. The band is an important component in the spirit and atmosphere at football games.

The Band Director will select approximately five invitations to marching competitions each season. Usually at least one contest will be out of town and require an overnight stay. "Call time" for a competition will be announced by the director several days before the performance along with a tentative agenda. The announcement will be provided to your student via their school mailbox, so it is important that you hold your student accountable for bringing information home. The band travels to/from competitions as a group by bus. The festival coordinators typically release the performance schedule 2-4 weeks prior to the event. This makes it difficult to plan ahead of time so all students should assume that they are unavailable for any other activities the day of a marching competition. The Band Director will work out athletic conflicts with your students coach in the event that a sporting event and a marching competition fall on the same day. In this case, parents are expected to make every effort to transport their student to perform in both. In Marching band, there are no back-ups or understudies.



Prop Pops will load the truck and Uniform Moms help with gloves, gauntlets, and any uniform problems. Make sure your band member eats in the morning. There won't likely be another opportunity to eat until after the preliminary performance and that could be mid-afternoon. Snacks are provided by the SCW Band Boosters. If funds are available, meals will be arranged, but students should plan on having money for meals purchased through concessions at events unless otherwise instructed.

PARENTS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE in the success of the band on competition days. As you'll soon see, marching band shows have evolved into large scale audio and visual productions. Our show will have many props, large instruments and electronic audio equipment. We absolutely **MUST** have parents available to assist in moving this equipment from our truck in the parking lot to the warm up areas and then to and from the field. Having parents that can attend all competitions and consistently be a part of the "pit crew" will be necessary because the director will actually assign specific jobs to parents to carry out at each competition. Training someone once is optimal compared to having to re-train new parents each week.

The Thursday night before the final competition parents are invited for an end of the year celebration. Parents are asked to decorate their student's chair in celebration of their accomplishments and to wish them success. While the students are at the stadium for that evening's rehearsal, parents meet in the band room with balloons, favorite drinks and snacks, and gifts to leave on their student's chair. Some parents make signs or leave cards. After rehearsal, the students return and the entire band family including parents and staff will celebrate together. A meal will be served provided by the SCW Band Boosters.

## Special Trips

The band director will work to find opportunities for the Marching Warriors to travel outside of the St. Louis Metro area for competitions. These weekend marching competition trips typically having every other year. Past destinations include Kentucky, Oklahoma, Kansas and even some years as far as Florida and New Orleans. Traveling on band trips provide students the opportunity to build lasting memories while being exposed to the differences and similarities of the marching band activities in other states. Additional costs may apply for hotels and charter bus transportation.

## Parades

As they are, after all, a marching band, the Warriors may march in several parades during the year. The Marching Warriors will perform every year in the St. Charles West Homecoming Parade and every other year they will perform in the St. Louis Thanksgiving Day Parade.

## Spectator's Guide to Competitions

Competitions are a big deal! Parents and family are encouraged to attend. The support is very important to our students and the reaction from the audience motivates them to give their best performance.

Bands are divided into classes or divisions. Sometimes the divisions are based on school size (student body enrollment) and sometimes they are based on the band size. These divisions are usually expressed as A, AA (or 2A), AAA (3A), AAAA (4A), AAAAA (5A) in increasing size of school/band. Sometimes the divisions are expressed as colors. (Buying a program will help you keep it all clear and give you some place to record the competition results.) Bands within a given division compete with each other during preliminaries and, if there are finals, all finalist bands compete evenly for overall placement. After the final band in the division has performed the caption and participation awards for the division will be announced and accepted by the drum majors. If there are finals, then after the last band of the last division has performed, the bands that will be performing in the finals are announced.

Some judges observe from the press box while others will be on the field with the band during the performance. It is the judge's responsibility to stay out of the way. This frequently makes for entertaining viewing as the judge tries to anticipate where on the field to go when the band starts to move. Judges record their observations on tape recorders during the performance. Later those remarks are shared with the Band Director and he will share them with the band, at his discretion, so that they will better understand what areas of the show need to be improved or changed.

Performances are scored, usually according to one of the four judging systems developed by the Mid-America Marching Band Consortium ([http://www.sunflower.com/~unity/index\\_files/frame.htm](http://www.sunflower.com/~unity/index_files/frame.htm)). A maximum of 100 points can be earned for the performance. As a scoring example, the "6 judge panel with auxiliary and percussion totaled" system is scored using the following point allocation:

Music Performance General Effect	20 + (score x 1.25) = max 25
Music Performance Ensemble	20 + (score x 1.25) = max 25
Percussion Performance	10
Visual Performance General Effect	20
Visual Performance Ensemble	10
Visual Performance Auxiliary	<u>10</u>
	100 points

Get to the competition early. It takes time to find a parking place and get through the gates. It's also fun (yes, fun) to watch other bands in the same class, evaluate their performance, and see how your ratings compare to the judges. At larger events where there may be hundreds of spectators it is easiest to get seats before the class competition starts. The best seats are usually within the 45 yard line markers at least half way up or higher; remember that the formations in the show are designed to be viewed by the judges in the press box.

Your enjoyment of the show will be enhanced by sitting with other St. Charles West parents at the competition. Don't be ashamed to be loud; yell, cheer, and clap at appropriate times. As a matter of etiquette, please do not enter/exit the stands during any band's performance. It is also impolite to talk during any show. And of course, set cell phones and pagers (does anyone still use those?) to vibrate.

Applaud every band after their performance. Students in other bands have worked just as hard as our students and they deserve respect and applause too. Regardless of how you feel about the judge's

decision, remember that every parent and every band member performing feels their band should be number one. Do not mistakenly equate winning with coming in first. The band will receive that honor when it deserves to based on performance. Until then, we know “winning” is the state of every individual having endured the hardships, taken the chance of competing, and done their personal best in the pursuit of excellence. All the students in all the bands are participating in an activity that is teaching teamwork, respect, and pride in themselves and their achievements. There are no losers on the marching field.

Each competition is hosted by a school and is usually held at the school’s football field. The hosting band does not compete with other schools but will frequently give an exhibition performance. Admission generally ranges from \$5 - \$10. The hosting band will also operate a concession stand; sell programs, and sometimes band-related apparel like T-Shirts and hats. A competition is a fundraising activity for the host school. Dollars you spend help support band activities at the host school.

## Band Terms You'll Want to Know

**Battery:** The marching percussion usually consisting of snare drums, tenor drums, quintets, bass drums, and cymbals.

**Band Parent:** The finest, most selfless, hardest working people on Earth. The only reason the band is held together.

**Caption Award:** A competition award given for a particular category of performance such as best music, best visual effect, best auxiliary, best percussion, best drum major, etc.

**Color Guard (Auxiliary):** Originally the armed guards who protected the U.S. Flag (the Colors). Since drum and bugle corps evolved from the military, they also carried colors and had a guard. As drum corps got more elaborate, the color guard began to include teams of rifle spinners, tall flag performers and dance teams. The name is still used for these squads even though the national flag is rarely used in performance. This group is a crucial part of the visual and thematic aspect of the show. The Color Guard has its own instructor.

**Competition (Invitational, Festival):** An event where bands are judged and ranked by division. Specific areas of the performance are scored by several judges. Place awards are presented at the end of the competition.

**Drill:** Formations and movement between formations. It's the marching part of the program. Small changes and additions are made to the drill during the season. The drill learned at band camp will be regularly enhanced until the director believes it to be perfect, i.e., never.

**Drill List:** Coordinate sheet that tells the marcher their position on the field for each set. Each marcher has a customized drill list. You can't borrow someone else's if you lose yours.

**Drumline:** The entire percussion section of the band including both the battery and pit. The Drumline has its own instructor.

**Drum Major:** A student conductor who leads the band on the marching field and directs the band for the show. All band members are expected to follow the drum major's leadership. Position auditions are held in the spring.

**Football:** A game played on a marching field to entertain the audience while the band is getting ready to perform.

**Gauntlets:** Sequined wrist and lower arm coverings; part of the marching uniform.

**Glide Step:** A gliding style of marching where the leg swings forward, (similar to a walking step) the heel contacts first, and the weight is smoothly rolled to the toe.

**Horn Flash:** A visual effect in which all the horns raise their bells to point upwards toward the press box. The effect can be done while playing or quickly in an up/down motion in preparation for playing.

**"Last Time":** When a director says this during rehearsal it can mean any one of: one more time, a few more times, I can see the road that leads to the last time, we'll keep doing it until you get it right, or after this time it will be so dark that I won't be able to see you.

**Parade Block:** The formation used while parade marching. The files and ranks are evenly spaced setting the band up in a large rectangle formation.

**Pit (Front Line):** Students who play stationary instruments, often in front of the band on the sideline. The pit includes a variety of percussion and rhythm instruments including marimba, vibraphone, piano, bass drum, bass guitar, chimes, etc.

**Pit Crew (Prop Pops):** Volunteers that assemble the drum major stands, props, pit instruments and amplification equipment before the performance and quickly removes the same items afterwards. These volunteers also assist in the loading and unloading of equipment before, at, and after competitions and frequently at rehearsals as well. May be called upon to build or maintain props and other equipment used by the band. According to some, the opening comedy act for the band; the real reason most people come to see marching band.

**Plume:** The feathered portion of the marching hat.

**Sectionals:** Practice sessions with members of the same instrument group. Most sectionals will take place before or after school and will be led by the section leader.

**Shako:** A tall cylindrical hat with visor and plume worn as part of the marching uniform.

**Show Shirt:** An annual shirt design made to reflect the theme of the marching show and the competition schedule. All students are required to have a show shirt as part of their band uniform.

**Slide Marching:** A style of marching where the band member marches in one direction and twists the upper body so they can play in another.

**Team Leader:** Each year, the marching band employs students to be peer leaders. Students desiring this role must apply for the position and will be interviewed. Each leader is subject to a performance review by their peers at the end of the season to evaluate their performance as a leader. Team leaders are assigned members of the band to their team. The goal is to compartmentalize the many student responsibilities, aide in communication and to ultimately engage the teams in activities geared towards enhancing the moral of the group and strengthening the familial bonds of the marching band.

## Ensemble Requirements

To participate in the marching band, students must be enrolled in the Concert Band class. The strength of every comprehensive band program comes from a sound focus on instrumental music fundamentals taught through concert band. Students can be exempt from this requirement if there is a scheduling conflict. These situations are handled on a case by case situation and are not permanent. If for example a student must take a class in school that is only offered at the same time as Concert Band, they may be exempt from concert band. Jazz Ensemble will serve as an alternate option to the Concert Band requirement if a scheduling conflict cannot be resolved. Color Guard members are exempt from the Concert Band Requirement, though they are encourage to learn an instrument and join us. Many color guard members have learned instruments and excelled in recent years as members of our Concert Band.

## Music Classes and Additional Opportunities at SC West

### Concert Band (Class offered in the school)

Symphonic Band is the winter and spring core concert class. Once marching band season concludes, the students retreat into an indoor environment to develop and enhance their skills as musicians through the study and performance of traditional and modern concert band literature. s.

### Jazz Ensembles (Class offered in the school)

St. Charles West is proud to have two jazz bands. Both are offered as enrichment to the instrumental music education received through marching/symphonic band. Enrollment into the jazz bands at SCW is open to all students who are enrolled in Concert Band. Exceptions will be made for students who play the guitar, bass guitar, and piano as these are not traditional marching/symphonic band instruments. The same exceptions that apply to Concert Band concerning scheduling also apply to jazz bands. Scheduling conflicts must be resolved between the Band Director and Guidance Counselor before a student is allowed to enroll in Jazz without being enrolled in Concert Band.

Jazz Ensemble enters several competitions each year and hosts the annual Jazz Festival. The instrumentation is typically 5-6 saxophones (alto, tenor, and baritone), 5 trombones, 5 trumpets, and a percussion section including piano, vibraphone, and drum kit. If there is an abundant amount of any specific instrument over these numbers, auditions will be held.

### Pep Band

The Pep Band is a performing group that plays at all Girls and Boys Varsity Basketball home games. Pep Band is meant to be entertaining for both the band members and the audience. Whether the Warriors win or lose, Pep Band gets to play some fun music and put on a great show. Come to a game – you'll enjoy watching and hearing as they play, dance, and even sing! Students enrolled in Concert Band are required to perform in the pep band.

### Winter Guard

Winter Guard is an indoor color guard activity similar to the color guard that performs with the marching band. Unlike marching color guard, winter guard is performed indoors, usually in a gym or indoor arena, during the winter season. And there is no band – the guard performs to a pre-selected musical recording incorporating various musical genres. The unit performs using dance, acrobatics, and various pieces of equipment. Flags, rifles, and sabers are the main pieces of equipment. Guard

members toss, spin, and do much more with their equipment, which can change throughout their show. The unit must have at least 5 but no more than 30 members on the floor at any time.

The guard will perform in half a dozen or so competitions during the season, late January through early April. There are six judges that adjudicate each event with a total of 100 points available. Two judges sit near the bottom of the stands, one each for equipment and movement. Each of these judges has 20 points to award in his or her caption (40 total points available). At the top of the stands, there are three judges, one judging ensemble analysis and the other two judging general effect. Each of these judges also has 20 points to award (60 total points available). Finally, there is one judge on the floor that is responsible for timing and penalties. This judge deducts points based on rule infractions.

There is an additional fee for participation in the Winter Color Guard and fundraising is necessary to support this group as it typically requires \$6,000.00 to \$10,000.00 for operation.

## Honor Groups

### All-Suburban and All-State Ensembles

All-Suburban Concert and Jazz Bands are by-audition ensembles open to students enrolled in high schools included in the Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis (CSD). Auditions are held in early November at Ladue Horton Watkins High School. There is a nominal per audition application fee. Students may audition on multiple instruments but each audition incurs a separate fee. Students may audition for both jazz and concert bands but will be requested to choose one ensemble in the event they are selected for both. For those students selected to either band there are four rehearsals before a concert in early January. Audition music is available approximately one month prior to auditions. Students are strongly encouraged to audition. (See <http://www2.csd.org/slsmea/> -- although they don't seem to do a very good job of keeping the site up-to-date.)

Students who are selected to one of the All-Suburban ensembles are then eligible to audition for the same All-State ensembles. All-State auditions are held in early December in Columbia. Students who are selected to an All-State ensemble will participate in three days of rehearsals followed by a performance at the Missouri Music Educators Convention in late January. (See <http://www.missouribandmasters.org/stateband/>).

### Solo and Small Ensemble

Solo and Small Ensemble Festivals are conducted annually "to provide opportunities to demonstrate before the public the best knowledge, skills, and musical repertoire taught through a particular activity, and to evaluate the best that is taught in a school system in comparison with accepted standard of excellence." These festivals are opportunities to demonstrate excellence individually or in small instrumental groups. Participation is beneficial to the development of the band program as it encourages growth of individual musicianship.

Festivals are sanctioned by the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) on the district and state levels. Only soloists and ensembles qualified at the district level by earning the highest rating are eligible to perform at the state festival. The MSHSAA has rules specifying the maximum number and types of solos and ensembles that an individual and school may enter. There is also a fee for each entry. The district festival is usually in early March and state festival is usually in late April. The Band Director will have the details on eligibility, festival dates, graded music selections, and application procedures. (See <http://www.mshsaa.org/Activities/Info/MusicActivities.aspx>).



## Band Boosters

### Mission/Charter

The St. Charles West Band Booster Club, Inc. is a corporation operated exclusively for charitable purposes to provide positive and active moral support and financial assistance to the St. Charles West High School band program. The Band Boosters is composed of the parents and guardians of band students and operates under a set of by-laws which are necessary to ensure orderly conduct of business as well as to file for incorporated tax-exempt status. The information below is meant to be an explanation of the organization's operation. For specific details you are referred to the Band Booster Club, Inc. by-laws.

### Tax Exempt Status

The Boosters recently completed the application for Section 501(c)(3) status, granting exemption from the federal income tax to non-profit organizations. 501(c)(3) exemptions apply to, among other things, corporations organized and operated exclusively for educational purposes. Another provision of the tax code, 26 U.S.C. § 170, provides a deduction, for federal income tax purposes, for some donors who make charitable contributions to most types of 501(c)(3) organizations. Regulations specify which deductions must be verifiable in order to be allowed (e.g., receipts for donations over \$250). Corporations may deduct all contributions to 501(c)(3) organizations (regardless of foundation status) up to an amount normally equal to 10% of their taxable income.

501(c)(3) status for charities and the related section 170 deduction for donors are important to many charitable groups like the Band Boosters. Some individuals and groups (and virtually all foundations) will not give to a charity if it does not have 501(c)(3) status (as no tax deduction would be allowed). When the 501(c)(3) status is completed the Booster Club can then apply for a tax exempt number allowing purchases to be made tax free. With these tools, the Band Boosters can more vigorously pursue corporate sponsorship. If you know of a local corporation that might be interested in sponsoring the band, please bring this to the attention of one of the elected Band Booster officers.

### Organization

There are four elected officers on the Leadership Committee: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The President presides, the Vice-President watches, the Secretary records, and the Treasurer treasures. Seriously, though, the elected officers have assigned duties as specified in the organization by-laws, all meant to support the band, contribute to its success and ensure an enjoyable and educational experience for all band members. The officers are themselves band parents who have the interests of the entire band at heart. They will build and monitor budgets, maintain by-laws, provide structure around fundraising, and communicate with the booster club at large.

The officers meet regularly and coordinate closely with the Band Director to accomplish the stated purpose of supporting the band in its musical endeavors. Officers serve in their elected capacity for one year. Elections for the following year are held at the conclusion of each "band year" as specified by the organization by-laws.

## Committee Heads

The opportunities for enterprising parents in the Band Boosters are numerous. There are standing committees for Fundraising, Band Camp, Uniforms, Props, Equipment, and Transportation. A chairman is appointed to each committee by the Executive Board. Within the Fundraising Committee there is a coordinator/chairman for each fundraising activity. Committee heads are always looking for someone to teach their job. This knowledge sharing and succession strategy ensures that the Boosters can continue operating efficiently and effectively year after year despite the continually changing membership of the organization.

Of course, the committee heads don't do all the work themselves; they are there to ensure that all the necessary pieces come together. Dedicated band parents are also welcome (and vitally needed) to serve on these committees and make their own contribution to the success of these activities.

## Meetings

General meetings are convened regularly on a schedule specified in the by-laws. A reminder of the date and time will be made on the scwband.com email list. Usually an agenda will accompany the reminder or be sent shortly thereafter.

Your attendance and participation in meetings is strongly encouraged. We'll discuss the results of the most recent fundraisers, upcoming fundraisers and band events, and volunteer opportunities. The Treasurer will present a financial report and we'll hear the "state of the band" from the Band Director. If you want to know what is going on and how you can be involved, this is THE opportunity to find out. The Band Director will typically entertain a question and answer session as well.

## Contact Information

SCW Band e-Mail List	Contact: christine.lepski@gmail.com	
SCW Marching Warriors	<a href="http://www.scwestband.org">http://www.scwestband.org</a>	
SCW High School	<a href="http://www.stcharlessd.org">www.stcharlessd.org</a>	636.443.4200
Ben Meyer, Band Director	<a href="mailto:bmeyer@stcharlessd.org">bmeyer@stcharlessd.org</a>	314.210.2605
Emily Hotop, BBC President	<a href="mailto:emily.hotop@gmail.com">emily.hotop@gmail.com</a>	636.448.3485
Christy Buehrle, BBC Vice-President	<a href="mailto:christybuehrle@gmail.com">christybuehrle@gmail.com</a>	636.219.4788
Lisa Schmitz, BBC Treasurer	<a href="mailto:lmmschmitz@yahoo.com">lmmschmitz@yahoo.com</a>	636.578.9231
Christine Lepski, BBC Secretary	<a href="mailto:christine.lepski@gmail.com">christine.lepski@gmail.com</a>	314.780.0641

## Fundraising

As a primary purpose of the Band Boosters is to provide financial support for the band, it should be no surprise that fundraising is a major focus of booster activity. What may be surprising is how much it actually costs to operate the band. The school district provides basic support for the band by funding a small number of instruments, faculty, and transportation (i.e., yellow buses). That's nowhere near enough.

No one is immune from the rising costs of living; we've all experienced the economic crunch of rising gas prices for example. The band isn't immune, either. The costs of being competitive in our division will continue to rise. The Marching Band's operating budget is typically \$60,000. to \$70,000.00 annually.

Fundraising helps to offset the costs of operating the semi-trailer rig needed to haul the band equipment to/from competitions, equipment, meals and drinks, transportation, overnight hotel

expenses, show entry fees, show design/composition, props, color guard uniforms and flags, the annual awards banquet, and more. Success in fundraising allows your band student to participate with lower out of pocket costs for you. If the boosters did not do any fundraising the additional cost to parents would exceed \$1,000.00 per year per student. Due to successful fundraising, the fixed per student fees at St. Charles West are much lower than other bands of the same caliber.

The Booster Club sees fundraising as a multi-year activity. The goal is to balance fundraising effort across years the band makes a bowl trip and years they do not. Optimally we would raise the same amount each year. As you will learn, we still have some work to do in this area.

Fundraising activities are primarily intended to generate funds for the band's general account. The general account is for the benefit of the entire band. What expenses are paid from the general account and how much is spent is a decision of the Band Director and the Booster Executive Board.

All students benefit equally from fundraising into the general account. And ideally, we would ask all Booster Club members to contribute equally to fundraising activities. In the real world, individual and family responsibilities make this unlikely. What *is* asked then is that when opportunities arise and schedules mesh and moons are full and planets align that you please say "yes" to help support something your child loves. Besides, fundraising can be fun. It's an opportunity to meet and interact with other parents who, like you, have talented kids they want to see succeed. Parents are often criticized for not being involved enough in their children's education. Band Booster parents are a "cut above".

Handling Booster Club funds is a responsibility of the Treasurer, not the Band Director. This is different from Band Fees collected by the Band Director Receipts from fundraising activities should not be sent to school with students. It isn't appropriate to put either the students or the Band Director in the position of being responsible for handling Booster Club monies. All funds should pass from parents, committee chairs, etc., directly to the Treasurer. It is extremely important to process funds and receipts promptly and to honor the time that people are donating to the fundraising events.

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### Festival of the Little Hills

The Festival of the Little Hills is an historic St. Charles tradition that takes place every year the third weekend of August. Started in the late 1960's, this festival is known nationally as one of the top ten craft fairs, and runs through an entire weekend featuring great food, live entertainment, craft sales, and shows for kids. The theme of the festival centers around the famous Lewis & Clark expedition: many participants don clothing from the era and act out historic events. The city also encourages individuals to bring their homemade crafts, jewelry, paintings, clothing and other items to sell at the festival. It is the largest festival of the year for St. Charles, drawing more than 300,000 visitors. (See <http://www.festivalofthelittlehills.com>)

The SCW Band operates a food booth that serves rib-eye steak sandwiches, bratwursts, and drinks. We can use plenty of volunteers to help prepare and serve the food. The Band Boosters also oversee the parking lot at the Family Arena where shuttle buses take crafters and patrons back and forth to the festival. Each shift requires 2 – 4 people. The job is simple: point to parking areas and answer questions. **Each student is required to work one shift for the Festival of the Little Hills**

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## Craft Fair

The craft fair is the second largest fundraising event held by the band, accounting for \$13,000 to \$15,000 of the annual budget. It occurs on the second Saturday of December. The event has been held annually for over 30 years and enjoys substantial community support.

Booth spaces are sold to crafters from around the region. Booths are allocated in the commons, auxiliary gym, and main gym mezzanine. A single booth space is \$55 (\$60 after March 1). Nearly 200 crafters participated in the most recent event.

The day starts early: 6:30 AM. Crafters arrive to setup their booths. **Each student is required to work either load in or load out. They will assist vendors transporting their products to or from their vehicle.** Crafters are usually very appreciative for the help. Students are advised to dress appropriately for the weather as they will be in and out of the building. The fair is open 9:00 to 3:00. After the fair students are again needed to assist in helping crafters back out to their vehicles. Without student assistance it is likely that some crafters would not be able to participate.

The concession stand is open all day.. In addition, other food – hot dogs, pretzels, candy, etc. – is sold. Both parents and students are needed to work the concession stand. In addition, students are needed as “runners”, assisting crafters with concessions and breaks. Students earn participation credit towards their varsity band letter/pin.

The fair includes a bake sale ... OK, just cookies. Each band member is asked to donate at least 12 dozen cookies to be sold for \$6/pound. Chocolate chip and slice-and-bake cookies usually don't sell well. People are most interested in shaped cookies or seasonal favorites, iced, decorated, etc. Cookie sales can bring in upwards of \$2000. Volunteers are needed to staff the cookie table which stays busy from the time the doors open until the cookies run out.

This is a great opportunity for both parents and students to get involved. While there is advance planning, coordination and advertising necessary, the bulk of the “work” comes the night before and the day of the fair itself. Booth spaces need to be laid out and numbered the night before. The more volunteers to help, the faster it goes. All that is necessary is a tape measure (the longer the better), a sharpie, masking tape, and the ability to follow a diagram. Signs directing buyers to the various booth venues need to be made and hung. It only takes a couple hours. The day of the fair parents are needed to staff tables (cookies, raffle, door prize), provide directions to incoming buyers, and supervise student volunteers. After the fair, parents are again needed to remove booth layout tape, clean and remove tarps in the auxiliary gym, return borrowed chairs, and perform any final cleanup.

It's a long day but a profitable one. Any assistance you can provide is welcome.

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## Trivia Night

A Trivia Night is a function where teams of people get together to compete against one another answering prepared trivia questions. Trivia Nights are becoming increasingly popular because they are fun, interactive, and team-based. They make great fundraisers because they are relatively simple to organize and cheap to host.

A Trivia Night lasts about three hours. Any shorter and people feel like they haven't gotten their money's worth. Any longer and they tend to lose interest. It consists of six rounds of ten questions with an optional seventh bonus round that has its own prize. A small team is assigned to research and create questions across pre-determined categories like math, science, geography, history, sports, movies, current events, pop culture, etc. The bonus round is themed, significantly harder than the

general rounds, and announced in advance of the event to encourage everyone to participate. At the end of the night, the team with the highest score wins.

Event tickets are sold by the table, \$200.00 for a table of eight. Traditionally, the entry fee includes drinks (soda and beer) and possibly snacks. Preparations don't need to be too elaborate as many people who attend trivia night events bring their own snacks.

Other fundraising opportunities at Trivia Night include 50-50 ticket sales, basket raffles (great because you have a captive audience for several hours), and round and table business sponsorships.

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### Concession Stands

Concession stands at athletic events – football games, basketball games, etc. – are staffed by school volunteer organizations. Dates are assigned by lottery to the various organizations that are interested so we don't know until then what the dates are that we will be able to operate the concession stand. The committee chairman will make the dates available as soon as they are known. Several volunteers are needed for each date. The work is easy and shifts are only a couple hours. This fundraiser generated approximately \$1,200.00 last year.

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### BBQs

We have had success running BBQs at local lots. Substantial sales to local businesses like car dealerships and serving drive-up/walk-up customers can generate some nice profits.

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### Band-Aid

Many local businesses will offer funds to assist students if they are asked. Anyone who has knowledge of a local business willing to help is encourage to contact them and open a dialogue. Report to the Booster Board for support.

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### Night Out

Some area restaurants offer groups the opportunity to raise funds by sponsoring a designated night from which a percentage of the receipts from patrons is donated. Specific details will be provided as the date for each event nears.

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### Your Ideas

Fresh ideas on fundraising are always welcome. Please feel free to make any suggestions you have to the fundraising committee. Or if you are so motivated, join the committee and help them implement new opportunities. Remember, though, that not every idea will be successful. Even good ideas may "fail" if they do not generate the interest necessary from the band and booster club to make them work. But if we keep trying new things we'll eventually find the right mix of activities that will ensure we reach our financial goals each year.

In general, fund raisers that bring in money from non-band parents are preferred. The goal is to both support the band and reduce out-of-pocket costs for band families.

## Awards Night

Each year, the Band Boosters produce the annual Awards Night to celebrate the hard work and accomplishments of the band members. This semi-formal event is open to all band members and their parents. The program consists of service awards, outstanding performance awards and special recognitions. Outgoing seniors are recognized and the evening concludes with a dessert reception.

## Finances

Here is a budget sheet for a typical year. A more detailed budget will be provided annually. The estimated 2019-2020 Budget is included in the back of this handbook

	Budget Amount
Income	
General Activity Fee	15,000.00
Band Camp Fee	10,000.00
Craft Fair	14,000.00
Festival Little Hills	6,000.00
BBQ's	2,000.00
Trivia Night	4,000.00
Product Sales	2,000.00
Other Fundraising	15,000.00
Concession Income	1,000.00
Total Income	69,000.00
Expenses	
Marching Band	39,900.00
Jazz/Concert Band	4,000.00
General Expenses	14,000.00
Special Projects	6,500.00
Emergency Fund	4,000.00
Total Expenses	68,400.

## Band Fees

At St. Charles West, the Marching Band is an extracurricular activity. The school district provides financial support for capital instrument purchases, repair and maintenance, but aside from that, the marching band is a self-funding organization. For this reason, the marching band is funded by a combination of participation fees and fundraising. Here is a breakdown of participation fees associated with marching band.

### ***General Student Band Fee - \$300.00***

The General Student Band Fee is payable in two payments. A non-refundable payment of **\$100.00** is due on **May 29, 2019**. This is non-refundable because the funds are used to begin custom design of our marching band show. It is critical that the number of students participating is accurate when designing a marching band show because it is written for that exact amount of students. If a student decides not to participate after the custom design has begun, all completed work on that custom design have to be changed and the designer will charge additional billable hours. Therefore, the initial \$100.00 deposit for participation is retained if a student decides not to participate. The final balance of **\$200.00** is due on **September 6, 2019**.

The General Student Band Fee covers the cost of everything associated with the custom design and creation of the marching band show including props, special uniform pieces, and professional visual choreography. The General Student Band Fee also covers the cost of additional staff hired for the marching band season. A copy of the proposed 2019-2020 budget is included in the back of this handbook.

### ***Band Camp Student Fee - \$200.00***

The Marching Warriors have been hosting an overnight band camp for over 40 years. Ask any former band student and they will tell you that the summer camp is the most memorable part of being a Marching Warrior. This fee covers lodging for 5 nights, 3 meals and an evening snack each day, 24 hour medical personnel and transportation to and from the camp grounds. As described previously in this handbook, Band Camp is not an optional event. Marching Warrior participants are expected to attend camp. Exemptions from participating in Band Camp are decided on a case by case situation between parents and the Band Director. If you have a conflict with the dates of Band Camp, please discuss this with Mr. Meyer as soon as possible as he understands that unavoidable conflicts do arise.

The Band Camp Payment of **\$200.00** is due on **July 9, 2019**.

### ***Additional Costs***

The Marching Warriors are regularly receiving invitations to perform in festivals and competitions outside of the St. Louis Metro Area. Mr. Meyer reviews invitations and usually focuses on taking the band to a special event every 2 years. Additional costs associated with travel may be hotels, charter buses and meals while traveling. The desire is that our fundraising will be successful enough to ease this burden, but it may be necessary for students to pay additional fees for traveling to special events.

### ***Monthly Statements will be mailed to band members with outstanding balances.***

Students who do not meet the payment due dates will be placed on the St. Charles West Fee/Fine List. They will be restricted from exempting finals or making additional purchases such as Homecoming/Prom tickets. Students who are still on the Fee/Fine List at the time of their graduation will not be permitted to participate in Commencement until all outstanding balances are settled.

***Financial Assistance Policy:*** Students who request financial assistance will be submitted to the SCW Administrative team for review concerning Free/Reduced Lunch Status. Due to confidentiality laws, no SCW Band Staff member will ever have knowledge of the review findings. Only a simple Yes/No response will be provided from the Administrative Team. If Financial Assistance is awarded, payments can be broken into a payment plan and if reduced fees are awarded, students and/or parents will be asked to participate in more than the required amount of fundraising.

## How Can I Help?

The Booster Club thrives on volunteers. It languishes without them. As the boosters go, so goes the band. You may think that you don't have any special skills to offer or that you don't know what to do. No need to worry. There's a place for everybody. You don't need any special skill other than willing hands and a cheerful heart. Veteran parents will gladly teach you the ropes. They won't ask you to take on more than you can handle. But they will ask you to learn. They'll ask that because they're thinking of the future. One day, every veteran band parent will "graduate" with their student. The band (including your child) will be depending on you to step up and continue the tradition. Each freshman class brings an infusion of parents who will one day be Booster Club leaders. It's an experience you'll never forget ... or regret.

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### Fundraisers

This is one of the most significant contributions that you can make, to give the "band experience" to your own child as well as many others. If you have a willing spirit, the band will find a way for you to help. Chair a committee, serve on a committee, work at Verizon, deliver ice at Riverfest, place signs for the craft fair, work the concession stand, chaperone the middle school dance. There is no end to the opportunities. Do it once. Do it twice. Do it twenty times. Show up, sign up, we'll find something for you to do. Do a little or do a lot. Just please do *something*. If you *are* willing to help but don't think you can or have special circumstances, please feel free (gulp) to approach one of the Band Booster officers. They may be able to suggest ways to get involved that fit within your circumstances.

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### Band Camp

Band camp couldn't happen without the active support of many parents. Approximately 16 parents, 8 male and 8 female, are needed as cabin chaperones. Another half dozen or so are needed to run the kitchen and canteen. Parent volunteers comprise the medical staff and others ensure the kids have plenty of water. Even if you can't stay overnight, all parents are welcome to visit and observe rehearsals and throw in wherever additional help is needed. Band camp is when the "Prop Pops" maintain scaffolding and other equipment and begin building whatever props or other items are needed for the upcoming season.

It is a band tradition to provide a "welcoming bag" in each cabin filled with various items that students need, may have forgotten, or would simply enjoy at band camp. They really appreciate this expression of support. Parents are needed to volunteer to donate items, assemble them into welcoming bags, and deliver them to band camp. The call for donations goes out in late June, about a month prior to camp. Everybody can help out here.

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### Water Detail

Marching is hard work. To a thirsty band member, nothing could be more welcome after an hour of exertion in 90 degree heat than a parent holding out a cool cup of water. Or a parent with a squirt bottle offering a refreshing spray. This is a serious responsibility, ensuring the hydration and health of our band members. If you're dropping your student off for rehearsal, why not stay and lend a hand? It isn't hard work but it is vitally important. Water detail can use at least 4 people at each evening practice, performance, and competition.

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### Uniform Parents

These moms are responsible for sizing students for uniforms, maintaining uniforms, checking the uniforms in and out at each performance, and assisting students in donning their uniforms properly for the performance. Even if you don't know how to sew, the veterans will teach you what you need to know. Uniform moms also load uniforms on/off the truck and ensure that all students turn in all elements of their uniforms. At least 4 volunteers are needed each time the uniforms are used in performance or competition.

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### Prop Parents

The band requires a lot of equipment. Drum major stands, amplification equipment, marimbas, vibraphones, piano, drums. Props have to be built. Equipment and props have to be moved on and off the field for marching band, winter guard, and winter drumline. Even jazz band and symphonic ensemble can use help getting instruments in and out of competition sites. You'll be there to watch your child perform anyway, right? So why not volunteer to help? Watching the show from the stands is fine – but nothing is like being part of the action, right on the sideline.

The attire for Prop Pops helping put the show on the field during competitions is black pants or shorts and the maroon Prop Pops polo. The shirts can be purchased at St. Charles Printables on Campus Drive across from Save-A-Lot for about \$25. Although it is not mandatory to wear this, it makes us look a lot more organized and helps us continue our reputation as "St. Charles West Award Winning Prop Pops"! (As evidenced by their convincing win at the 2005 Ozarko competition.)

A special need of the Prop Pops is for individuals owning larger SUVs or trucks to tow the small trailer to/from the stadium and other performance venues.

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### Overnight Trips

Chaperones are needed when the band goes on overnight trips. They are responsible for helping band members find (and stay in) their assigned rooms, assisting students to resolve problems or acquiring anything necessary to make their stay comfortable, and ensuring that all band members positively represent St. Charles West High School. Band parents who cannot, for whatever reason, accompany the band on the trip are grateful for volunteer chaperones who are concerned for the welfare and safety of the entire band.

## Resources

### Web Sites of Interest

#### **Band Leadership**

<http://www.bandleadership.com/moodle/>

This website offers free online courses in band leadership. *Foundations of Band Leadership* focuses on introducing and improving student leadership skills specific to band communities. *Advanced Topics in Band Leadership* is a two semester program designed for students currently serving in a leadership position. This course will focus on the current trends and issues in leadership, self-analysis and improvement, discipline issues, improving and maintaining team work, conflict resolution, delegation, and task and goal management. All band students are highly encouraged to take these courses.

#### **Dynamic Marching (articles & blogs)**

<http://www.dynamicmarching.com/>

Dynamic Marching is a resource for learning how to make your marching band program look and sound great. They offer a wide range of products and services designed for band directors and students of all ages and experience levels. Particularly interesting are the blog articles that aim to help directors and students improve their visual and musical abilities to play, march, move, or teach.

#### **Halftime Magazine**

<http://halftimemag.com/>

Halftime Magazine is a glossy print magazine that highlights the "sights, sounds and spirit of marching band." This bimonthly lifestyle magazine connects high school and college musician-athletes through shared experiences about competitions, school spirit, and band traditions with profiles, first-person accounts and thought-provoking feature stories. In addition, the publication will provide tips to enhance students' musical and marching skills as well as connect the band community through news, events calendars and product reviews. Some content is available on-line.

#### **International Association for Jazz Education**

<http://www.iaje.org>

The IAJE mission is to assure the continued worldwide growth and development of Jazz and Jazz Education. Among the resources on their website are current and back issues of their publication *Jazz Education Journal* and numerous links to jazz-related sites around the web.

#### **Marching Emporium**

<http://www.marching.com/>

Marching.com was founded in 1996 as a source of information about marching band events. Over time the site has grown to include an extensive listing of links to marching bands, a resource directory of services and supplies useful to marching units, a listing of websites related to high school marching bands, college bands, drum and bugle corps, color guards and drum lines, information on companies that provide fundraising ideas, school group fundraisers and fund raising events for marching bands,

color guards and performing groups, and news and articles on topics related to marching bands and pageantry arts.

### **Marching Band Planet**

<http://www.marchingbandplanet.com/>

Marching Band Planet is an independent news, information, and community-based forum for the pageantry arts including Drum and Bugle Corps, Color Guard, Percussion Line, Marching Band, and other similar art-forms. With a family of related sites, they host the world's largest community forums for the pageantry activities.

### **Midwest Marching Competitions**

<http://www.midwestmarching.com/>

Carries marching band performance schedules and scores for Missouri and surrounding states. Lots of links to school band websites and other marching resources.

### **Music Education Online**

<http://www.childrensmusicworkshop.com/>

Children's Music Workshop is a music education company which specializes in a variety of products and services including custom designed band and orchestra method books, school site music instruction, instrument sales and rentals, music education advocacy and more. Presented by CMW, Music Education Online provides a wealth of online information for anyone interested in music education. Established in 1993, it is "one of the most referenced web sites" for music education on the Internet.

### **Standing 'O' – Marching Arts Specialists (articles)**

<http://www.standingomarching.com/>

Standing 'O' - Marching Arts Specialists offers a variety of services and support for marching band programs including drill writing, color guard books, clinics, consultations and leadership training. Of particular interest are the articles written by members of the Standing 'O' - Marching Arts Specialists staff, intended to provide educational information for both instructors and students. Some of the articles are available in audio format.

### **Student's Guide to Marching**

<http://books.google.com/books?id=QNVdSeZOO8C>

The Student's Guide to Marching is an informational and inspirational aid for any marcher. Beginners can learn basic marching terms, skills, and exercises that will easily integrate them into any marching group from coast to coast, continent to continent. Mature marchers will get a fresh look at their activity, learning how to better understand their body and getting a peak at a new system of drill cleaning. Over 150 graphics help you along the way. More than just a users' manual, this book will teach you how to teach yourself.

### **Tales From Band Camp (TFBC)**

<http://www.talesfrombandcamp.com/>

You'll enjoy this weekly comic strip about life in a high school marching band.

### **Understanding a Marching Band**

[http://www.coollessons.org/Understanding\\_a\\_Marching\\_Band\\_HS\\_KurtDobbeck.pdf](http://www.coollessons.org/Understanding_a_Marching_Band_HS_KurtDobbeck.pdf)

This is a learning activity written by Kurt Dobbeck, Band Director of South Elgin High School. The lesson is intended to familiarize a student with a set of standard rubric for evaluating a marching band performance. Understanding how performances are evaluated provides valuable insight for marchers seeking to improve their scores as well as observers seeking to enhance their appreciation for the marching arts.

### **U.S. Army Band Section Leader Handbook**

[http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/tc12\\_44.pdf](http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/tc12_44.pdf)

This book is addressed to the Army band section leader and to the senior instrumentalist training to become a section leader. Its purpose is to provide information useful in that position. Developed by the U.S. Army Element, School of Music, it has two chapters of particular interest. The first chapter is a history and evolution of musical instruments and instrument groups most commonly found in bands. The second chapter is a detailed "how-to" on training and leading a section including leading sectionals, section organization, and individual practice. This information should be useful to all band members but particularly those who are or are aspiring to become section leaders.

### **U.S. Military Heat Acclimatization Guide**

<http://www.usariem.army.mil/download/heatacclimatizationguide.pdf>

Written for the U.S. Army Ranger and Airborne School students, this guide provides practical guidance on how to obtain optimal heat acclimatization to both maximize performance and minimize the risk of becoming a heat casualty.

### **World Guard International**

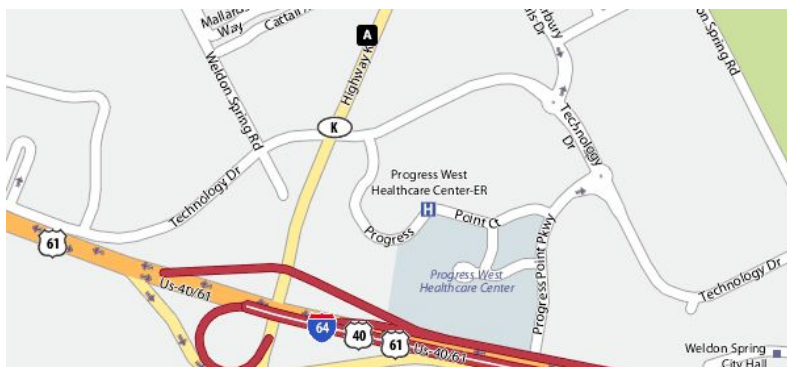
<http://wgi.org>

WGI is the nonprofit youth organization leading the winter guard and indoor percussion activities. Their website carries news, feature stories on the individuals and units that participate in WGI competitions, event information, competition videos and photos, and educational resources. A free monthly email newsletter carries announcements, special merchandise offers, scores, and exclusive stories.

## Local Music Stores

### Mozingo Music

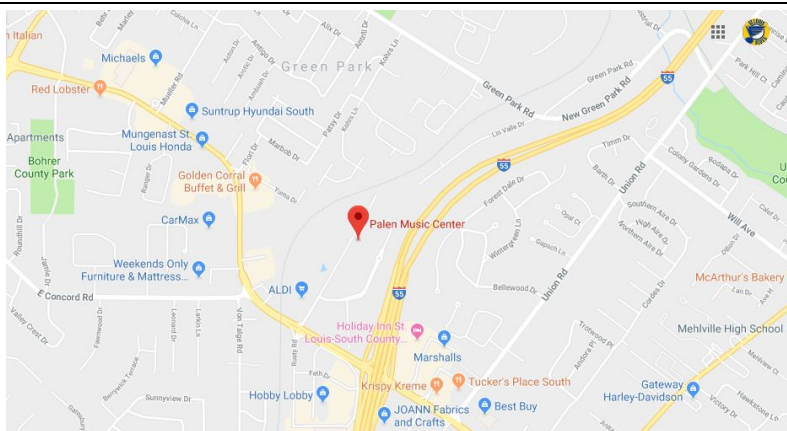
4689 Highway K  
O'Fallon, MO 63368  
636.300.9553 or toll free: 877.mozingo  
fax: 636.329.8700  
email: [info@mozingomusic.com](mailto:info@mozingomusic.com)  
<http://www.mozingomusic.com/>



### Palen Music Center

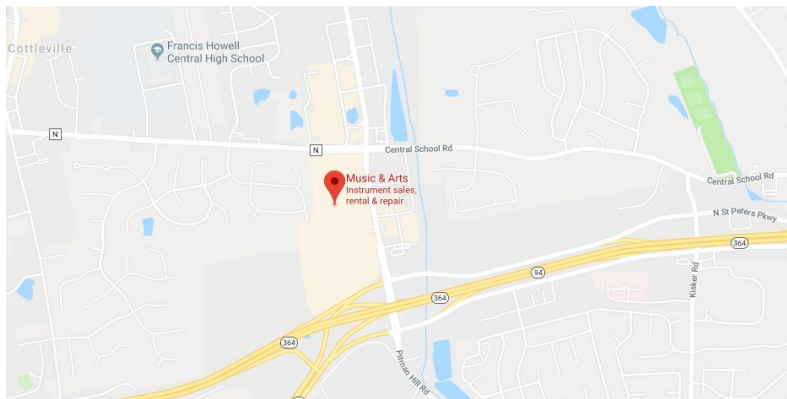
11134 Lindbergh Business Ct B  
Saint Louis, MO 63123  
636.229.1904

<http://palenmusic.com>



### Music and Arts

6161 Mid Rivers Mall Dr  
Saint Charles, MO 63304  
636.244.3770  
<http://stores.musicarts.com>



## Private Instruction

Students are strongly encouraged to study privately. Private lessons offer opportunities to students that cannot be obtained in a large ensemble rehearsal. Often students develop bad habits that can only be addressed by a professional in a private learning situation. Private lessons teach students about accountability and responsibility and aid in the development of regular practice habits. A good private teacher will know the lesson materials and solos that are appropriate to their current abilities, and will have a sequence of materials available to develop them to their fullest potential. Attention to details particular to the instrument can really only be effectively addressed privately.

Private lessons are not intended to be remedial. The need for individual instruction, tutorage and mentoring actually increases as a student advances. Inherently, students who study privately perform better than those who do not. While it is not required to study privately to be in the band program, nor is it a factor for grades, chair, or ensemble placement, it is a reality that the students who study privately do better than those who do not. The quality of the entire school band program is reliant on the musical growth of its members. In any fine musical organization, the majority of students study privately. We all want St. Charles West to have the finest band program in the region.

The following teachers are among the recommended ones who are closer to St. Charles. There are many others in the St. Louis region. The Band Director will gladly assist you to find a quality private instructor.

Please contact Mr. Meyer if your student is interested in private instruction.

The instruments that are usually purchased for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are known as “student-model” instruments. They are affordable, designed to help young musicians begin to play quickly, and are built to withstand 5<sup>th</sup> grade hands. These are excellent instruments in that they introduce young students to music, while providing them with an instrument that can withstand their abuse. However, these instruments have their limitations. They often do not produce as beautiful a tone (the way you sound is the most important thing about playing an instrument), respond as quickly, or may even be “holding” them back, allowing students to play as well as the instrument allows instead of as well as the student can play.

Many 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who have shown aptitude on their instruments may benefit from moving up to a more advanced instrument. Intermediate and professional models are built out of better quality materials with more care, are designed for advancing students’ hands and embouchures, and have different features that can make playing easier and more enjoyable. Additionally, a more professional, better sounding, better built instrument *may* inspire greater pride and enthusiasm among students for playing their instrument.

The choice between an intermediate and a professional instrument needs to be considered carefully. Generally intermediate instruments have many of the advanced features of a professional model but lack the same quality of materials and workmanship. For this reason, they appear to be slightly more affordable – in the short term. Intermediate models have a short lifespan in terms of the time of benefit to the student. Plus they are harder to resell. Most students will use an intermediate model for a year or two and then are ready for a professional model. So, now you’ve got a fairly expensive (newish) horn sitting around (hard to resell) and the added expense of the professional horn. Thinking out a few years, it is frequently better to either move directly into a professional horn or wait a year or two (say sophomore or junior year) and then get the professional horn.

When you consider purchasing an instrument first get as much information as you can. Know the brands, models, and features that are important to your decision. Then shop around; get the best value you can. It is not generally recommended to purchase on-line. First, the student should always play the instrument before it is purchased. And if there is any doubt, the band director or private instructor should be given an opportunity to examine the instrument, play test it for you, and make a recommendation. Frankly, the prices on-line may not be better than what you can get at a local music store. And the service at a local store will be much better.

New is not necessarily better. Used is not necessarily bad. When evaluating a potential used instrument purchase consider:

- What was the quality of the instrument when new? Was it a student model or a professional?
- What is the age of the instrument and its history? A ten year old instrument played for only two years may be in better condition than an instrument that is five years old but has been played for five years.
- What is the instrument’s repair history? Is it in Good Playing Condition? If possible, take it to a local instrument repair shop and ask them to examine it for any potential problems (leaks, corks, pads, springs, welds) and get an estimate to put it in Good Playing Condition.
- What is the appearance of the instrument? Noticeable dings, dents, or tarnish could be cosmetic or possibly a symptom of abuse or neglect. Again, an instrument repair shop can determine whether the appearance is “character” or “problem”.

ALWAYS play the instrument before you buy. Students should play test an instrument with their regular mouthpiece, reeds, etc., if at all possible because different mouthpieces make a huge difference. Have your student follow this procedure:

- Relax – You should feel relaxed, and not anxious or nervous, especially about playing in front of others. Take at least 20 minutes per instrument. Don't rush. Multiple visits might be helpful.
- Alone time – Employees can be very helpful in discussing features and benefits of certain instruments. However, let them do it before or after play-testing, not during. Ask if there is a practice room where you can play-test the model or models you're considering. The store employees will likely allow you some time alone with an adult. This should help you feel more comfortable, and there will be fewer eyes watching you, which may make you feel more relaxed.
- Listen – When initially play testing, you should be asking yourself "Does this instrument play with the sound for which I am looking?" Your tone is the most important thing about choosing a new instrument. Slowly "warm-up" you and the instrument by playing long, slow scales on whole notes. Do as many as you can, including different octaves to hear both high and low registers. On every note, in every register (high/medium/low), listen carefully for an "even" sound and consistent color and vibrancy.
- Feel – Now play a few scales again or perhaps a warm-up exercise like lip slurs or intervals. This time, think about how the instrument "feels" to blow into. Does this instrument feel like it has too much or too little resistance? As you develop, you will probably prefer an instrument with a good balance of resistance in all registers, but usually a little freer blowing.
- Play – Take along a copy of a song that you are very comfortable with. Pick a few spots that have slower expressive passages and faster articulated passages. Does the instrument respond well? Is it comfortable to hold? Listen carefully!
- Don't settle – The instrument you are trying will almost certainly sound/feel better than your current instrument. That's the idea! But don't settle on the first one you try.

While your student is play-testing an instrument, you can help in the selection process by:

- Letting them play – Ask questions of them (see the student procedure above) but try not to while they are playing. This might make them more anxious.
- Keeping track – Don't be afraid to pause the decision. Write down useful information and record their thoughts, but unless you and your child are 100% confident that you've found the instrument for them, pause your decision until you're comfortable. Often the first instrument they play may seem like a whole new world of good things, but other instruments may be even better suited.
- Understanding instrument care – Because professional instruments are designed for advancing musicians, there may be "new" procedures they will have to follow to keep the instrument in optimum playing condition for years to come.

Here are some suggestions on common instrument features and accessories to look for as you shop for a new instrument.

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### Flute

- Headjoint: Most important as this is where the tone is produced. Solid sterling silver is best followed by silver-plated. Avoid nickel-plated.
- Body: Solid or plated sterling silver is great; avoid nickel-plated.
- Inline G vs. \*Offset G: Offset allows for more natural hand position.
- \*Open hole (French) vs. Closed hole (Plateau): French keys encourage proper hand position. Some models allow plugs to be used until you are comfortable with this feature.
- C Foot vs. \*B Foot: B Foot improves the tone and allows you to play low B natural.

- Gold lip plate: Debatable, but said to improve tone quality and lip “traction”.
- Gizmo Key: Helps to produce “double high” C
- Manufacturers and models to consider: Emerson 88B; Pearl Elegante 795 Series; Pearl Quantz 765 Series; Yamaha 600 Series

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## Clarinet

- Body: A wood body will vastly improve the tone. (NOT recommended for marching.)
- Mouthpiece/Ligature/Reeds: This combination is where the tone is produced. There is no better investment for the money than a quality mouthpiece and ligature. Optimally you should try a mouthpiece with several combinations of reed and ligature before buying.
- Keys: Silver-plated keys are less slippery than nickel-plated but more likely to tarnish.
- Bore Size: Larger bore instruments (.590 inches in diameter at the end of the upper joint) typically have a broader sound, but are harder for some students to play in tune. Smaller bore (.577 inches or smaller) typically have a more focused and centered tone. Small to medium bore instruments are preferred because they are easier to play in tune. Start with something in-between (.573-.584)
- Tone Holes: Undercut tone holes can make the instrument “freer-blowing”.
- Manufacturers and models to consider: Buffet R13; Leblanc Concerto II; Selmer Paris Signature
- Mouthpieces: Vandoren B45; Vandoren M13 or M15; Portney 01, 02 or 03 facing; Selmer HS or HS\*; Pyne Sinfonia
- Ligatures: Rovner; Bonade; BG Revelations Super or L4R; Oleg

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## Saxophone

- Body: Yellow brass with a clear lacquer. This is the standard finish for most saxophones.
- \*Ribbed vs. non-ribbed construction: Ribbed construction mounts the posts to a thin piece of metal instead of directly to the body. This makes the posts more durable and reduces dampening.
- High F# key: An extra key to provide an alternative fingering. It looks like a single small rectangle, and is located by the right hand chromatic F# (oval) key.
- C# resonance key: Improves the tone of open C#.
- Tone Boosters: The small circles in the center of saxophone pads are called tone boosters. Metal tone boosters project more sound.
- Manufacturers and models to consider: Yamaha 875, 62 or Custom Z; Selmer Paris 62 Alto or 54 Tenor; Selmer Paris Mark VI
- Mouthpieces: Selmer C-Star hard rubber; David Hite Premiere; Meyer 5
- Ligatures: Rovner; Bonade; Oleg, Francois Louis Ultimate

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## Trumpet

- Valves: Nickel-silver valves tend to be a little stiffer than monel valves which, properly oiled and cared for, will respond better and smoother and last longer. Stainless steel valves are also good, although less common. “Hand-lapped” valves are fitted by hand and are more desirable.
- Silver-Plate vs. Lacquer (yellow brass): Silver plating generally produces a “brighter” tone.
- Lead pipes/Bore: The inner diameter of the trumpets tubing measured at the second valve is the bore size. Most beginner model trumpets have smaller bores/lead pipes, which provides more resistance. As musicians mature and develop more lung capacity and breath support, they will benefit from a larger bore/lead pipe, which makes the trumpet a little more open and “free blowing”. Look for something with a bore size of .459 - .460 or greater.
- Bells: The best bells are one piece. Not only will the instrument project differently, but generally, more care is taken when making the one piece bells.

- Manufacturers and models to consider: Bach Stradivarius 180; Schilke Custom Series
- Mouthpieces: Bach 7C; Bach 3C has a slightly larger cup increasing the volume and control but requires a stronger embouchure and more air support; Schilke 9; Yamaha 11

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## Trombone

- F-Rotor / "Trigger": Sends air through extra tubing (wrap) and allows you to play C (sixth) in first position, many other notes in alternative positions, and adds notes to the lower range.
- Wrap (Standard vs. open): A standard wrap has more bends in it, which increases resistance. This helps younger players support their sound. Open wraps have fewer bends for a "freer-blowing" instrument, which experienced players with better developed air support may prefer.
- Bore (tubing diameter): Like the wrap, a smaller bore (.481-.500) provides more resistance, making it easier to support your tone, while a larger bore (.547) is freer-blowing. A middle range of .525 is common. Some instruments feature a "dual-bore" meaning that it has the resistance of a small bore instrument with the darker tone of a large bore.
- Metal: Yellow brass with a lacquer finish is the standard.
- Leadpipes: Variations in design and materials can have very noticeable effects on the instruments sound. Models with interchangeable leadpipes provide greater personalization.
- Manufacturers and models to consider: Bach 42BO or 36BO; Conn 88H; Getzen 1047
- Mouthpieces: Bach 6½AL or 5G

## A Little Band Story

This is a story about four band members named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important event to prepare for and Everybody was positive that Somebody would do the work. Anybody could have taken care of it but Nobody did. Somebody was angry because they realized that Everybody should have done their part. Somebody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody thought that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done and Everybody should have done! As a result, Everybody suffered and Nobody had a good time. Don't let this be Anybody's story when you have the chance to be Somebody that can make a difference.

## You Know You're a Band Parent When ...

1. You make three more trips than expected to drop off your band student with everything they need.
2. You carry spare black gloves, needle and thread, safety pins, black socks, electrical tape, duct tape and a toolbox to every band event.
3. You follow school busses around all day on Saturday.
4. You no longer speak of your child as a fourteen-year-old daughter/son, but as a "freshman trumpet", "junior saxophone", etc.
5. You have the band office phone number on speed dial (or even better, memorized).
6. You know you will be wearing maroon and white every Friday night and on certain Saturdays.
7. You don't leave home without stadium seats, camera, and video recorder.
8. Someone suggests you'd be a good candidate for booster club officer and you agree.
9. You can't stop humming the music to this year's show.
10. There's no such thing as "prior commitment".
11. You talk to the staff like you actually know something about music.
12. You wear the school colors now more than you did when you were in high school.
13. You start to critique your child's marching style.
14. You compare shelving in other band's trailers.

TALES FROM BAND CAMP



## Band Parenting

The transition from middle school band to high school band can be overwhelming, despite the best efforts of veteran band parents to assist. This phenomenon isn't restricted to St. Charles West. What follows is a tongue-in-cheek description of one freshman band parent's experience. It is based significantly on work posted at [www.bandparenting.net](http://www.bandparenting.net) that has been redacted for presentation here. Enjoy!

### Foreword

Band parenting hardly existed when we who are now band parents were in high school. The concept of band parenting, even the word itself, was all but unknown. Parents of band members attended one meeting a year and paid a dollar. The Band Director and band members did everything else. Parents were just a source of a small amount of additional money for the band program.

The tremendous growth of band activities in the last three decades forced a reinvention of band parenting. Other school booster clubs just raise a little money and show the colors at games. Modern band parenting is life's total commitment experience. Band parents have deep involvement in all aspects of high school band management during band season (June 1st to May 31st inclusive). Band parenting becomes the motive underlying existence, especially during the marching season. As a new band parent you are about to embark on your greatest adventure.

You can find additional help in your local community. If your child plays the flute, trumpet, trombone, clarinet, oboe, or alto saxophone you may wish to seek additional information about how to cope from an experienced band parent. If your child plays the tenor saxophone, the bassoon, the baritone saxophone, the euphonium or the French horn you may wish to seek additional information about how to cope from a bank loan officer. If your child plays the drums, the tuba or the piccolo you may wish to seek additional information about how to cope from an audiologist or a mental health professional.

As you strive, sparing no effort or expense, to be the best possible band parent pause occasionally to try to relax and have fun. As important as band is it may still be possible, at least theoretically, to overdo your commitment and burn out. Don't let this be an excuse for reducing your efforts. As the Head Director of the Milliard Fillmore Senior High School Marching Muskrat Band so wisely observed, "We've never lost a band parent yet. Well, there were those few on the band trip two years ago but the most satisfactory explanation is that they were abducted by space aliens."

### Why Your Child Must Be In Band

The reasons your child should be in band are so numerous that they could easily fill a book. Here are but a few:

1. Band is real neat. A bold statement, perhaps, but band can live up to it.
2. So you can be a band parent. Yes.
3. Your child will learn to pay attention and follow directions. Failure to pay attention on the marching field can mean being trampled by a phalanx of quick-marching sousaphones. Band members must listen to directions and keep their minds focused just to survive.
4. Your child will learn music not played on MTV. Too many young people are unaware of great art, good art or any art not in the 'Top 40'. Band will widen the scope of your child's appreciation.
5. Your child will not play pool (billiards). Playing pool is the first step on the sorry road that leads to bowling, mahjong, pin ball or even card games! Do you want your child to succumb to the questionable pleasures of cribbage? Of course you don't. Band is the answer.

6. It will keep your child off the streets (excepting parade) and away from almost everywhere else as well. Band members are too busy to get into trouble. After marching rehearsal and other band commitments plus enough studying to stay eligible there's barely time left for eating and sleeping.
7. If playing music to unborn babies can make them into little Einsteins, think what actually learning to play music can do for a teenager's intelligence.

### Qualifications for Band Parents

It's so simple. You need to be the parent (or grandparent, or god-parent, or foster parent, or step-parent, or adoptive parent, or great grandparent, or legal guardian, even "just like a parent") of a band member. Band Parents' Organizations properly use the widest possible definition of "parent".

New band parents often wonder if they have the training and skills to be proper band parents. Band parents require a will of iron, the Wisdom of Solomon, the endurance of a marathon runner, nerves of steel, the diplomacy of an ambassador, the strength of Hercules, the patience of Job, the self denial of a saint, the determination of the *Little Engine That Could*, plus the skills of a master mechanic, a registered nurse, a darn good carpenter, a school janitor, a tailor, a licensed psychologist, a political campaign fundraiser and a boot camp master sergeant.

Not every band parent needs to possess all of these virtues in full. When the Band Parent Organization (BPO) needs wisdom then two band parents, each of whom has half the Wisdom of Solomon, can form a committee. Three out-of-shape couch potato band parents can move a vibraphone as well as one in-shape jogger band parent. Science has proved (in studies conducted by the Band Parents' Research Institute of Elkhart, Indiana) that good band parents are made, not born. Your most important qualification for band parenting is your willingness to show up. They'll teach you everything else.

### Why YOU Really, Really, Really Should be a Band Parent

By now it will already be clear that students should be in band and that every parent can be a band parent. (If this isn't clear please go back and re-read the previous two sections five or six times.) It is likewise true that you really should be a band parent. It is your destiny. You can no more avoid it than death, taxes and fast food commercials.

Some people still resist. Many will advance spurious arguments in defense of their position. Seemingly compelling at first glance these arguments are easily refuted by a thorough understanding of band. Some common arguments against becoming a band parent are refuted here.

*I take care of my child. I don't have to worry about the rest of the band.* This shows a basic lack of understanding of how a band works. Bands are only as good as their weakest section. Your band member could have the finest instrument, the most expensive lessons, go to the best summer band camps and still never have any chance of winning at competition if the rest of the band is neglected. A few good players do not a good band make. In a good band every player must be good. To take care of your band member you have to help take care of the whole band.

*The school district should take care of everything the band needs.* That would be nice, wouldn't it? Usually they just pay for the basics. There are people in every community who do not understand the importance of band. You will have to fight them for every penny.

*I don't have enough money for band parenting.* No one does. Band always needs more money. If people waited until there was enough money for band there would be no bands. Be a good band parent with whatever money you have.

## How to Become a Band Parent

Just follow this simple program:

1. Acquire a child.
2. Enroll that child in band.
3. Repeat as often as you like.

It's easy to get started; but becoming a band parent is a gradual process. Perhaps you didn't even realize it was happening. The road to band parenting begins when your child is in fifth or sixth grade. A letter comes home saying your child has expressed an interest in band. At first it seems simple. You may need to rent or buy an instrument. Later there are private lessons. There might be a band parent meeting or two; an occasional concert to attend. Seventh and eighth grades the pace picks up a little: jazz band, concert band, pre-school rehearsals, after school sectionals, weekend competitions. Then you're asked to help out with the annual fundraiser.

The first inkling of what is to come arrives towards the end of eighth grade when you receive a form letter from the high school Band Director. This poorly reproduced missive will change your life more than any other single piece of paper you will ever see. After cheery greetings and congratulations on finishing middle school is the request to bring your child to a uniform fitting, notice of rookie camp for beginning marchers, the first band rehearsal, and the schedule for marching band camp.

While you are juggling your summer plans around marching band the letter will arrive from your Band Parents Organization (BPO). You are hereby invited to attend the next Meeting. You are about to become a really and truly, fully-fledged **BAND PARENT!**

## Time to Talk Expen\$e\$

Running any band is expensive. Running a good band is very expensive. Running a top rank band is probably beyond the means of the merely well off.

Taxpayers decided long ago that schools would be funded at a level just sufficient to accomplish the basic education of talented well motivated students. For anything more you are on your own. What the school district provides typically is limited to: salaries, bus transportation, and band room upkeep.

The director will outline the various other costs associated with the band program including, but not limited to, uniforms, fees, trips, meals, clinicians, arrangers, choreographers, props, program equipment, etc. In addition to these you may wish to pay for further enrichment of your own band member's band experience. Costs the band parent will pay which are not actually required by the band program but are certainly encouraged: instrument, accessories (valve oil, reeds, mutes, etc.), repairs and maintenance, lessons, band jacket, band sweatshirts, sheet music, contest photos, contest T-shirts, performance recordings, summer camps, etc. (Of course the above does not include travel/meal/lodging expenses for you at overnight trips, pay you are docked for skipping work to attend band events and fundraising purchases you make from people in exchange for their buying your band stuff.)

You may dwell momentarily on the high cost in money and time of band parenting. Put such thoughts aside. Money and time are small sacrifices for the good of the band program and the good the band program will do for your band member.

## The Marching Show

The Director will describe the year's marching contest show. Your interest will increase as you realize that you will see it in whole or in part over 67 times during the next five months.

If you have not seen a marching show recently prepare yourself to be amazed, astounded, affected, absorbed, agitated, amused, agog, anabatic and just generally describable by adjectives beginning with the letter "A". Thirty years ago bands just marched down the field and then played a couple of standard marches while standing at attention. Modern marching shows are aesthetically significant works of art.

A good marching show rivals Ringling Bros. in spectacle, the Olympics in athletic prowess, a symphony concert in musical quality, and grand opera in intellectual depth. High school bands now commission original music by Grammy winning composers and Broadway quality choreography by Tony winning choreographers. Full dance companies complement the performance with routines derived in ballet and jazz styles by their own staff of dancing masters.

## Band Parent Irritations

Though band is fun, like everything else in life there are irritations. Space does not permit a detailed consideration of every type of band parent irritation. Only the more interesting irritations will be covered. You will soon experience all the others anyway.

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### Band Member Behavior Irritation (BMBI)

Since Band Parents are parents of band members they live in a constant state of (at the best) near irritation with band member behavior. For some this serves as a vaccine which inoculates them from being further irritated by other band members. For most this acts as a sensitizer making them especially susceptible to BMBI. BMBI is insidious because it takes so many forms, almost as many forms as there are ways for band members to behave. Chaperone band parents are most affected because part of their duties is to pay attention to band member behavior and if necessary inspire the band member(s) to change it. The most effective way to deal with BMBI is to get far away from band members to an environment of pleasant good cheer. There is a charming outdoor bistro in Salzburg, Austria that suits this purpose perfectly.

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### Contest Judging Irritation (CJI)

A not always rational but entirely understandable irritation caused by contest judges who score based on the performance they saw and stubbornly refuse to realize how hard the band members and directors have worked for the last four months. Deal with it by complaining for several hours to other band parents and then going out for a nice dinner. Repeat as needed.

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### Fellow Band Parent Irritation (FBPI)

This occurs when band parents do not exactly agree on purposes, plans, budget, schedules, etc. which is all of the time to a greater or lesser degree. But it's not our fault. We have been negatively influenced by years of observing the behavior of the Congress from whom we learned how not to get along (and from whom we learned how to place the blame for this on someone else like the Congress). Deal with it by realizing that complaining too much may result in being elected as the next BPO President (or worse, Treasurer). If that still does not calm you then you probably deserve what you get which is to be elected the next BPO President (or worse, Treasurer). Just don't say you weren't warned. If you already are BPO President, (or worse, Treasurer) deal with it by finding some unwary soul – um, public spirited individual – to replace you in office. Another way of coping is to remind oneself that band isn't about the parents, it's about the kids. FBPI could be cured if everyone was concerned about what was in the best interest of all the band members all the time.

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### Football Fan Behavior Irritation (FFBI)

A common chronic irritation caused by football fans that make a lot of noise during the bands' half-time performance. There is no known way to eliminate the cause of this irritation. Deal with it by hoping that one day everyone will appreciate marching band as much as you do.

