

BRHS Marching Band Parent/Guardian Information Packet



The Student Experience

Students who sign up for this activity are beneficiaries of countless life lessons, travel experiences, personal & musical growth experiences, and forge relationships with friends that extend far beyond the yard lines of the football marching band field. There is no other activity that combines so many performance elements with students of all grades and sections all in the starting line up with no bench. The rewards of individual & collective achievement stems from the directors', staff, student, and band community's relentless commitment to being the best band we can be and this philosophy underlines all facets of the program. We strive for a balance of hard work & fun to meet these ends, but at the end of the day it is all about growth.

Performances

The band competes as a measure of growth and because these events provide the structures and venues where we are able to perform for a receptive crowd of judges and an appreciative "band audience". These competitions are opportunities to enjoy the fruits of our hard work and evaluate ourselves to take the next steps with our show, while also receiving professional feedback and experiencing the great collegiality with other HS bands. We also perform at home and away football games in the stands, give halftime performances at most home games, and make appearances at several community events throughout the year including the John Basilone Memorial Parade.

Over the course of our season student marching experiences include the following:

- HAVE FUN being with friends, making music, and performing.
- Learn & hone techniques for their instrument/section.
- Develop time management skills.
- Join a family of students from all grades.
- Learn the universal process of goal setting, measurement, and achievement.
- Healthy physical activity.
- 9th grade members get to know the school campus, befriend many upperclassmen, have an established "home base" in the band room including a locker for their belongings, and get

academic support from peers all before the first day of classes. It is a major jumpstart/boost to the start of what can be a challenging transition to a large high school!

- Unique travel events & opportunities.

In order to make all of that happen for the students, we try to organize ourselves as efficiently and effectively as possible. Please read the following information so you are prepared for the season ahead. Should you have any questions please reach out to the directors.

Mr. Mossa NMossa@brrsd.k12.nj.us & Dr. Bourgault TBourgault@brrsd.k12.nj.us

Schedule & Attendance Policy

The BRHS Marching Band season schedule and weekly schedules are presented at the BRHSBand.org website and website calendar, which is the most up-to-date location for all events. All practices and camp dates are mandatory for all members unless otherwise specified.

The nature of the marching band activity warrants full attendance at all times - there is no bench of backups that can take any members' spot, and each role in the ensemble is individually crafted for each performer. Additionally, absences on the field create many more obstacles for other band members to improve themselves as it forces the students to compensate for visual "holes" or a change in musical balances. Absences also put a strain on our staffing resources to catch up with individuals who incur an absence. What's more, it is important that students value the commitment to themselves as performers but also to the team which counts on that commitment from everyone. For these reasons, we stress the importance of managing personal, academic, and band schedules and ask that you, the family, support your student in their attendance at all band obligations. *Please do not schedule events for your student during marching band obligations if it can be helped (doctor or dentist appointments, family trips, college visits, etc.).*

Additionally, the posted start times for our practices are when organized activity/instruction begins, not when students are meant to arrive. Please ensure that students are punctual and "on time" (which actually means early). For example, most of our practices start at 6pm which should mean arriving at 5:45 or earlier. The posted end time for our events will be when students are dismissed. However, students often have equipment or instruments to handle/care for at the end of a rehearsal, etc. so the practice end time is not necessarily the pick up time. It is reasonable to expect approximately 15 minutes of clean up, etc. after dismissal for most students.

The students of the front ensemble will have a call time/dismissal time of approximately 45 minutes before/after posted times most rehearsals to facilitate the movement of instruments & equipment.

Students who are frequently late or incur unexcused absences may be subject to a revised performance role or dismissal from the ensemble at the discretion of the directors.

Religious events/obligations, illness, absence from school, or other emergencies of a one time nature are excused absences and never incur any sort of penalty. Students should disclose any expected

absences through the registration form when signing up, and we ask that parents/guardians email the directors with as much notice as possible in the event of an unplanned absence.

Volunteering

The Marching Band activity is a true community experience for our students and families alike. A coordinated network of parent volunteers are required to facilitate a successful season. We rely on the **BRHS Band Parent Association** to run our volunteer network and you are encouraged to become a paying member to support the organization's many efforts to back all of our programs at BRHS throughout each school year. Annual membership costs \$30 and you can sign up at BRHSBand.org/BPA

Regardless of BPA member status, ***we require that every marching band family participate in at least one volunteer initiative & contribute to/volunteer at NJMBDA State Championships***. All volunteer sign ups are collected via "SignUpGenius" links which will be sent out to all marching band families via email. The following list describes any of the ways you can help:

Uniform Fitting

Students of the wind & percussion sections are fitted for the marching band uniform over the course of a day or two during band camp in August. Parent volunteers take measurements, manage the distribution of uniform bottoms and tops, provide care instructions, give hemming instructions as needed, and take shoe measurements (only for students who need to purchase shoes).

**Color guard uniform measurements are typically separate from this process. Students of the color guard make plans for measurements with the color guard staff*.*

Chaperone

Chaperones ride the buses to competitions and away football games with the students. Chaperones on each trip assist with supervision of the students when traveling, escorting students to and from restrooms, carrying water bottles through warm up areas and in bleachers, and assisting with front ensemble equipment and instruments when entering and exiting the field for performances. We typically travel with 1-2 chaperones per bus.

Truck Drivers

The band travels with two box trucks to competitions on Saturdays. Truck drivers for the band will be responsible for picking up and returning pre-arranged rental trucks from local rental agencies and/or the school district's box truck which is parked at the bus yard adjacent to Basilone Field. Truck drivers will be given specific instructions & keys if applicable by/from the directors and can expect to be reimbursed for any fuel or toll costs from the BPA. Truck drivers do not need a CDL, but will be asked to submit proof of insurance, drivers' license, and a completed waiver form for the BRRSD since the trucks are paid for from district accounts. It is ideal to have 4 truck volunteers for each competition (1 driver per truck, 1 passenger/co-pilot per truck for GPS).

Additionally, the band needs a driver for most rehearsals at Basilone Field (Mondays & Wednesdays). Drivers for mid-week rehearsals can expect to pick up the school district owned box truck at 5:00pm

and assist with front ensemble instrument load and travel to Basilone Field and then return with the truck for a 9:00pm dismissal and assist with front ensemble instrument load back to BRHS.

Pit & Prop Crew

Members of the pit crew assist the front ensemble with loading and unloading from the trucks as well as managing the props for the marching band for rehearsal and competition days. Pit crew members should be prepared for moderately physical tasks of pushing/pulling large instruments & equipment varying distances at competitions through warm up and performance areas.

Meals & Snacks

The band enjoys meal times together on our football game and competition days prior to departure. The students are always welcome to bring their own food but most rely on the meal organization & pre-ordering assembled by the BPA. As such, we ask for food service volunteers to assist with feeding the band.

Fall Banquet

Our championship weekend concludes with a celebration of our students' hard work in the form of a banquet dinner we put together at the school. The banquet comes with a few extra details that are not included in typical meal times such as decorations, a special cake, and more.

TCNJ State Championships

NJMBDA, our main competition circuit, entrusts the BRHS BPA to organize and run their premier state championship event due to our parent association's amazing leadership, operations, and organization. For several years, this event has run smoothly thanks to our parents' hard work and it has resulted in an amazing experience for our students and hundreds of students throughout New Jersey who compete at this event each year. Plus, this serves as our biggest fundraiser of the year!

We have been invited to continue hosting this championship event at The College of New Jersey and it presents us with dozens of jobs/tasks/volunteer opportunities that require all of our efforts. Please reserve the entire day of Sunday 11/3 & the inclement weather date of Sunday 11/10 and plan to be present. More information about specific duties/tasks/jobs for the event will be communicated at a later date - but there is something for everyone!

Cost & Fees

BOA Delaware Overnight Trip - Not to Exceed \$650 per student

The marching band will be competing at the Bands of America Regional Championship at the University of Delaware on Saturday October 19th. The band will leave school on Friday October 18th, perform & compete at the show on Saturday, and stop at Six Flags in Jackson, NJ on the way home Sunday October 20th. Included in the final cost is transportation on motor coach buses, 2 nights hotel room, cost of entry at the competition, tickets to Six Flags Great Adventure, the travel arrangement services of Tour Resource Consultants, and several meals throughout the trip.

The itinerary, final cost and all chaperoning information will be presented at the first parent meeting in August. We anticipate presenting a fundraising opportunity to offset individual trip cost per student.

Shoes & Gloves - Approx. \$50

Marching footwear is required for all students as a part of their uniform. The shoes and gloves are purchased to keep by each member through a coordinated bulk purchase order at the conclusion of uniform fittings in August.

All wind players require marching gloves & marching shoes. Percussionists need only marching shoes (no gloves).

Color guard shoe cost is typically the same or very close to the marching shoe cost but the gloves tend to be slightly more expensive.

Final costs will be communicated in August but typically the overall expense for both shoes & gloves is approximately \$50.

Students who already own a fitting pair of marching shoes or guard shoes do not need to purchase again unless their size has changed or a new color is needed (color guard).

******Due to BRRSD policy updates in Spring 2024, there are no more BRRSD district activity fees to participate in co-curricular activities/teams.******