

*Butler High School  
Marching Band &  
Color Guard  
Parent  
“Lessons Learned”  
Collection*

*Spring, 2010 Edition*

## ***Welcome!***

Being a member of the Butler High School Marching Band and Color Guard will bring your children an interesting, and fulfilling educational experience. They will work hard and experience many triumphs, as well as downfalls; two things that will prepare them for the real world after high school

We sincerely hope this guide will answer some important questions about time management, time commitment, band fees and how to pay for them, fundraising, and uniforms. We would also like to give you some “insider” information on what it takes to be a band student, and a band parent!

As novice band parents, we too wanted to know what we should do. After all, the only people who were even more confused and looking to us for answers, were our children. We wanted to share with the “incoming parents” some of the answers to these many questions before we too forget how it felt not knowing what was going on...(of course we still don't have all the answers)!

## ***How Will My Child Have Time?***

### **TIME MANAGEMENT**

How will our children have the time to go to rehearsals three days a week after school, perform at eight to twelve Friday night football games, and compete on Saturdays? How will they have the time to do all of this, within a three-month period, and keep up their grades??

TIME MANAGEMENT will be the most important tool that your children will acquire when they become members of the BHS Marching Band and Color Guard Program.

The students need to quickly learn that they must use every minute of their day wisely. The time not spent in practice will very likely be spent doing schoolwork. At any given time you will find students in the band room, out in the hallway, or in any other space available doing homework. This is taught to them when they first join the program and it is expected of them. Remember that many band members are Honors or AP students.

Your student will learn how to keep a schedule, how to be punctual, and how to set priorities.

Early in the summer a detailed schedule will be distributed to all band students. It will list every rehearsal, football game, and competition your student will be required to attend the next four months (well, almost every rehearsal). You will be able to view this schedule at BPAA's web site at [www.butlerperformingarts.com](http://www.butlerperformingarts.com) and this schedule will now become a permanent attachment to your refrigerator.

Finally, your child will learn how to set priorities. There will be less time for television and video games, and rehearsals, performances and homework will now fill most of their free time.

### ***What About Rehearsals?***

#### **DOES MY STUDENT REALLY HAVE TO BE THERE?**

YES! Rehearsals during Marching Band season are mandatory. One absent member will disrupt rehearsal for all members of the band. To be able to put the best possible musical product on the field, the staff and director need for all members of the band to be present during all scheduled rehearsals. Please see the Band Handbook for the consequences of missed rehearsals. Your membership depends on consistent participation. Management of a band this size is a monumental task and it becomes next to impossible if members of the band are absent. Please help your student make every effort to be there.

### ***What is Band Camp? Group developments creates bonds.***

Band Camp is a not-to-be missed experience. The students spend time not only playing music and learning field formations, but also get to know each other, form friendships, and bond as a group. In general, parents drop off sons and daughters on a Monday morning and return on Saturday afternoon to pick up a Marching Band member. The transformation is amazing. The camp schedule looks something like this:

Breakfast

Practice

Practice

Practice

Lunch

Practice

Practice

Practice

Dinner

Free time (very short)

Group activity (dance, games, etc.)

Bed and light's out

Kids stay in dorm rooms—generally by grade (of course by gender).

Chaperones are on the floors. A thorough list of things to bring will be provided as well as a list of rules, emergency contact info etc. Snacks for sharing are always welcome.

### ***How Do We Keep Informed?***

The BPAA web site [www.butlerperformingarts.com](http://www.butlerperformingarts.com) is where you will find the latest information on all upcoming events and fundraising opportunities. You will find rehearsal times, schedules, Band Handbooks, Chaperone Guidelines, and parent contact information. You will also have an opportunity to sign up for the e-mail list.

When you need additional or official information, contact the Band Director, John Gorretta, at [john.gorretta@vandalia-butler.k12.oh.us](mailto:john.gorretta@vandalia-butler.k12.oh.us).

### *How Do We Pay For This?*

There are many questions about the funding of the Marching Band and Color Guard Program. While the middle school programs traditionally did not have fees, the high school band program is very different. The fee schedule (on the website) is broken down into payment coupons. We do not want economic factors keeping a student from participating in band. We offer many fundraisers designed to offset individual fees. Some of the most successful are the Entertainment Book sale, Panera Bread coupon sales, and Cookie dough sale. We are always open to other ideas.

The best way to learn about fundraising opportunities is by keeping informed; through the BPAA web site and attending the BPAA meetings. Payment due dates are not flexible; however unique circumstances can always be discussed and worked out with the Band Director. BPAA also donates significant amounts of money to the program which helps keep costs lower. In order to support the program, each family will be asked to volunteer a few hours for each BPAA sponsored event including concessions, air show program sales and Kickline Invitational.

### *How Do Parents Get Involved?*

#### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT = A SUCCESSFUL BAND PROGRAM**

Getting involved in the band program will give you the opportunity to share with your child these last four years of their education. Your child might say they rather not have you around, but most kids actually learn that in reality they appreciate your involvement and will thank you in the future.

BHS is fortunate to have a great director and staff. The band and color guard parents are needed to support the director, and help with the details of fundraising, transporting, feeding and watering an organization this size. The group needs parents to be able to function; it is for this reason that we urge you to get involved. Grandparents, siblings, or any member of your family can get involved and make a difference. Join the Butler Performing Arts Association; it is a great way to meet the parents and the kids your student will be spending much of their time with for the next few years.

Each year, BPAA donates over \$35,000 to the Butler choirs, kickline, band and colorguard. This is made possible by parents and students working various events. Volunteer requirements are:

1. Donate water and snacks to be used for Air Show and Band Camp.
2. Each student and a parent are responsible for two shifts at the Air Show selling programs. If a parent is unavailable ,(works on weekends, ect.) the student can work two shifts.
3. Each student is responsible for two fall concession events and one spring concession event. At least one of these shifts needs to be a parent working a Friday Night Football game. Exceptions will be made for special circumstances only.
4. Contribute a needed item to the Kickline Invitational dance competition in March. Students are also required to work one shift at the event, and parent volunteers are also needed.

The easiest way to volunteer is by attending the monthly BPAA meetings where you will learn more about the program and where would best fit in. It IS fun and you meet the other parents with the same interests as yours.

### ***Uniforms, Uniforms – What Do They Wear?***

**Marching Band Rehearsals:** Wear comfortable shoes, closed toe, no flip flops. Light colored t-shirt and shorts are appropriate. Students may want an extra t-shirt in case of a sudden rain shower. Expect that the shoes will be “honorably retired” at the end of the season as mud will take its toll. Water bottles should also be brought to rehearsals!

**Summer Band Uniform:** This is worn during selected summer performances. The members will wear their “show shirt,” white shoes, and khaki shorts. You will need to provide white athletic shoes (no other colors) and khaki shorts (tan, NOT greenish or white.)

### **Official Band Uniform**

Uniforms will be fitted and assigned to students at the beginning of the season. It costs over \$300 to replace a uniform. Uniforms need to be treated with respect and care so that they will last many more years. Uniforms will not be sent home, but will be kept in the uniform closet or in the trailer. The student is responsible for making sure that the student’s uniform is properly hung up in the provided garment bag.

The uniform includes:

- Black marching band shoes – These are special marching band shoes and cost \$35.
- Band Uniform jacket
- Band Uniform bibs/pants
- Show Shirt/ athletic shorts are to be worn under the uniform; many times students will be changing into and out of their uniforms in public.
- Black gloves
- Gauntlets (these wrap around the wrist and give a nice, finished look to the sleeve)
- Black socks. We suggest having several pairs exactly alike. (Dryers love to eat socks.)

The show shirt, socks, and shoes are purchased by each student. The remaining parts of the uniform are provided. Show shirts and shoes will be available for purchase at the beginning of the season. Uniforms are washed by parent volunteers and are kept at the school or in the trailer. Parent volunteers maintain and do the alterations to the uniforms, so if you are handy with sewing, this may be a job for you to consider. Color Guard uniforms change from year to year.

Tips to remember while in uniform:

- No visible jewelry - One small earring is permitted in each ear
- Colored drinks, condiments, and any other messy or greasy food are not to be eaten while in uniform.

## *Performances*

### **BRING A CAMERA!**

## **FOOTBALL GAMES**

There will be a marching band (MB) pre-game performance before each home game, usually starting around 7:15 pm. (All football games start at 7:30 unless otherwise announced.)

During pre-game, the MB will play the BHS fight song, Alma Mater and Star Spangled Banner. The MB will then form a tunnel on the field for the football players to run through. Once the football team has taken the field, the MB will march in formation to their seats in the stands. They will support the team by playing “stand tunes” until early in the second quarter. Then, the MB will leave the stands for warm up and halftime preparation.

At half-time, the visiting team’s band performs first. The BHS half-time show will vary. Often the performance will feature the Color Guard, the Butler Kickline, or the performance may be part of the competition show.

After the half-time show, band members are free for the 3rd quarter to eat the provided cookies or get something from the concession stand, relax and socialize. They need to be back in their seats, ready to play by the end of the 3rd quarter. 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter privileges may be revoked by the director. Instead of having free time, the Butler Drumline usually performs in front of the student section during 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.

During the 4th quarter, the band will continue to play stand tunes and drum cadences. Once the game and performance is over, the band will march back together to either the band room or the buses.

Games are a great chance for band parents to get to know each other and support the MB by sitting together and cheering on both the band and the football team. Wear your school colors and or the band t-shirt and have fun!

## **CONTESTS**

This is where your child disappears to on Saturdays during the fall. Contests are a competition for the band and color guard, and are a time for the students to shine and show off all that they have worked for. During a contest, the band will perform their entire show. Contests are scripted, with bands following a set 15 minute sequence for warm up, rehearsal and performance. The schedule for performances will be available just a few days prior to the contest. Often, contests will be an all day event. Judging is based on criteria of the contest and awards are presented in several categories. Although the show remains the same, there are two types of contests in which they may participate; TOB (Tournament of Bands) and MSBA (Mid-States Band Association). The basic format for the contests is the same, but each association operates and judges with different rules and criteria.

Tournament of Bands is a non-profit educational organization that is available to any middle, junior high, senior high, college or university. TOB sanctions approximately 100 field band events and nearly 100 indoor events as well as two major championships at the conclusion of each competitive season. On any given Saturday night in the fall, the TOB will have from 8 to 14 field band competitions providing the opportunity for hundreds of Marching Bands to participate in its competitive arena.

MSBA is a consortium of High School band organizations in and around the Dayton Ohio area. There are no "official" membership requirements: MSBA supports many High School band and guard units through sanctioned invitational competitions and a championship show at the end of the marching season.

For more info, see [www.midstatesba.org](http://www.midstatesba.org) or [www.njatob.org](http://www.njatob.org) .

Going to watch the band compete can be fun for parents too. You may want to consider volunteering as a pit crew member or a chaperone. Contests are held outdoors in football stadiums. Admission fees are around \$7.00 to \$8.00 (chaperones and pit crew members get in free.) Many of our band parents and supporters sit together and in the spirit of supporting the band, wear Show T-shirts or BHS colors.

### ***Helpful Hints to Save You Time and Grief:***

- Make your child responsible for being prepared. The first time they forget something will be the last!!! They learn to be resourceful when they have to be.
- Network – This is how we meet each other. It is also one of the best ways to get helpful hints on band parenting from others.
- Parents can carpool to competitions!
- Be prepared to cheer! The band loves it when they have their own cheering section.
- Keep extra socks, t-shirt etc. in your car or purse just in case.
- Visit the band web site to stay informed.
- Sign up for the e-mail notification list on the web site.

### ***Terms and Phrases:***

- **“Band practice is at 6 o’clock.”** –Translation at 6 o’clock, your child should be in place with their instrument and music and ready to play. A student dropped off at 5:55 will likely be late for practice, since they have only a few minutes to get ready. Always allow for extra time, since a student that is late for practice may be asked to do push-ups or run laps.
- **“Are you working the Pit?”**  
The pit is not something bad. It’s a group of percussion instruments that travel on the trailer and are stationary during performances. Parents in the Pit Crew work feverishly to set up and take down the pit in record time, before and after a performance (and you think race pit crews are fast!!)

- **“Last Time”**  
This can mean one more time, a few more times, it can mean you’re beginning to approach the road to the last time, or it can mean we’ll keep doing it until you get it right! There will be times when practice will run over. This may be because the kids are “oh so close” to getting the performance right, and the director doesn’t want to end that momentum!
- **“Show”**  
This is the band’s song line-up for a given performance. There will be “Half-Time Shows” that will only be performed at football games, and there will be a “Competition Show.” The competition show will have a theme and a name and will be performed at all contests.
- **“Show Shirt”**  
Band members will purchase t-shirts that promote their show. Supplies permitting, these shirts will also be available for parents and family members to purchase. Wearing one to a football game or contest shows your support and BHS spirit.
- **“3rd Quarter Cookies”**  
During the 3rd quarter of home football games, the group invites the opposing team’s band to join them for a snack of cookies and drinks. It is a great time for band members to meet kids from other schools. Parent volunteers serve the cookies and drinks.
- **“Senior Night”**  
During a designated home football game, senior members and their parents are honored and recognized.

***You might be a band parent if...***

- Most of your checks are made out to “BPAA.”
- You plan your vacations around Band Camp.
- You can “hum” the whole show.
- Your only free night is Monday night.
- Half your wardrobe is purple and gold.
- You no longer speak of your child as a fourteen-year-old daughter/son, but as a “freshman trumpet, senior drum major,” etc.
- You have the concession stand prices memorized.
- You own a shirt that has a nacho cheese stain.
- You know what temperature the hotdogs need to be cooked to.
- You prominently display a band calendar in the kitchen, have band dates marked on the calendar in your purse and/or have the BPAA website saved in your “favorites.”
- You know that you will be wearing something either purple or gold every Friday night and on Saturdays.
- You don’t leave home without cushions to sit on, camera and camcorder!
- You are cheering with other band parents!