

Holly Springs High School Band
Michael E. Biasi – Director

To all new students and their parents,

Recently, you have been asked to think about what courses you will be taking next year. You might have considered courses for career preparation or new electives. No matter what you are looking for, the Holly Springs High School Band will guarantee a positive transition and will be an awesome experience in your high school career. Performing in a musical ensemble develops teamwork, emotional expression, critical thinking, listening and decision making skills. No other course you can take develops all of these intellectual and emotional skills while experiencing the fun, excitement, and creativity of live group performance.

You probably have many questions about the Holly Springs High School Band program. Listed below are common questions and concerns for both parents and students:

WHAT IS A BLOCK SCHEDULE?

- 4 classes per semester *90 minutes per class
- Each semester of class receives 1 credit

Nearly all classes on a block schedule cover a full year's worth of material in one semester. However, because of the time and attention required to improve our individual and ensemble playing skills, our band classes meet year-round and students are expected to enroll for both semesters in a Band class. For freshman this is 52552AF and 52552AS.

WHY TAKE BAND IN HIGH SCHOOL?

- NO ONE sits on the bench in band or color guard. EVERYONE IS ON THE TEAM.
- More challenging music and ensemble playing
- New friends before school begins
- New experiences and travel

I CAN'T TAKE BAND ALL FOUR YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL

Like everything in life, you have to make choices, but the answer to this concern is YES, YOU CAN! In this schedule, a student...

- Takes band both fall and spring semester – every semester.
- Is able to take all of the courses required for him/her to graduate, event with the requirements of the NC Course of Study, Career Pathways, and the North Carolina Scholars Program.
- Is taking at least 2 AP classes and one extra science course.
- Takes 2 foreign language courses.

- Even with this load, common for students in the University Prep pathway, you have five extra electives outside of band courses. That's a minimum of one new course per school year. You've got plenty of room to take a vocational course, sing in a choral group, or take an art class. Even with all that, you can enjoy Band every semester!

DOES BEING IN BAND COST ANYTHING?

As our band is growing, so are our expenses. Each student will need to participate in "fair share" for concert band (\$70 for the year) and marching band. Because of the costs for our concert music, instruments, band camp, travel to competitions, custom-designed music, and additional clinicians/musical staff, we ask each student to pay an assessment. This assessment is their "fair share" of the additional costs with a competitive band program. It is my promise to keep this reasonable each year so that any student who wants to participate can. We never deny students opportunities to participate due to cost. *The cost for the 2009 Golden Hawks Regiment will be between \$330-\$450, of which \$75 is due by June 8, 2009.*

We do several fundraisers so that any student who wants to be involved in marching band or color guard can meet their assessment. Scholarships are available (which cover the entire assessment fee) based upon need.

ARE AFTER-SCHOOL REHEARSALS REQUIRED?

The Golden Hawks Regiment (marching band) rehearses exclusively after school. This is designed so the focus of the school day is spent on concert music and fundamentals of playing. (There is no NC Standard Course of Study curriculum for marching band.) However, this is not a year-round, every day kind of schedule. The marching band plans to hold rehearsals on Thursday evenings and Monday and Wednesday afternoons from August-October. The color guard and percussion section usually have one additional rehearsal in the early season; these will be determined in the fall. The marching band will also perform at competitions in October, home Friday football games and parades in November and December. Students travel by bus and are closely chaperoned by staff and band parents.

Other after-school rehearsals take place in the spring with the Jazz Band, Musical Pit Orchestra, and sometimes the concert band/wind ensemble around concert festival. However, the majority of rehearsals take place during the school day.

All performing groups (Golden Hawks Regiment, Concert Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble) have after-school performances. As with your middle school band, these performances are a required part of the course.

HOW DO I GET INTO MARCHING BAND?

In May of each year, there is an informational meeting that will give you all the tools necessary to join Marching Band for the following school year. Marching Band intents will be due in May and your financial obligations will be due in early June. We will have a mini-camp for all new members in May after school. Percussion and Colorguard will also conduct their auditions in May. All band students who wish to join Marching Band will be given an opportunity to do so.

WHAT IS BAND CAMP?

Our marching band camp has been set to begin August 3 at 8 AM. We will be conducting this camp at Holly Springs High School. Students stay on campus and are supervised by Mr. Biasi, band staff, and volunteer band parents. They begin their show rehearsals and have fun activities throughout the week. Each band camp marks the beginning of great friendships that continue throughout their high school career. Band becomes an extended family because everyone (kids and parents) works so closely together.

HOW LONG DOES MARCHING BAND LAST?

Marching band lasts from August – December. The bulk of the season ends the first week of November. Parades are usually in December. If the football team qualifies for the state playoffs, we perform at the games until they are eliminated.

I'LL BE INVOLVED WITH SPORTS/CHEERLEADING AND DON'T HAVE TIME TO TAKE BAND.

Many band students are involved in work, sports, student government, church activities, and other performing groups. With careful time management, a student can successively juggle many activities. I will publish a schedule with all band activities at the beginning of the year and work to make any conflict work out in the student's favor. I've been very successful at doing this. Students should make a commitment to attend all band performances, regardless of which group they join.

Students must work out your daily schedule so that they have time to attend band practices, complete homework and practice their instruments, but they've already been doing this for three years!

WHAT ABOUT AN AUDITION?

The auditions will take place in late April or early May for the concert ensembles. They are very low key and are only used to determine a student's placement for second semester. They are also a chance for the student and the band director to meet and speak on an one-to-one basis. More information will be posted on the bands website

(www.goldenhawksband.org). If you don't want to audition, that is fine, however you will be placed in Concert Band. You must audition if you want to be considered for the Wind Ensemble.

HOW AM I GRADED IN BAND CLASS?

- Daily Performance (50% of total grade/what you do each day, how well you are prepared)
- Tests (20% of total grade/playing quizzes, in-class written quizzes, attendance at rehearsals, pass-offs on selected excerpts of music)
- Projects (20% of total grade/attendance at concerts, major tests)
- Homework (10% of total grade/quarter assessments, written homework)

Regardless of a student's skill level, they are mainly graded on their progress. If a student is not a strong player when they begin, this is taken into consideration. Any student willing to work hard and improve WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. In addition, our student leaders will meet for small group sectionals (marching band) and help your child with basic skills, learning new music and marching. We regularly hire clinicians to work with the students individually or in sections.

WHAT ARE FRESHMAN BAND, CONCERT BAND AND WIND ENSEMBLE?

These are our concert ensembles. All freshman with the exception of marching percussionists are placed in the freshman band in the fall (52552AF). In the second semester, students are placed into Wind Ensemble or Concert Band. This is based on an audition that takes place at the end of the first semester. Students are placed in a group based on an audition and/or director recommendation (for new students) or their previous year's performance and audition results (current students). The concert band is for less-advanced students while the Wind Ensemble is for more-advanced players. Enrollment in the Wind Ensemble is limited to maintain proper instrumentation. Almost all freshman are placed into Concert Band. *If you sign up for the wrong course, don't worry. The band director will fix any errors prior to you starting school. **The important thing is that you sign up for band both semesters.***

I WAS IN PEP BAND/JAZZ BAND IN MIDDLE SCHOOL. DO YOU OFFER THESE?

Yes, our marching band serves as the pep band for football games. During the winter and spring, we form a jazz band.

Questions for Mr. Biasi? Questions about the Band Boosters?
Holly Springs HS Band Office phone – 919-577-1766
Band email – mbiasi@wcpss.net