

WEBSITE

The band has its own portion of the SISD website! You can be kept up to date by going to <http://www.shermanisd.net/shs/band-2/band.html>. In addition to important dates and information you will also find forms and contact information. Band parents maintain the site so check it often all year long to find out what's happening.

BAND CAMP

August is the beginning of our busy marching season. Attendance at this camp is mandatory so plan vacations accordingly. Speak to the directors with any concerns.

UIL rules dictate that a high school program cannot begin their marching drill until August 1. As you can imagine, this puts important emphasis on this camp. The dates and times vary, but get ready for 8+ hour days. Comfortable tennis shoes, light colored clothes, and a cap are the best type of attire. They must also have a **water** jug, sunscreen, and sunglasses. Have your band member check with their section leaders for other good advice. Please remind your student to stay well hydrated!

Some of the things happening at this camp include:

1. Marching instruction
 2. Learning show music
 3. Learning drill
 4. Uniform fittings
 5. Football program pictures
 6. Photo Button pictures
 7. Collection of band, color guard fees and instrument fees
 8. Purchasing required accessories
- Lots & lots of bonding between old and new band members.

WEEKLY MARCHING PRACTICES

Once school starts the practice schedule during marching season can be rather hectic. It will greatly aid your student to mark **your** calendar accordingly. UIL rules dictate that Texas bands can practice only 8 additional hours per week beyond class time and performances, so attendance is crucial.

BAND FEES

There are fees associated with the high school marching band program. Freshman fees are approximately \$175.00 (or less if we are able to negotiate a lower dry cleaning price), this price includes: meals for students on band trips (football games and contests), uniform cleaning, marching shoes, warm weather maroon polo shirt and the logo shirt to be worn under their uniform. These fees are some of the lowest of any band in the state and we are constantly working to keep costs at an absolute minimum. We do not want cost to prevent any student from being in our band program. We have several options available to parents to help deflect costs. You may make partial monthly or even weekly payments into your students band account or you may qualify for some financial assistance from the booster organization. Our funds are limited to no more than ½ of band fees.

SNEAK PEEK

This annual event showcases what the students have learned during band camp. It is traditionally held on the Thursday prior to the first day of school. It is also the time that we have our free food handler's class for parents who would like to help in the concession stands during the year.

SPIRITWEAR

Spirit wear is available for parents and other family members. We have many different types of shirts, sweatshirts, caps, etc. that are available at the beginning of marching season. You will have opportunities to view the products for sale at Sneak Peek, band parent meetings, and at some football games. It is a great way to show your support for the band.

PEP RALLIES

Pep rallies are held each Friday afternoon during football season. Parents are invited to attend and have a special seating area on the gym floor. The approximate start time is 2:30 pm. You can call the school office for the exact time, but plan to arrive early especially if you are videotaping. Parking is available in the visitor parking lot.

UNIFORM CARE

We are fortunate to have new uniforms. The students will be given instructions on the proper care and procedure to store their uniforms in the band hall and the band trailer. After football games and contests your student is **required** to bring his or her own uniform back to the band hall and PROPERLY hang it up in the appropriate area. Students, don't go for the 'slacker rack' just don't go there!

FRIDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL GAMES

Fridays in the fall semester become pretty fast paced for the Bearcat Band. The students will be given a scheduled meeting time to be at the band hall or the football stadium. They will also be required to return to band hall after every game to properly hang up their uniform.

The buses leave the stadium as soon as possible after each away game and return to the band hall. If you need to pick up your non-driving band member, you can wait in the band hall parking lot, but beware, there are many cars doing just the same thing.

COLOR GUARD

The color guard is an integral group that enhances the visual performance of the marching band (much like the "twirlers" of yesteryear). Selection is based on tryouts in the spring. The group is under the direction of the color guard director and is provided specially trained instructors. The guard may work on dance, rifles, sabers, as well as flags. The color guard is an auxiliary component of the band. Members of the guard are band members first, as with any other marching section.

BUS TRIPS

The band takes several bus trips through the year. Charter buses are used for "big" trips while "yellow dogs" (school buses) are used for Friday night football games. There is a larger cost associated with Charter Bus trips. These bus trips are great fun for the band. Be assured that there will be adult chaperones on every bus.

Band members are usually permitted to bring, snacks, videos, iPod's, blankets, and pillows on the bus trips. Quite often band parents donate snacks and drinks for the longer trips in addition to items that students bring. You will receive itineraries with times, locations, and phone numbers for longer bus trips.

UIL—REGIONAL CONTEST IN EVEN YEARS (2008, 2010 etc)
THE ROAD TO STATE MARCHING CONTEST IN ODD YEARS (2009, 2011 etc)

The University Interscholastic League--UIL--governs the state marching contests. The UIL has strict rules concerning the conduct and procedures to advance to the state competitions. You are probably aware of the fact that schools in the state of Texas are divided into classes based on student population. Sherman High is "class 4A". In order to make the state competition more manageable, class 3A and 5A schools have their marching competitions in even numbered years, i.e., 2004, 2006, and 2008. The 2A and 4A schools hold their marching competitions in odd numbered years.

The road to the state contest begins with the regional marching competition. This is usually held in mid-October. The bands are given a rating of Division I, II, III, or IV. There are not 1st, 2nd, 3rd places, etc. All bands receiving a Division I then proceed to the Area competition.

Division I bands from 2 –3 regions will gather at the area competition. The location of the area contest can vary based on the geographical makeup of the bands. It is during this competition that the bands advancing to state will be decided. All bands perform one time and a select number of bands will perform again in finals. A predetermined number of bands (based on the number of bands receiving Division I ratings) will get to make the coveted trip to State.

You can already see that just a trip to state is very exciting and just to get to make the trip is an honor. We have always considered it a great accomplishment to get to board the buses. Any placement or championship is "icing on the cake". You can get lots of information and see pictures and ratings on the UIL web site. The address is www.uil.utexas.edu

There are also patches available at UIL to commemorate contests. Please plan to purchase the patches at the event as some contests do not offer them afterward. Your student will want them later when they receive their letter jackets

INTERNET ETIQUETTE

There are an abundance of newsgroups and bulletin boards peopled by band students and parents. These sites are a great way to hear about what bands are doing around the country. Though entertaining, these places are littered with posts which reflect poorly on individuals and organizations. It's obvious that many people either don't realize or don't care that their personal thoughts, whether subjective or inflammatory, reflect on their entire group.

Unfortunately, there have been incidents in other bands where someone posted something they thought innocent, but it upset others when taken a certain way and drew criticism. Even when not intended, this is embarrassing. The safest way to avoid criticism or scrutiny is NOT to post. However, if you choose to post comments remember that you are speaking on behalf of the entire band and we want to continue our first-class reputation. This goes for students and parents.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons are offered on every instrument, pending instructor availability. The lesson fees vary by instructor. Students with the benefit of private lessons have a history of becoming top players in the program. Please contact the directors for a list of instructors for your student's instrument. In some instances, financial aid may be available to assist families with lessons, please see your directors for information about additional assistance with lesson fees.

CONCESSION STANDS

The largest fundraiser the band undertakes is the operation of the concession stands during football season and soccer season. For this reason we need a multitude of parents to be available to help in many different facets of this endeavor. The most visible function job for a parent is working in the stands during the game; however, there are many jobs that do not require your presence during game time. We need parents who are willing to solicit volunteers, call or e-mail the volunteers to remind them of their concession assignments. We also need parents who are available to 'set-up' the stands, they will come in early in the afternoon and start the food prep so that all food will be ready when the gates open for game time. If each band parent will sign up for at least one game, it will greatly benefit not only our program, but our ability to save you money by keeping our band fees some of the lowest in our area!

PASTA SUPPER

This event, usually held in March is our opportunity to showcase the spring contest music and enjoy performances from not only the High School bands, but Piner as well. You have probably already attended as the parent of a Piner band member, and enjoyed the fine food and music. However, as a high school band parent your help will be invaluable.

The Pasta supper is completely planned and served by band parents. Careful planning through the years has gotten it down to a fine art, but many people are needed to sell tickets, set up, cook pasta, bake deserts, serve, etc. This event is not a fundraising event; we try to charge only enough to cover the expense of the dinner.

CONCERT SEASON

Because the marching band is so visible and performs so often publicly, concert season is sometimes "forgotten". This is far from being true. Concert season is the time when most musical training takes place and each band's performance rating during the UIL concert contest is the basis for evaluating the entire band program.

Band members will be placed in bands based on the number of students and their playing abilities. Tryouts are held in late spring and band selections are announced in May to facilitate the students' class schedules.

Two concerts are presented at the high school and are open to the public. A winter concert is presented in December and a spring concert is held in May. These are wonderful, well-attended concerts and you will hear challenging music. This is a great time to invite the grandparents, aunts and uncles and let them hear "what else the Bearcat Bands can do".

SOLO AND ENSEMBLE CONTESTS

These contests give the band student and director a good idea of how each student is progressing musically. Solo and Ensemble contest is usually held in February. Your child will be given plenty of time to prepare a solo or ensemble performance. All band members are encouraged to participate.

JAZZ BAND

The Jazz Band meets during the second semester. Admission to this fun, hip group is based on tryout performances. The jazz band performs at various events in the area and competes in jazz band contests. Be sure to mark your calendar for this extraordinary performance.

REGION, AREA & STATE CONCERT BANDS

Individual band members are strongly encouraged to tryout for these bands. Pre-selected tryout music is available to all students during summer band. The region band tryouts are held in early December in two phases. If a student passes the second phase they attain area status and therefore are eligible to compete for the all-state band. This competition is usually held in early January.

Band members who become All-State musicians assemble in San Antonio in February to perform at the Texas Music Educators Association convention. The bands and orchestras made up of these wonderful musicians represent the top 1% of the high school band members in the state of Texas. Advancing to All-State is the highest individual honor a high school musician can achieve.

WINTER GUARD

We are looking forward to starting a winter guard program in Sherman. Those in color guard for the marching season and marching members who want to perform in a different environment enjoy this winter activity. Winter guard performs a routine in the gym to recorded music. Not only is there an effort to perform well for winter guard, but this activity helps strengthen the color guard for the upcoming marching season.

PERCUSSION SHOW

A special "Percussion Concert" is held in the spring featuring the front line percussion ensemble and drumline. The students perform music that they have learned for Solo & Ensemble Contest and new pieces that they put together for the show. Some students write and perform their own work.

UIL CONCERT & SIGHTREADING CONTEST

The UIL concert contests are held in April. The concert bands travel to local high schools where they perform and are critiqued and graded by UIL judges. Each band performs their concert music followed by the sight-reading portion of the contest. If you have never been to the contest, you will stand in amazement during sight-reading. The band is given music they (or the directors) have never seen or heard and have approximately 8 – 10 minutes to talk their way through the piece. They then receive a "one-time-shot" at their performance. Many do not understand that UIL concert contests are open to the public. Even though performance times are sometimes inconvenient, it will be worth your time and effort to attend these performances.

SPRING TRIP

Traditionally the Sherman band has taken a spring trip to a fun destination for a contest. Trips in the past have gone to Disney World, Colorado, Corpus Christi and other fun filled sites. While these are fun places to visit it is also a contest trip where the band will play at an adjudicated contest. Our band has done quite well at these in the past as witnessed by all the trophies proudly displayed in the band hall.

BAND BANQUET

A band banquet is held each spring near the end of the school year. This special evening brings the band together one last time to review the year and wish the seniors a fond farewell. A DVD of the year is shown and the meal is catered. There is no charge for band students to attend, and many bring parents and brothers, sisters and dates for a wonderful evening of food and fun.

The location varies from year to year but it is usually held at a local church or other facility with enough room to feed over 200 people.

GRADES AND NO PASS NO PLAY

Each year our freshmen wonder 'how will I manage to participate and keep my grades up'? Organization is the key skill here! A planner is a great tool so that they can write down rehearsal schedules as well as homework and test dates. Help your student to set a realistic plan to work through any conflicts and please make sure to stay in contact with the teachers and directors. The directors and teachers are more than willing to work with your student, but they can't help if they do not know that there is a problem. I will take this opportunity to let you know that most of our band students rank very high in their class and many are in the top 10%. Some of the best and brightest at SHS are in the band program.

SCHEDULING CONFLICTS

The directors, counselors and teachers are all willing to work things out, but, they can't help if they are not aware of the problems. Please notify one of the directors as soon as you become aware of any scheduling problems with your students. They can work with your student and the counselors to correct the schedule and make certain that your child will meet all of their graduation requirements.

STUDENT BAND ACCOUNTS

To assist you in keeping up with fees and student funds. Each student will have their own 'band account'. As you pay for fees or your student participates in 'optional' fundraisers all money is credited to your students account. Since we are a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation the IRS mandates that any money credited to your students band account through a fund raising event may not be refunded to you as a cash refund, but may be used to pay for fees, trips, spirit items etc... However, if you have made a cash (check) payment to your students account, that money can be refunded to you.

In the event of a default on student account the Sherman Band Boosters will notify Sherman High School that the student is in default on required fees, a default on any student account can result in grade reports, school schedules, textbooks and transcripts being held, it can also result in a senior not being able to walk during the graduation ceremony with their graduating class.

Please make every effort to keep your students account up to date to avoid the need for any action that could place your students account in default. I also understand the Sherman Band Boosters is not deprived of statutory collection remedies in the case of default.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Our band has student leaders at many levels. The most visible are the Drum Majors. Drum Majors lead the band during contests and games and direct our marching show. They are easily identified by their uniform, which is all white in contrast to the bands maroon and black uniforms. Each section has a section leader and all marching sections have 'drill assistants' The section leaders and drill assistants are responsible for keeping their individual sections on task and making sure that each member understands the drill. They also assist the directors in passing on information to the band students. Please make sure that your students section leader has your students contact information, including email addresses and cell phone numbers.

WHO ARE THE BAND BOOSTERS AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

The band 'boosters' are all band parents, grandparents and family! If you have a student in band you are a Booster! The main function of the booster organization is to support our band program and our kids. There are many facets of the booster organization, the most visible is usually the Executive Board Members that lead the monthly meetings and send e-mails and information out to the parents. We have many committees who perform various tasks throughout the year each committee has a chairperson and sometimes a large contingent of parents on the various committees. If you have a particular skill or interest, please let us know and we will be happy to put you in contact with that committee chair, or if you are interested in chairing a committee or creating a new committee if you see a need, we would love to have you!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do we march in bad weather?

Yes and No. If there is a slight rain the band members have ponchos that they wear over their uniform to keep dry. If there is hazardous weather, lightning, etc... no, the band will not march on the field. They may still be in the stands to support the football team if weather permits.

What equipment does my child need?

For summer band, each band member needs to obtain a 'dot' book. This is a small binder that holds 3X5 index cards for marking their place in the marching show drill. Comfortable and supportive shoes for summer marching. A one-gallon insulated thermos to keep hydrated during summer marching and a great attitude. All other marching season essentials will be addressed at summer band camp and communicated to parents via e-mail and packets given to all band students.

Will my child be able to participate in other activities?

Yes, Band students are active in a variety of activities including athletics, theater, choir, orchestra, UIL academics, student government and special interest clubs.

Will band interfere with AP or Honors courses that my students would like to take?

Definitely not, Band Students are highly involved in the AP and honors courses at SHS and are some of the best and brightest students!

Are there opportunities for my student to be recognized for doing well?

Yes, there is All-Region, Area and All-State bands, Solo & Ensemble as well as student leadership positions such as section leader, drill assistant and Drum Major.