

LOARA HIGH SCHOOL BAND
ORIENTATION INFORMATION
2008-2009

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Loara High School. This orientation meeting is held, and these papers are provided, to help prepare you for membership in the band program at Loara High School.

If you want to be a member of the Loara band program, then it is very important that you read, understand, and agree to abide by the tenets of these orientation materials. Our program is built on a foundation of everyone understanding program expectations and following through. It is important that everyone does their fair share, and knows that everyone else is doing what they have agreed to by signing the program contract. We have a well-developed system of accountability for both students and parent boosters. So, please read this carefully and ask questions. We all want your involvement with the program to be positive and with as few surprises as possible.

THE STUDENT

Students are required to be at all rehearsals and performances. Students are responsible for communicating with their parents and keeping them informed about program events and responsibilities. Students must dedicate themselves to the development and improvement of their musical skills through practice on their own.

Music, friends, dedication, and integrity are the focus of the program. Students should be interested in working on developing these qualities through practice, good citizenship, a strong work ethic, and acceptance of responsibility.

THE PARENT/FAMILY

Parent involvement is mandatory. Whether through direct participation at booster fundraisers or by "paying rather than working", involvement is mandatory. The booster club has developed four fundraisers that parents are required to support.

When parents have questions or concerns, proper protocol should be followed. If you have a concern that is student oriented, Mr. Schroeder or a school administrator should be contacted. Other issues have an appropriate booster position to address your question or concern. See our web site (www.loaraband.org) for our by-laws, which will outline our organization's structure and define areas of responsibility for you. Of course, you can always contact the Band Office (714-999-3677 x 2111).

BAND OFFICE/FAMILY ACCOUNT COORDINATOR

Since 1968, the Loara Band has been fortunate to have a volunteer parent work in the band office. This is an excellent resource for the families of our program.

These parents have always volunteered their time and are in the band office on a daily basis. They are there to answer your calls, collect money and papers, write receipts, and help you with questions and concerns. If they don't have the answer you need, they know how to get it for you.

THE LOARA BAND, COLOR GUARD, AND DANCE TEAM BOOSTER CLUB, INC.

The booster club exists to serve and support ALL of the students in the program. Membership in the booster club is free and automatic when your child signs up for the program. The booster club holds monthly meetings, which you are encouraged to attend. The booster club is incorporated and is a 501-c-3, non-profit and tax-exempt entity in the State of California. Boosters serve and support the needs of the students and are not a policy-making entity. They have autonomy and control over their structure, operating procedures, and the money that is earned through booster sponsored fund-raisers. Instructional staff and student related matters are not under the purview of the booster club.

PARENT REPS

In totality, we are the Loara Band Family. But we are comprised of several sub groups. These include the Band, the Color Guard, and the Drumline. Even though the Drumline is a part of the Band, they function on their own during much of the second semester. Each of these groups has a parent representative to the booster board. They advocate for their group and are a major source of communication between the booster club, the program families, and the band office.

YOUR FAMILY ACCOUNT

When you become a member of the band program, a "family account" is opened up for you automatically. Almost all of your financial transactions with the program will go through your "family account". It is called a "family account" because the money can be used by parents as well as students for trips and camps and anything that is program related. Your account information is available at any time by calling the band office (999-3677 x 2111). You can also access the information online with your student number.

The family account is there for your program related expenses. You can pay for camps, trips, attire, and even private lessons or instruments through your account. You cannot buy yearbooks, class rings, pay for prom, or other non-program related expenses through your account.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is one of the most important aspects of a program like ours. Earlier in these materials we have encouraged students to communicate with their parents and for parents to communicate with the band office. The band has developed several ways of communicating with you and keeping you up to date in a timely manner.

All meetings are open and everyone is encouraged to attend. We publish a monthly newsletter, which is placed on "the table next to the door" in the band room for easy access. With each newsletter, an updated calendar of events is included. Each time we have a performance (other than football games) a flyer is produced which includes maps, schedules, and anything else you need to know. Our boosters have an organized phone tree. Each "group/section" has a parent representative to the booster board who is in charge of keeping their group/section informed. We also have a web site that has calendars, newsletters, and much more on it. The URL address is www.loaraband.org. The band office phone is 999-3677 x 2111. You can leave messages on the office phone. You can email Mr. Schroeder through the web site or at Loara@aol.com.

TIME COMMITMENT

There are times when we are very busy, and there are times when we are not. The important thing is that you be aware of the fact that there will be occasions when the demand on your time will be more than you might be used to, and that you should be ready and willing to give the time it takes to be a member of our highly successful program. Perusing a calendar of events for the program will give you a good idea how our year goes. You can do that by accessing the Program's web site at www.loaraband.org and clicking on the calendar page.

We are active throughout the summer, although summer activities are not required until we begin "band camp" (August 18, 2008). The student section leader will contact you about "summer sectionals". You are encouraged to attend these sectionals unless you are out of town on vacation. They really help give you a head start. About two weeks before school starts, we begin what we call "band camp". All students wishing to participate in the marching band portion of the program need to attend band camp. There will be more about band camp later in these materials.

Time management becomes an important issue when entering high school. There are so many more school and social activities available to the students than there were in junior high school. The Loara Band program supports students being involved in a variety of activities and structures its program with this in mind. Students are supported in their academic endeavors through an appropriate rehearsal schedule and calendar of events that allows a healthy and well-rounded lifestyle.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

This section is only for those families who opt to participate in the co-curricular part of the program and are willing to pay the expenses associated with it, including the competitive parade and field bands, camps, and trips.

Full participation in the Band will cost about \$600 per year. This includes all camps, trips, clothing/uniform costs, and any other expenses. Drumline members who participate in the second semester "indoor competitions" will have added expense, which will be explained at a special meeting at a later date.

Aside from the expenses related to being in band, all parents must contribute to the efforts of the booster club, which supports ALL of the students. While participating in booster activities is not a financial obligation per se, the boosters are responsible for raising the money that supports the general needs of the organization and is an important financial consideration and obligation.

FUNDRAISING

Booster club fundraisers meet the general needs of the program as represented in the annual budget, and your participation in their efforts is mandatory for those involved in the co-curricular part of the program. Student/family fundraising, which is designed to help you offset the expenses related to being in the program, is voluntary.

Our Booster Club sponsors a "SCRIP" program, which is solely for the purpose of helping you put money in your account to help pay for band.

SCRIP is really another name for "gift certificates". By using SCRIP (which you get through the boosters) to do your shopping, you will receive a percentage of all your SCRIP purchases into your family's account. The percentage you will receive varies with the store that you shop at. When you join the program, you will be given all of the information on how to get started on SCRIP.

The four mandatory booster club fundraisers that meet the booster budget are detailed in other supplementary materials.

UNIFORMS/ATTIRE

We need to have attire for three different kinds of performances. We need a uniform for marching in competitions, we need something to wear at more informal marching performances, and we need concert attire.

The Band provides the competitive marching uniform. There is a \$50 fee for hemming the pants to a uniform length and general uniform maintenance including dry cleaning. You must purchase the personal items that you would not want to share with others like shoes, gloves, and socks. The uniform stays at school and is checked out and back in before and after each competitive performance. We dry clean the uniforms in bulk for you, but you pay for the cleaning.

For non-competitive marching events you will need to have the Band's sweatshirt, t-shirt, and hat. These items along with long denim jeans and any kind of shoes are what we wear to many of our more informal performances. The order form for these items will be included with your registration materials.

We wear "black and white" formal attire to concert performances. The girls should wear long black dresses, which they can purchase, make themselves (we have the patterns), or have someone make for you. The Band has black tux jackets, tux shirts, and bow ties for the guys to use. The guys will have to provide long black pants and black dress shoes and socks.

BAND CAMP

Of all the things we do during the year, Band Camp would be the one thing that most of the students would single out as their favorite. Not only is this an intense 4 or 5 days of hard work preparing the parade and field bands for marching season, this is also where the group bonds and becomes a family. Most of the group's traditions and foundations are established at band camp. Even though there is expense attached to the experience, it is well worth it. Students who do not go to camp take longer to assimilate fully into the group once school starts. By going to camp, your student will begin school with over 200 new friends and a sense of security and belonging that few freshmen experience as they enter high school, not to mention the performing skills they develop and music that is learned at camp. Going to camp in the mountains is not required, but is strongly recommended. Parents wishing to be chaperones at camp just need to contact Mrs. Miller (774-4854) to get on the list. You can also contact Mrs. Miller online at BertBand@aol.com.

BAND TRIP

The Band takes a trip every year. Next to Band Camp, this is their second favorite activity. Everything said about camp goes for the trip as well. Going on the trip is optional as well (except for 4th period band members). All parents have to do to chaperone is let us know (and pay). The trips are usually as far away as we can get on a bus in one day. San Francisco, Phoenix, and Las Vegas and the mountains are regular venues.

BAND AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

The program's philosophy is that high school age students need the opportunity to explore and experience a wide variety of activities. Most band members are involved in other groups and/or organizations.

We consider what you are doing at school to be of the greatest importance. Of course things like your family, religion, and health take priority over anything. Family situations must be of an emergency or tragic nature. Weekend trips to the mountains do not qualify. Religious excuses must be of a dogmatic nature such as religious holidays. Weekend church retreats do not qualify. Health excuses must be serious enough to warrant absence. Runny noses do not qualify. DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS MUST BE SCHEDULED AROUND REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES.

For exceptions to be warranted, we must hear from you in a timely fashion. Letting us know of conflicts at the last minute prevents us from being able to cover your absence and causes problems for the rest of the group. In general, two weeks notice is required.

GRADES

Per AUHSD policy, students must maintain a 2.0 GPA at each grading period (quarter) to be eligible to participate in any school activity. A GPA below 2.0 does not remove the student from the class, but from participating in extra and co-curricular activities. Raising the GPA on the following report card reinstates your ability to participate. There is a one time only opportunity to use "probation".

WHAT CLASSES TO SIGN UP FOR

All freshmen and sophomores sign up for 5160 PE/MARCHING BAND unless you are signing up for athletics. Students signing up for sixth period athletics should not sign up for 5160 PE/MARCHING BAND. Enrolling in 5160 PE/MARCHING BAND gives you the PE credits you need for graduation. Students signing up for 5160 PE/MARCHING BAND do not have to take a regular PE class during the day.

Freshmen who wish to participate in the competitive parade and field bands should sign up for 4400 CONCERT BAND. Freshmen percussionists (drummers) who wish to participate in the competitive parade and field bands should sign up for 4440 PERCUSSION 2.

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have auditioned and can play their major scales should sign up for 4410 SYMPHONIC BAND. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have auditioned and can play their harmonic minor scales should sign up for 4430 WIND ENSEMBLE.

We will have a JAZZ ENSEMBLE if there is student interest. It will be before and after school and will begin after marching season. With the right kind of commitment from the members, we could offer class credit for JAZZ ENSEMBLE even if it is before and after school.

Please don't be concerned about the "names" of the courses. The "number" is what they really go by. All of the instrumental music courses listed above (except 4420 BAND) fulfill the A-G requirements for entry into the UC system.

Below (see attachment) are four suggested four-year school plans. The first is designed to prepare you for basic entry into college. The second includes AP and Honors courses of study within the college preparatory plan. The third example is for those interested in the IB (International Baccalaureate) program. The fourth schedule is for AVID students. Each example shows you how to reach your academic goals while having band (or any elective) in your schedule.

The most important thing is that you consider the classes you are taking from the time you are a freshman (7th grade would be better) to make sure that you are taking all of the classes you need and are taking them in the correct year so you don't find yourself in your Junior and Senior year behind in your classes with no chance for taking electives or enrolling in advanced courses.