

SYCAMORE HIGH SCHOOL BAND HANDBOOK

2009-2010



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Band Boosters President – David Simpson

Band Boosters Vice-President- Kim Stewart

Band Boosters Treasurer – Marty Clinton

Band Boosters Secretary-Shannon Roberts

www.sycamorewareaglesband.com

Dear Parents and Students,

I am proud to announce the return of the “Sycamore High Marching War Eagles.” We are all looking forward to another successful year.

For those new to Sycamore, welcome to the Sycamore High Band family. Here you will find friendship, dedication, hard but rewarding work, and success. We want you to find the same joy that marching band has brought to so many of us.

Should you have questions regarding Band Booster activities, you may contact David Simpson, President of the Sycamore High Band Booster Organization.

Questions regarding student activities should be directed to Jordan Tupper, Director of Bands.

Thank you for your continued participation and support.

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Director of Bands
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Cheatham County School System Mission Statement

The mission of the Cheatham County School System is to have a unified commitment to promote physical, emotional and intellectual excellence.

Sycamore High School Mission Statement

The mission of Sycamore High School is to provide each student a diverse education in a safe, supportive environment that promotes self-discipline, motivation, and excellence in learning.

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Overview

The primary focus of the Sycamore High School Band is individual achievement leading to organization achievement. As we work to cultivate the ability, intellect, and character of each student, the musical development of the individual student requires a performance oriented program capable of meeting the needs of the school community, providing for the aesthetic nurturing of the student, and creating life-long learners and seekers of excellence. We seek to always present the best musical performances we can while working to create an atmosphere where students learn the value of dedication, discipline, team work, and pride while having fun and participating in events that they will remember the rest of their lives.

This multi-faceted approach is carried out through an active performance schedule, beginning with marching band. During the fall, the Sycamore High School Band performs at all football games, four or five marching band contests and festivals, and both the Pleasant View and Ashland City Christmas parades.

During the Winter and Spring, our performance focus turns toward concert opportunities. If possible, we will present both a light Winter Holiday concert and a more intense and musically demanding spring concert series. We will also present Winter Guard for our color guard students to continue developing their unique brand of artistry. In early Spring, we plan to perform for evaluation at the Middle Tennessee School Band and Orchestra Association Concert Festival. Along with the marching and concert band performances, the Sycamore High School Jazz Band "Fallen Leaves" will be developing their craft in a twice weekly Jazz Lab, focusing on improvisation and various jazz styles.

To accomplish the band program's primary objective of musical development of each individual student, our daily classroom activities center on improving the level of musicianship of each student. Our classroom program of technical skill development includes scales, arpeggios, lip slurs, and rudimental studies (Percussion). An offshoot of this technical study is an emphasis on All-State auditions and solo and ensemble festival. All students are encouraged to, at some point during the year; perform by themselves or as part of an ensemble. These performances may take place at festivals, concerts, or seasonal opportunities in the community.

Activities

ALL camps, practices, sectionals, games, and competitions are required. You need to talk with Mr. Tupper, if you have a conflict, for prior approval.

SUMMER 2009

Guard/Percussion Camp (Mandatory for all guard and percussionists)

Monday, July 20 – Friday July 24th, 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 PM

Rookie Camp (Mandatory for all new band students)

July 20th-July 26. 8:00AM to 1:30PM

Band Camp (Mandatory for all band students)

July 26th-July 31st, 2008, Hickory Hills Band Camp

FALL 2009

Regular band practices – for all band members

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Full band rehearsal – for all band members

TBA

Football Games - each Friday evening (plus any play off games) - Required

TBA

Contest and Festival Performance – **Required**

TBA

Pleasant View Holiday Parade

(First weekend in December unless otherwise told)

Ashland City Holiday Parade

(Second Weekend in December unless otherwise told)

Winter Holiday Concert

Early December

Summer Band Camps

The Sycamore High School Band holds three camps during the summer to aide in our success.

Guard and Percussion Camp
Rookie Camp
Band Camp

These camps are held at Sycamore High School during their respective times. The Band Camp at the end of July is off-campus and will involve overnight stays. This is where we begin learning the drill and music for the upcoming marching season, so attendance is mandatory. It is also imperative that by Band Camp each student must turn in a notarized consent/health form. (*Please note: notary public usually available during first weeks of the marching season.*)

During band camp, we will conduct many sectional rehearsals, full band music rehearsals, and marching rehearsals. Please note that students will not be allowed to leave campus during camp for any reason. Please make other arrangements for any doctor, dental, or any other appointments during this week.

In order to pay for instructors, drill and music the Sycamore High School band requires a deposit for band camp, and also the first payment of the band fee no later than Monday of Band Camp. A payment schedule is listed on page 14. Checks are payable to the Sycamore High School Band Boosters and may be turned into the band office at any time.

Students should bring to band camp:

Wear comfortable shorts & t-shirt (*school dress-code appropriate - NO bathing suits*)

Low-top athletic shoes and socks

Individual water jug

Sunscreen

Instrument (*sticks, mallets, flags, mouthpieces, reeds, etc.*)

Pencil

Hat

Sunglasses

Light snacks

Hats and athletic shoes are a must. Sandals and bare feet are not appropriate for marching practice at any time. Instructors and students often find that small towels are useful at practice, especially when wet and applied to the back of the neck during the heat of the afternoon.

Parents desiring to visit during rookie camp are welcome and needed. Please feel free to let us know if you are available to help serve meals, get water, or just run errands.

Consent/Health Forms

The consent/health forms are available in the band room and posted on the website. Notaries Public will be available at school throughout pre-camp. These forms are absolutely necessary for your child's safety and well being. Please feel free to add any additional information to the form that you think is necessary for your child's safety. We will always try to contact a parent or guardian when serious medical attention is needed, however, these forms are a requirement for any emergency medical attention that may be needed. In the rare instance where a student needs more extensive attention, we transport the student to the nearest hospital.

Band Grades

Band is a unique course at Sycamore High School. It has curricular requirements just as any other academic discipline. Band grades are derived from attendance at rehearsals and performances, attentiveness in class and at rehearsals, and full, contributory participation in classroom activities and rehearsals as well as written and playing exams. A high level of commitment from each student is the driving force behind the organization and is reflected in the achievements of the individual band members and the achievements of the band as a whole.

The band as an organization provides a medium through which students progress academically, musically, and socially. Musicianship, attitude, attendance, punctuality, good conduct, and a desire for excellence are expected essentials. No other discipline in education requires the high level of achievement and commitment from all participants that is required in musical performance. Through the level of commitment required, students are better prepared for the challenges and responsibilities encountered throughout their lives (and band is a fun way to get a good grade just for effort!)

Attendance Policies

Rehearsals, both during school and after school, are the means by which students learn and by the very nature cannot be "made-up." Each student is greatly dependent on every other student. It is imperative that students be present for all rehearsals unless their absence is absolutely unavoidable.

Unexcused rehearsal absences, lateness, and/or early departure will affect a student's performance and thus will substantially impact his/her grade. Although the director frequently acts as conductor, he is primarily a teacher responsible for the musical and aesthetic education of each student in the band program. For this reason, the staff is absolutely insistent upon each student's daily and full participation. Rehearsals are not optional and are reflected in the student's daily grade. An unexcused absence from rehearsal will result in a 10 (ten) point deduction from the final semester grade. An unexcused absence from a performance will result in a 20 (twenty) point reduction.

Absences from rehearsals are only excused in case of illness of the student (doctor note required), a death in the family, religious holiday (advance notice required), emergency, or by special permission of the doctor obtained substantially in advance of the rehearsal by the student's parent or guardian.

Absences from performances are only excused in the event of an extreme emergency, such as illness of the student (doctor note required), a death in the family, religious holiday, or other reasons deemed excusable by the directors.

The band or activity director, substantially in advance of the rehearsal or performance, must approve all non-emergency absences from rehearsals or performances. Excessive absence, excused or not, may result in the student being removed from pending performances or being placed in an "alternate" status.

After Rehearsals and Performances

Rehearsals usually end at the announced time and buses usually arrive from competitions and football games at the designated times. The staff members are accurate at estimating return times and ending rehearsals on time. Students are to be picked up at the designated time in the parking lot in front of the band room. Please be at school or make certain a ride is arranged for your student at the designated time. Students are directed to make phone calls at an appropriate time in order to get a ride home when returning to the school on the bus. The staff cannot leave until all students have been picked up, please be respectful of their time and energy.

Marching Band Policies

Rehearsals are never cancelled due to inclement weather. If conditions do not permit outdoor practice, we will work inside and wait for conditions to improve. We may at times continue to work outside in light drizzle or intermittent light rain.

Scheduled rehearsals go on regardless of the temperature. Students should always be prepared for changes in the weather (both temperature and precipitation) and be appropriately dressed for practice. Low top athletic shoes are necessary for the style of marching step we use.

The Sycamore High School Marching War Eagle Band will maintain a high profile in a variety of performance opportunities. As a part of the school community, the marching band will support the football program through the completion of its season, including post-season playoff or “bowl” games. The marching band will also represent Sycamore High School in all local parades.

Incoming freshman who participate in fall sports at Sycamore High that interfere with marching band may be in the concert band.

Individual Development Opportunities

It is expected that the band students at Sycamore High will have varied backgrounds and levels of experience. For that reason, the driving force of the band program is to help students move forward from their current skill level. To further the band’s commitment to individual achievement, all members are encouraged to participate in auditions and/or Solo and Ensemble opportunities. Individual and small ensembles are one of the greatest educational opportunities available from being in a good band program. Many of these provide for a challenge as well as an evaluation of your playing.

In order for our full band to reach high achievement, every member must seek improvement individually. This aspect develops self-esteem, which is a valuable by-product in any educational offering. That is why individual practice is so important. Students will be expected to seek growth and improvement on their instrument, which can only be obtained through practice. The more ... the better!

The band members at Sycamore High are very fortunate to be able to seek individual private lessons. There are several people in the area that teach privately. We can get a list of people, numbers, and rate of charge. Please note that we are willing to come early and stay late to help students.

Activities include All-Midstate Band, Orchestra, and Jazz Bands, as well as All-State Band, Orchestra, and Jazz Bands. Middle Tennessee School Band and Orchestra Association (MTSBOA) and Tennessee Music Educators Association (TMEA) sponsor the All- Midstate and All-State bands. Students interested in auditioning should indicate their interest by October 1st. The staff will assist students in preparing for the auditions in individual after-school sessions by appointment.

Solo and ensemble opportunities may include performances in organized Solo and Ensemble festivals, which are held in the spring. MTSBOA sponsors these festivals usually in March or April. This adjudicated event allows students to expand their musical experience in a more intimate setting.

Student Conduct

Students involved in the band activity are subject to all general rules of conduct as determined by the administration of Sycamore High School and the Cheatham County Board of Education. The band's image is based on the actions of the individual members. Our collective public reputation is determined by our actions, our appearance, and our projection of integrity and organization. It is the responsibility of each band member to ensure that we represent our school, our community, and ourselves in the best possible manner.

Contest, festivals and other adjudicated activities are important aspects of the Sycamore High Band program. Through these activities, we hope to obtain valuable feedback about our progress as individuals and as a program. Although we should not "live or die" by one judge's or one panel's opinion of our performance, clearly we should learn the value of giving the maximum effort and standing by the results as one person's opinion of our best possible effort of that day.

The Sycamore High School Band has established a tradition of expressing our respect for all other participants at the events we attend while taking great pride in our own achievements. We respectfully acknowledge our competitors as scores are being announced and graciously accept the results, regardless of the outcome. The Sycamore High School Band shows its appreciation and respect for all of our competitors. We congratulate all with whom we compete. Some people may not understand our expression of respect for our competitors. Those people may never know the true reason for participating in competition, mistakenly equating winning with coming in first. We will all come in first when we deserve to, based on our own level of performance.

We know that "winning" is the state of every individual having endured the hardships, having taken the chance of competing, and having done his or her own personal best in the pursuit of excellence. We take pride in doing our best performance regardless of the evaluation of the judges. We recognize that every student who participates in a band is a winner.

Bus Etiquette

Each student is responsible for making sure his or her trash is placed in the trash bags provided. As young adults, students are expected to clean-up after themselves.

Students are to be seated at all times. This is for your safety.
All radios and CD players must have headphones.

Students must adhere to all bus driver and chaperone instructions at all times. Students who disobey the bus driver or chaperone will be moved to the front of the bus and appropriate action will take place.

Focus time is an important time for the Sycamore High School band community, as we arrive on our destination, we fall silent. We retreat to our inner minds, focusing on what we need to do to achieve our personal best at that performance.

Uniforms

Sycamore High School takes pride in our uniforms. At competitions, judges and fans all comment on how good we look. Each new band member will be fitted for their uniform and shoes during either pre-band camp or another designated time. At that time, they will be shown how to properly care for his or her uniform.

Each marching member will be required to buy a pair of shoes at the choosing of the director. This pair of shoes is required at all marching band events. Please utilize the website or see the director for a shoe order form. These marching band shoes are important, as they correct posture and allow for proper marching technique

Each student is responsible for providing their own pair of black “show” socks (recommend purchasing two). An additional t-shirt may also be ordered, and is highly recommended so that you have one for ballgame and one for competition.

After uniforms are issued, they will remain at school. The uniform crew will handle all alterations. The new uniforms are machine washable, which will save cleaning costs, however they must be washed following an exact procedure. The uniform crew will do all washing of uniforms, please DO NOT wash individual uniforms. Weekly cleaning of socks, gloves, band t-shirts, and shoes is the responsibility of each individual student.

The uniform of the Sycamore High School Band has been custom designed and made to exact standards. Much time and energy went into the process resulting

in our unique look. If a student loses or damages a part of his or her uniform, the student will have to replace the missing or damaged part.

The replacement costs for the parts of the uniform are:

Full uniform \$500
Shako \$ 50
Gauntlets \$ 30
Plume \$ 25
Jacket \$150
Pants \$150
Gloves \$ 2

Guard Uniform/Equipment

Guard uniforms are designed to be an integral part of each season's show. When the design process is finished, each guard member will be properly fitted. Instructions for the care for these uniforms will be given at a later date.

Each guard member will be assigned proper guard equipment. This must be returned to the band. If a student loses or damages a part of their uniform/equipment, the student will have to replace the missing or damaged part. The replacement costs for guard equipment and uniform are:

Full uniform \$ TBA
Practice Flag \$ TBA
Performance Flag \$ TBA
Rifle \$ TBA
Sabre \$ TBA

Proper Wearing of the Uniform

When the Sycamore High School Band appears in uniform, every student must wear every part of the uniform exactly as intended. Jackets must be closed and fastened. Clean black socks must be worn. Only band shoes may be worn with the uniform. Athletic shoes are not an option. Hats other than the uniform shakos are not allowed in uniform.

Long hair must be up inside the shako and absolutely no jewelry (including earrings and watches) may be worn during performances.

Band t-shirts or section shirts can be worn under the uniform. Whenever we are

out of uniform at a competition, the band t-shirts MUST be worn by all band members.

Band Fees

The quality of the band program at Sycamore High requires substantial financial expenditures. *Students who are not able to meet the financial obligations may still participate in band classes which includes the activities of concert band.*

General Band Fee

Band fee for the 2008-09 school year is \$330.00 per student. This fee covers transportation, supplemental instruction, equipment, uniform maintenance, music, drill, and other band expenditures throughout the entire school year. Once the location and cost of these competitions are determined, the payment amount and due date will be announced. The band fee is calculated to cover the operating budget of the Marching War Eagle Band – excluding items noted as well as the Winter Guard.

In order to have the cash flow that is necessary to keep the band program operating without debt, it is required that each student make no more than three payments.

\$110 due on June 1
\$ 110 due on July 1
\$ 110 due on August 1

Checks may be made out to “SHS Band.” On the memo line, please put the student’s name, so that your balance may be correctly calculated.

Any student with an outstanding balance as of June 1 from the previous school year will not be allowed to participate in marching band until the problem is resolved.

Financial payment plans and assistance are available. Any student or the parent of the student who requires a payment plan or assistance in meeting these financial obligations is encouraged to speak directly with the Director in confidence. A written request is also required and will be treated with the utmost discretion and respect for the privacy of the student and family. All approved payment plans will be agreed upon by Band Boosters and the student’s parent(s) in writing. Any discussions of personal finances are kept in the strictest confidence. It is expected that any student and/or parent on a payment plan or receiving financial assistance will participate fully in all fundraising activities.

Students not in Marching Band but participating in other band functions will pay a

class fee through the standard fee program.

Competition Food

Most competitions are all-day events. Through experience, we have found that it is far better for the Band members and more efficient for the Band Boosters to provide meals and snacks for the students. Through a combination of donations and band booster funds, meals are provided for the students and parents. Most often, donations are collected by the parents who choose to eat with the students, offsetting the cost.

Participation in the competition food program is not mandatory. However, students will not be allowed to leave the band area to purchase lunch at other areas or at concessions stands during the times when the band is assembled together.

School Instrument Usage

Any student using school provided instruments, including but not limited to percussion instruments, will be expected to be responsible for its upkeep. Should damages occur to the instrument, that student may be held responsible for its repair and the financial obligations. Replacement fees may be charged if an instrument is lost or deemed irreparable.

Winter Guard and Drumline

Winter Guard and Drumline is a program separate from the Marching Band yet part of the Sycamore High School Band program. It is open to all members of the Sycamore Band program. Fees and schedules will be determined in the fall.

Pep Band

In order to maintain the high profile of the band program, the Sycamore High School Pep Band was formed to provide entertainment at basketball games. Student participation is voluntary, and highly encouraged. More details of this program will be discussed at the beginning of the Basketball season.

Refunds

Refunds for fees paid will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, it is Band policy that no refund will be given for any student who is removed from any Component of the Band program for reasons decided upon by the Director. Removal/dismissal reasons include but are not limited to the student's inability to or decision to not meet minimum performance requirements or failure to meet behavior guidelines set by the Director.

Sycamore High School Band Boosters Organization

This is an organization of parents and friends of the Sycamore High School Band that provides support for the band program in every way imaginable. It is the support of the Band Boosters that enables us to provide the full band program we have at Sycamore High School. We are heavily dependent upon the Band Boosters as our cheering section at competitions, for set and prop construction, for transportation of our props and equipment on the field at performances and games, for logistics for our many activities, for uniform maintenance, for administrative support, and for financial support.

Every parent who wishes to be a part of the Band Boosters may do so and is welcome. The band program needs a strong parent support group in order to be successful. Band Booster meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the bandroom. If you are unable to attend, you can still be a part of the parent group by participating in a number of activities. We encourage every parent to serve as a chaperone at least once throughout the year.

Chaperones

Travel with the band to football games, competitions and festivals. Being a chaperone is a way to share your child's experience in the Sycamore High School Band, make new friends, and to see other bands perform. Chaperones are responsible for overseeing the students from the time the band leaves the school until the band returns. They are to stay with them at all times.

Discipline of the students, however, is the sole responsibility of the directors. In addition, the directors are the decision makers regarding scheduling, arrivals, and departures. Information flows from the directors through the bus drivers and chaperones to the students.

Chaperoning can be hard work. The hours are long. Nevertheless, the rewards are great and accompanying the finest (and most well behaved) young people in Cheatham County as they take their show on the road is an experience you will never forget. If interested in being a chaperone, or for more information on becoming a chaperone, please call the band office.

Uniform Crew

Help with fitting, managing, alterations (this requires sewing ability), repair and cleaning of our uniforms. Responsible for distributing and collecting uniforms before and after every ballgame and competition.

Color Guard Uniform/Equipment

Help sew color guard flags and uniforms as needed. Maintain equipment and

inventory. Collect all uniforms and equipment at the end of marching season.

Notary Public

Come to pre-camp and other rehearsals to notarize consent/health forms.

Fund Raising Committee

Helps implement the various fundraisers throughout the years.

Set & Prop Construction

Help with the design, building, and maintenance of sets and props as needed.

Pit Crew

Assist with organization and transportation of band equipment from band room to performance field or from the truck to the performance field during the marching season. Reverse the process after the performance.

Concession Stand Workers

Positions available for each home game

Hospitality Tent

Provide drink & snack at every home game for band members and visiting team band members. Volunteers needed to provide refreshments and serve refreshments.

Competition Food

Band Camp – Provide morning and afternoon snack and lunch.

Volunteers needed to: setup and cleanup, prepare and serve food, make contacts for donations, pick-up donations and purchase food from merchants.

All information is available on our website:

www.sycamorewareaglesband.com