

## 2016-2017 Yorktown High School Marching Band

<http://www.yorktownband.org>  
director@yorktownband.org

Welcome to the Yorktown Marching Band! We're excited that you'll be joining the Yorktown Music Department. Included in this document are the details you will need to know for a successful start to the school year.

### Important Marching Band Dates

#### SPRING

- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation & Spring Booster Meeting (for all parents & students of rising 9-12 graders) – May 16, 7 pm in YHS Band Room.
- Marching Band Drumline & Front Ensemble Auditions – May 31, June 2, June 6, 6 - 8 pm, at YHS.
- Marching Band Spring Reading Sessions (rising 9-12 grade wind players) – June 1, June 15, 6-8 pm.
- Color Guard Interest Meeting/Open Clinics, 3:15 pm–4:45 pm April 26 & April 28; May 19, 6-8 pm.

#### SUMMER

- August 6: 9 am – 1 pm Student Leadership; 2 pm – 6 pm *Full Ensemble Rehearsal*; 6:30 – 8:00 pm Back to School Barbecue (All families, students, & alumni are invited!)
- August 8: Marching Band Pre-Camp Rehearsal, 5 – 8 pm
- August 9 – 14: Away Camp at Mercersburg Academy (transportation provided)
- August 16 – 18: Rehearsal 5 – 8 pm
- August 23 – 25: Rehearsal 5 – 8 pm
- August 30 – September 1: Rehearsal 5 – 8 pm

#### First Football Game: September 2!

\*Exact evening rehearsal times are subject to change based on field availability. Rehearsals are reduced to twice per week after school once the school year begins.

#### FALL

September 10, Mini Camp, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm & 9/11 Memorial 5k, 4:00 – 7:30 pm

September 17, Band Day 8:00 am – 2:00 pm

Check the Marching Band page and the Calendar for more fall dates as we approach the spring!

<http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/ensembles/marching-band>

<http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/calendar>

#### Financial Picture

Please refer to the Financial Document on the website for a list of costs and deadlines.

<http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/band-business/financial-obligations>

\*\*\* Please make checks payable to:

Yorktown Band Boosters  
PO Box 101141  
Arlington, VA 22210

*Cost should never prohibit student participation. Contact Mr. Bersh for more information.*

## Marching Band Information & FAQs

### 1. *What is the time commitment for Marching Band?*

The marching band season lasts from August to mid November. In order to be prepared for the season, the marching band, like other Yorktown athletic groups, holds summer practices and a weeklong band camp. During the school year, evening rehearsals are limited to Tuesday/Thursday nights, with the exact time of rehearsal reflecting the field availability. The band performs at home football games, about 4 Saturday band competitions and the Arlington Showcase during the fall.

<http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/calendar>

### 2. *What is Band Camp?*

For one week in August the entire band, including staff and chaperones, travel to Mercersburg Academy (1.5 hours north – we sleep over in their dorms) to learn our fall show. During this time period, we take advantage of the excellent resources at Mercersburg, an optimal staff to student ratio, and the enhanced focus of the students to learn the bulk of our fall show. In addition to being an ideal venue for enhancing the collective musicianship and ability level of our group, it is a great setting for strengthening social bonds and welcoming new members to the Yorktown Band family. Each year, students have the advantage of making new friends across grade levels before the first day of school begins.

## Materials Necessary for Marching Band

- **Fanny Pack** Every member will wear one. You will have pencils/highlighter in it at all times. A Cheat Sheet for your drill will be attached by a carabiner. You may choose to keep Chap Stick and/or sunscreen in here as well.
- **Earplugs** Protect your ears. Mandatory for all Percussionists.
- **Pencils** With you at all times – **Highlighters** For marking drill charts – **Sharpie** For marking drill.
- **1 inch three ring binder** To organize drill pages/drill manual/schedule/visual technique handbook.
- **Plastic Sheets** To protect drill sheets & music.
- **Carabiner** To attach cheat sheet to your body/fanny pack.
- **Packing/Scotch Tape** To waterproof materials (cheat sheet).
- **Black Towel** (tubas!) To place instruments on during 3<sup>rd</sup> qtr. of football game (protect from concrete)
- **White T-Shirts:** Students should wear white t-shirts for rehearsals.
- **Running Shoes:** Students cannot march in sandals – shoes must have closed toes and ankle support.
- **WATER WATER WATER**

## Things I Wish I Knew as a “First-Year” Band Parent.

1. **What Do The Payments Cover?** In order to provide the highest quality experience for band members, students require instructional staff, music, copyright permissions to perform the music, drill to march on the field, uniforms, and equipment. We also need to cover the costs of participation in regional festivals and purchase and maintain marching instruments that are often different than the instruments students perform indoors. Participation in a music ensemble is an extremely rewarding experience. It promotes self-discipline, responsibility, respect, and above all – It is fun! I consider it a privilege to have this opportunity to develop a rapport with such fine students during the course of their high school participation, and it is a true pleasure to be involved in the development of their social and organizational skills, emotional development, leadership training, and aesthetic training.
2. **Why Do We Practice So Much?** The marching curriculum is taught as an evening course. Students receive an additional ½ academic credit for their participation in this course. The evening time slot enables students from the symphonic and concert bands and color guard to participate as a single

cohesive unit on the field. Putting together a full program of music and marching with so many students takes a great deal of time to perform at a high level. As our program evolves throughout the season, students take on great visual and musical challenges. Listening to our adjudicators' tapes, which are shared with the students online after each competition, is a great way to gain a better understanding of the marching arts and the performance skills required of a marching band.

3. **Teamwork.** In order to practice effectively, we need every member present for each rehearsal (Every student is a "starter," there are no subs and there is no bench!). Each student plays a very important role in the program and is missed when he/she is not at a rehearsal or performance. Our goal is to practice the way we will perform, and that means being able to consistently practice our intonation, balance, and blend as an ensemble. Adding and subtracting musicians has a large impact on these musical elements. Additionally, each member plays an integral role in the visual development of the show. Not only will a student's absence impact the listening environment for all those around them, it will also make it harder to march the drill, where students serve as dress points for each other on the field. Successful performance is achieved through the contributions of each member of the ensemble as we work together toward our performance goals.
4. **Competition Days.** Marching Band Competitions can take an entire day depending on the location and our performance time. We will get a schedule out as soon as possible, but generally the show site does not confirm a schedule until within two weeks of the competition date. Please avoid scheduling other events on competition days so that we can prevent conflicts. Also, remember to pack a lunch/snacks, water, a change of clothes, cash if you would like to purchase items from concessions stands, and sunblock when necessary.
5. **Why Do We Need to Fundraise?** We have a very active Booster organization that works to provide support for instructional staff and items such as uniforms, instruments, music, equipment, instrument repair, replacement, and maintenance. Additionally, Booster funds may support transportation, special instruction, financial aid, and assistance and encouragement of the parents or guardians of our students. We work to provide students with a unique educational experience that will benefit each member of our ensemble.
6. **The Importance of Physical Conditioning & Nutrition.** Marching Band requires a great deal of musical skill and physical endurance. Students must be able to march at fast speeds while controlling their body, instrument, and breathing. It is a physical activity that requires our students to be well nourished, hydrated, flexible, and fit. We will stretch and incorporate strength and conditioning into our rehearsals, but for students to truly reach their potential on the field, they should be exercising consistently through the summer and fall. Students should bring water/sports drink and a snack for each rehearsal to stay hydrated and maintain energy levels. Encourage your students to make smart decisions in their eating habits before we perform (*Avoid Fast Food & Soda*).
7. **The Importance of Volunteering.** Simply put, we can't do this without you – we are only able to pursue our shared ambitions and vision for the program with the support of the parents. Thank you for all that you do! Volunteering opens the unique opportunity to interact with the students in our program, contribute to the program's overall success, and witness the musical and personal growth of our students. You can find out how to help by attending Booster Meetings and communicating with our Volunteer Chair. Visit <http://www.yorktownband.org/WP/band-boosters> for more information.
8. **Who is on the staff?** One of the great opportunities that our students have throughout the marching season is to work with a dedicated team of musicians & educators who care deeply for both the students and the music program at YHS. You can find bios of our staff members on the band website.

9. **When is the Show Finished?** The Marching Band Field Show is an evolving process. It is not done when we begin to compete (and that's okay) and it will continue to develop over time. The show you see in November is a vastly different product than what is performed in September.

#### 10. Band Jargon

- **Shako:** This is the hat students wear while marching.
- **Plume:** The feather that goes in the hat.
- **Gauntlets:** The accessory that wraps around students' wrists.
- **8 to 5's:** When students march with a step size of 8 steps per 5 yards on the field.
- **Roll Step:** A technique for marching forward in which the heel rolls forward all the way through to the toe.
- **Sliding:** The technique wind players use to march with their instruments facing the audience as they march from side to side.
- **Dot:** Term referring to the coordinates that a student stands in for a particular drill set. Students' Drill Sheets and Dot Books give them the information they need to know for where they should be standing on the field at given points in the music, and how they should move from one dot to the next.

#### What Instrumental Ensembles are at Yorktown?

- **Concert Bands** There are two wind bands at Yorktown: The Symphonic Band and Concert Band. Members of these ensembles may have the opportunity to perform with our award-winning Symphony Orchestra. These ensembles perform concerts on campus and additional concerts off-campus each year. Last year the Yorktown Band was invited to participate in the National Concert Band Festival in Indianapolis, IN – The first band from Arlington, VA to ever participate in this prestigious event! This year – Disney! The repertoire is chosen from orchestral transcriptions and challenging original literature for band and wind chamber ensemble. (2015 Symphonic Band State Assessment – I, Superior)
- **Marching Band** The largest ensemble at Yorktown! A performance ensemble with an innovative approach to entertainment and an emphasis on musicality, the marching band performs custom arrangements and is taught in collaboration with professional staff. This ensemble performs at football games and competes with other schools in the Mid-Atlantic region from late August through early November. (2015 State Assessment – I, Superior; 1st Place, US Bands Marine Corps Invitational)
- **Jazz Big Band** The YHS Big Band performs a variety of genres, including jazz, funk, samba, and fusion. The ensemble is a standard instrumentation big band that performs concerts throughout the year and participates in regional jazz festivals. (2014 & 2015 – Selected to perform on the Finals Stage at the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival)
- **Jazz Combo** The jazz combo focuses on improvisation and group interaction while playing a wide range of styles in a quartet/quintet jazz setting. There is flexible instrumentation.
- **Steel Band** This ensemble concentrates on the "Panorama Style" arrangements native to Trinidad, as well as "lead sheet" charts and band member arrangements.
- **Indoor Percussion** Indoor Percussion combines elements of music performance, marching, and theater. Students work together to perform highly advanced percussion arrangements in coordination with choreographed drill on a customized floor covering. This ensemble competes January through March. (2014 AIA Championships Percussion Scholastic A Class: Gold Medal)