

## **A Survival Guide for Incoming Lafayette Band members**

Welcome! The first day of freshman year is a big day for any student and you have taken on an additional challenge by deciding to continue your music education as a part of the Lafayette Band. Band participation is a commitment, not just for the student, but for the whole family. This guide is intended to answer some of the questions that you and your parents will have as you begin your involvement with Band.

### **The LBA website: Your best source of information!**

First, the website on which this survival guide is posted is the best place to find Band information. As you can see, its user friendly and is kept up-to-date with announcements throughout the whole year. Many band members & parents include it in their list of “favorites” for easy access.

### **What’s up with auditions?**

In late April, eighth graders who have registered for Band are asked to audition. The word “audition” scares some people and confuses others. Don’t worry: you don’t have to “make” the Lafayette Band. If you’re dedicated and willing to work, you’re in! Everyone who is in the Band (even the rising seniors!) audition once a year to determine whether they will be in Concert Band, Symphonic Band or Wind Symphony and which chair they will occupy.

### **I’ll never be able to march and play at the same time!**

Sure you will—that’s why we have Band Camp. Three weeks late in the summer are set aside for Band Camp. These weeks are publicized a year in advance, enabling families to plan vacations and other activities so students won’t have to miss these important weeks of rehearsal. The first week of Band Camp is for first-time marchers (mostly freshmen), as well as students that make up percussion and color guard (although these groups rehearse periodically throughout

the summer). The entire Band will gather the second and third weeks of camp. In the weeks before Band Camp starts, you will receive a great deal of information about maintaining your health and well-being during camp. Be sure to read and heed the information about staying well-fed, well-hydrated and well sun-screened!

During the second week of full Band Camp, first-time marchers traditionally are required to wear a beanie, which will be given to them by the Seniors. This has been a Lafayette tradition since the 1950's

### **I've heard people talk about "sectionals." What's that?**

The Lafayette Band is made up of groups of instruments. People who play trumpet, clarinet, flute, etc., meet for rehearsal with just that section periodically, during and after regular rehearsal time. Each section has one or more section leaders, who are seniors or juniors. These section leaders are often at that first week of Band Camp and will help you with your marching and your music. Sections sometimes get together for social events and most design a special t-shirt that you can order.

### **I've never been on the Lafayette campus. What's the student parking lot?**

The student parking lot (also referred to as the senior parking lot, since only Lafayette seniors are allowed to park on campus) is the first lot you turn into from Springhill Drive. The entrance to this lot is between SCAPA and Lafayette). This is the most convenient lot for being dropped off & picked up. We ask that cars to stay clear of the marching field before or after rehearsal (it may look like a parking lot, but we know better!).

### **What is the Parent Performance?**

On the last evening of Band Camp, parents (and anyone, really) are invited to see a short re-cap of what the Band has been sweating over for the previous three weeks. In recent years, the

performance has been preceded by a tailgating cookout and after everyone is finished eating we gather at the football field for a demonstration of fundamentals and a bit of the show for the coming season. It's a fun night and usually kicks off marching season with a bang.

### **Does the Band perform at every ball game?**

The Band performs only at home football games, unless we're away for a competition. Football games are almost always on Friday nights.

### **I've seen pictures of the Band in two different uniforms. What's up with that?**

In 2006, the Lafayette Band introduced a uniform that is worn specifically for competition. The traditional uniform is worn for concerts.

### **How will I know which uniform is mine?**

During the summer, the uniform crew works long hours making appointments with every student to come in to be measured and fitted for both uniforms. At the fitting, each student is assigned a number that is sewed to both uniforms. The number is also on a red bag. This is your number for the year and you are responsible for the contents of the bag. You will be given instructions about how to care for the items in the bag, and what can be carried and what should not be carried in your red bag. Red bags are collected at the end of marching season, so you will need to be sure that everything that you were issued in August is in the bag and in good repair when it is collected.

### **Are shoes included with the uniform?**

Shoes are not included with the uniform. Students are asked to purchase white shoes for marching season and black shoes for concert season from RRR Accesories which comes to Band Camp to measure students for their shoes. **Please remember to write your name inside both shoes.** Lost shoes are a fact of life and a name in a shoe helps them find their way home! Shoes

should be clean and polished before each use. Long white socks are required for marching season; long black socks are required for concert season.

**I've never been to a marching band competition. What should I expect? Do I need to have transportation to the competition?**

Students ride buses to all band competitions (school buses for short trips; charter buses for longer trips). The entire Band, with the staff and the chaperone crew, are together from early in the morning until we return to school in the evening. Contests usually involve a preliminary performance in the afternoon and a finals performance in the evening. Several days before each competition, you'll receive an itinerary that will give you the specifics about call times, performance times and return times.

If your family will be attending the performance, they should dress for the weather, because they'll be outside most of the day. Early in the season, it will be hot, hot, hot and by the end of the season, they may want to wrap up in blankets (available at the Band Store!). There is an admission cost for competitions and the cost of admission includes prelims, as well as finals (not true at the state competition, which is actually semi-finals and finals competition). There are usually food sales at competitions, although many people tailgate and picnic as well. Often, there is enough time for families to go off-site to eat between the preliminary and final competitions.

Bands of America competitions are different from in-state competitions in that they take place indoors, in domed arenas. At the beginning of the season, you will receive information about BOA competition and there will be information for families about tickets and traveling details.

Lafayette Band parents and boosters are known to be courteous and supportive of all the bands at a competition. Before the first competition, watch your email and the Lafayette Band

newsletter for Marching Band Contest Etiquette. These simple guidelines that will make competitions fun for everyone!

Lots of families decorate their cars for competition; it's especially fun for the Band, as they're riding on a bus, to see a car whiz by decked out in Lafayette's distinctive red, white and blue!

Commemorative t-shirts, patches and programs are often available at competitions. Let your family know if you'd like to have such merchandise and ask them to purchase it; students never have the time or opportunity to do so. BOA competitions have commemorative patches that most students want to have for their jackets. The state competition patch is provided by the band; BOA patches are not.

### **How can I get a Band jacket?**

Band jackets are sold early in the year by R&W Sports Connection. R&W can also sew you bars and letter on your jacket and can advise you about placement of patches that you accumulate throughout the year.

### **What should we expect for overnight trips?**

The Band usually makes one or two overnight trips each year and these trips can make for some great Band memories. We stay in hotels and before the trip you'll be asked to sign up with three other people for a room assignment. You'll also be given the opportunity to request to ride the same bus with friends. Mr. Smith makes the final decision about bus and room assignments, but makes every effort to accommodate preferences. Boys and girls room on separate floors; the student/chaperone ratio is about 12 to one.

As is the case for day trips, you will receive an itinerary for overnight trips several days in advance. Itineraries are always posted on the Lafayette Band website the week of the trip.

### **What do we have to pay for on overnight trips?**

Transportation, food (including snacks) and lodging are all included in Band payments. Except for rare occasions, there are few needs for pocket money during a Band trip.

### **Anything else?**

Band trips include some fun traditions like door decorations and room feasts. Many students like to display their school and band spirit on the door to their rooms and sometimes there are enough snacks and soft drink in students' rooms to feed a small army. Mr. Smith has been known to prowl the floors, checking out the treats (Cheez-Its are said to be his favorite).

### **What happens when marching season is over?**

As busy as we stay during marching season, Band continues through the school year with an equally busy concert season. Concerts (usually three a year) are included on the calendar and there are usually several after-school rehearsals for each concert, in addition to the in-class time that is devoted to concert rehearsal.

### **Are there honor bands in high school?**

The Kentucky Music Educators' Association holds auditions each year for All-State band, orchestra and chorus. The Band auditions are held in three stages: the first round is held in the 7<sup>th</sup> District (the Lexington area); the final round is held in mid-December, usually outside of Lexington. After this round, the All-State Band is selected. The third audition is held after All-Staters report to the KMEA convention in February and determines the seating for each member. The All-State Band meets initially on a Wednesday evening, rehearses together on Thursday and Friday and performs on Saturday.

Auditions are held for the All-District Band annually in early January. The 7<sup>th</sup> District is made up of schools from Bourbon, Clark, Franklin, Harrison, Scott and Woodford counties, in

addition to Fayette, and is one of the most competitive in the state. The District Band meets on a Thursday evening, rehearses all day Friday and performs on Saturday.

Just the process of auditioning for these bands is instructive; the Lafayette Band traditionally has good representation in both All-State and District bands.

### **What is M2?**

M2 is shorthand for Mastering Musicianship, a program of private instruction that is a program offered to Lafayette Band students. Registration for the fall semester begins in the summer and registration for the spring in December. M2 tuition for each semester is \$150 and includes 10 lessons. If lessons during the fall semester are scheduled during marching rehearsal (and many of them are), you are free to leave rehearsal a couple of minutes before your private lesson begins and report back to marching rehearsal after the lesson is over. This type of private instruction is one of the things that set the Lafayette Band program apart from many bands in our area.

### **What is Mothers of Band?**

Mothers of Band is an unofficial group that gathers before the state competition to write notes of support to each Band member. Parents should watch their email for more information about becoming involved with this group.

### **What's the honors banquet?**

In May of each year Band members and their families gather for a banquet on a Sunday afternoon. In addition to sharing food and fellowship, students receive letters and bars as well as individual honors and accolades.

### **How will I be notified about Band events?**

In addition to notification in your Band classes, additional communication for the Band is electronic, via email, twitter and the LBA website. We've found that email is the most efficient, least expensive way to get information out to hundreds of people as quickly as possible. If you do not have access to email, please let one of the LBA co-presidents know so that alternate arrangements can be made. We want you to be informed!

### **Why do we have so many fundraisers?**

The payments that you pay are just part of the cost of fielding the Lafayette Band. Expenses include trips, uniforms (and their cleaning), food, drill design, music arrangements, and more. We depend on everyone to pitch in to raise money for the Band, although for each fundraiser, a family may make an "in lieu of" payment.

### **Do my parents really need to be involved?**

Absolutely! The Lafayette Band needs hundreds of volunteer hours to thrive, and we're proud to say that LBA is one of the best booster associations in the state. Take a look at the dozens of jobs that are available for volunteers and see where talents are needed. This can be a great activity not just for you, but for your whole family!

### **What if I have questions that aren't answered here?**

If you have ANY questions about anything, please feel free to call any member of the board of directors. All of their contact information is available on the website.