

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

Dear 7th Grade Parents:

I hope your fall semester is going well. It has been a very busy and fruitful fall for us. It has taken me awhile to get acclimated returning to music, but I feel like we are making progress with the students. I wanted to send home a note that discussed some upcoming events – and an opportunity to change the rehearsal schedule for your child.

This letter is rather long, and it is possible to miss some things. So look for details regarding these events:

Elementary Band Night (October 30th)

Louisiana Showcase of Bands Field Trip (November 10th)

Rehearsal Option for Wind Students (starting November 11th)

Christmas Parade (December 4th)

Christmas Concert (December 9th)

Wind Symphony Elementary School Tour (December 2nd)

We are preparing for the elementary band night this Friday evening. There will be a lot of events happening at halftime – we will have the elementary band performance, and we will honor the senior band/cross country/swimming students and parents at halftime. It's nice that on the same day we are honoring our graduating students, we are welcoming in our future students. Should weather be an issue this Friday, send your child with a rain coat. Also, all students (hs included) can wear Halloween costumes for the game. Should they choose not to, they can wear the band shirt and jeans.

The following weekend, we are offering to take the 7th grade students with us to the Louisiana Showcase of Bands Marching Contest, held on the campus of ULL. This is the culminating event for the marching season, and being that it is our hope that your child will be with us this upcoming year – we felt it valuable to get as familiar with our program as possible. We will not have an itinerary ready until next week, but we will provide transportation and supervision – as the students go with us throughout the day. They will travel with us, go with us through the warm up procedure, be on the field for the performance, and sit with us as we watch the other bands perform. The students would need a few dollars for concessions, and the itinerary will detail all aspects of the day – from the report time to the estimated time to return. Included in this letter will be a permission form to be returned to us.

As we begin the next component of our high school program, concert season, we wanted to offer a change to the 7th grade students' rehearsal calendar. We would like to invite the 7th grade brass/woodwind students to be a part of the high school concert band. This ensemble rehearses on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3:15 to 4:30. I believe this would be advantageous for the students since they would be challenged by advanced music, extended staff to assist, and playing in an ensemble with complete instrumentation – in addition to becoming familiar with our processes at the high school level. The high school percussion students rehearse at a different time, so this switch will not work for them – as we would like them to continue in the morning. However, this spring – we will be having training sessions for all percussionists relating to the upcoming year – and we will communicate this information to you when available.

These rehearsals would replace the morning rehearsals for your child. The afternoon rehearsal block would break down in this manner:

3:15 to 3:30 – Daily Drill, Ensemble Exercises

3:30 to 4:00 – Sectional work with Additional Staff

4:00 to 4:30 – Ensemble Rehearsal

4:30 – Dismissal, or you could arrange for a private lesson with one of our staff members.

I believe this would advance your child at a faster pace than we can accomplish in the 6th/7th grade morning rehearsal. Transportation solutions could be carpooling to our campus or taking transfer busses to our school. This is the first time we have offered this change in our program, and I believe it will be beneficial for those that can take advantage of it. Please call with any questions you may have regarding this opportunity. Of course, the option to stay on the current schedule is still available, as well.

Two other events coming quickly will be the Terrebonne Parish Christmas Parade, which (at this time) I believe is on Friday, December 4th. The 6th/7th grade band will march the parade with the HS students. We will meet at Vanderbilt and return to Vanderbilt via busses. We will produce an itinerary as that day gets closer. The second event is our annual Christmas concert, which will be held on Wednesday, December 9th at 6:30 PM in the Kolb Center on our campus.

In addition, we will be touring the elementary schools with the Vanderbilt Wind Symphony this December. The touring day is December 2nd, and we will be presenting a 45 minute concert to the elementary schools. Once we have a complete performance schedule for the day, we will post it on our website (www.vcband.org). We will have both elementary bands perform with the Wind Symphony while we are at their school.

Thank you for supporting our program. I know you make personal sacrifices to bring your child in the mornings, and both Steve and I are very appreciative. It's inspiring to see parents putting their children first. If we can ever be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to call.

Thanks,

Brad Adams/Steven Wilson