

# North Harrison Marching Cougars

New Parent Information & Frequently Asked Questions

## **WELCOME!**

It's great to have new parents and students become involved with the Marching Band. Involvement with the Marching Band is hard work, at times for everyone, but leads to fun and excitement for the entire family.

After you have read through this information, if you still have questions, be sure to ask someone who has been involved with the band previously. Or, better yet, ask one of the current Booster Officers. You can find information on the current Booster Board at the end of this handbook.

### **Why consider marching band for your student?**

Students in band are accepted into high school peer groups more quickly than students that do not participate in outside school activities. Students are exposed to, and become friends with, upper classmen who are able to help them cope with the high school environment. Marching Band provides the opportunity and encouragement to develop close relationships with other committed students who have similar values and interests. Marching Band students learn many skills in addition to musical skill, such as dedication, hard work, perseverance, responsibility, working as a team, acceptance of others, how to compete in a healthy friendly way, and leadership skills. Marching Band also provides the opportunity for much needed exercise. The band is an extremely high quality program that is respected throughout the state marching community.

### **What are the Band Boosters?**

The Band Boosters is an organization of adults interested in supporting the music programs at North Harrison. The focus of the boosters is the support for the staff/students and to raise money to pay for the items not provided by the school system that the music program needs to have superior music education in our schools.

There are two budgets that support the program. The first is money from the school and is used primarily for staff, music education, instruments, instrument repair, and transportation. The second comes from money raised by the Boosters via fundraising and assessments. The Booster Officers develop the Booster budget with input from the director. The majority of the budget is for staff, transportation, music, drill, flags, and overall development of the show.

There are many other expenses required to prepare and perform throughout the marching season. It is not unusual to have expenses come up during the season that are not in the initial budget. This happens because of the creative nature of what we do and the level of the performances that are expected of the band. The Booster Officers occasionally vote on budgetary questions. The budget and detailed transactions are always available for parent review.

### **Who is part of the Band Boosters?**

Every family who has a student in the band program is considered a member of the boosters.

### **Why should I, as a parent, need to be involved with the Boosters?**

It requires significant adult support for a quality band program. There are numerous costs in producing an outstanding music and marching program, over and above what is provided by the

school. The Boosters work to defray these costs and reduces the fees that each family needs to pay towards their student's music education. Many things are provided for the students, such as props for the shows, chaperones, meals, and drinks. It takes adults to coordinate and provide these necessities. There are many, many logistic and support items that need to happen in order to get the band to all the places it needs to go.

The Boosters provide emotional support and encouragement to each and every student to obtain their highest level of success. Just as the marching band needs all the students giving their best, the Booster parents need to give their best.

### **How can I become involved with the Boosters?**

Parents are encouraged to sign up to help on committees, such as fundraising, uniforms, chaperones, medical, transportation, hospitality, equipment, pit crew, camps, and clinics. Just to name a few. There are more committees that you may be interested in joining. There are also many small tasks you can do without joining a committee. Eventually, you may want to become more of a leader in the Band Boosters.

The Band Boosters meet on a monthly basis on the third Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the High School Band Room or the Auditoria.

The key to success is helping in some way – even a small way.

### **What is it going to cost me for my child to perform with the band?**

A fee is set each year by the Band Director for those students in Marching Band. Winter Drum Line and Winter Guard Directors set their program fees.

These fees are broken into several payments paid to the **North Harrison High School Band Boosters**. If payments are not made by the specified dates, the board has set aside consequences. These include inability of the individual to perform in competitions. It is **EXTREMELY** important that your payments are paid on time. Because your student has been assigned a spot in the show, if fees are not paid there is a hole that affects the entire band. Various fundraisers can earn booster money.

### **Fundraisers:**

Students and parents of marching band and winter programs are expected to help with the fundraisers developed by the Boosters. The Boosters use fundraising for students to help pay their fees and to provide for the general fund. Many fundraisers are developed each year to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to offset their payments.

### **What other costs are involved?**

New parents will also find that there are optional costs involved with having a student in band. These costs include: cost of personal instrument or supplies for a school-owned instrument (i.e. reeds, reed guards, mouthpieces, percussion sticks, mallets), admissions to competitions (for parents), travel (for parents going to competitions), and gifts between band members (tradition has it that small gifts are exchanged between various band members, sections, and big brothers/sisters).

### **What uniforms does my student wear?**

The marching uniforms are provided for the students to use but each member is responsible to buy certain pieces of the uniforms. Generally you will need to purchase marching shoes (ordered through the band director) and gloves (only purchased once unless the student loses them, outgrows them, or damages them beyond use).

The Boosters provide each student a “show” t-shirt each year. These t-shirts are to be worn at specific times, either as part of the fall, summer, or travel uniforms.

### **Uniform Parts:**

The marching uniform consists of a jacket, pair of bib pants, pair of gauntlets, hat, plume, and a pair of gloves. In addition, students are required to supply a pair of black socks. Students often have to change in public areas and should plan undergarments accordingly (hence shorts and t-shirts)!

### **Uniform Bag:**

A numbered uniform bag is provided for each band member for use with transporting the uniform parts (except shoes). The jacket and bib pants always stay in the band uniform room. For trips, the jacket and bib pants are put in the bag for loading on the truck.

### **Fittings:**

Uniforms are fitted to the students each year. Uniform fittings begin with the seniors and continue through the freshmen/8<sup>th</sup> graders. It is important that each student gets fitted each year for a uniform (sizes change for many students). Fitting schedules and times will be announced.

### **How to wear uniforms:**

Students are taught proper care and respect of uniforms when they are fitted for a uniform. Students **MUST** be responsible for returning **ALL** pieces of uniforms to the proper location between and after games, competitions, and events.

### **Cleaning:**

Parents/Students are responsible for laundering gloves and personal items (socks and items worn under the uniform). Students are also responsible for cleaning and polishing their shoes prior to each performance. The Boosters are responsible for dry-cleaning of the uniforms (jackets, bib pants, and gauntlets). **STUDENTS ARE NEVER TO LAUNDER THE BIB AND JACKET!**

### **What is expected of a parent of a marching band student?**

A parent of a marching band student requires flexibility. Places, times of rehearsal, etc. do change based on the needs of the band. Changes in schedules are kept to a minimum, but do occur. Your student, as well as all students and staff, need your support. There will be times when your student, or your student’s friend, becomes discouraged. Your encouragement to keep plugging along will help get them to the next rehearsal, game, or competition. Even the

experienced marchers occasionally need to be reminded of why they are investing so much effort. We also need your assistance on various committees and activities. We value your time and energy as much or more than financial support.

### **What kind of supervision does my student have when they are with the band?**

In addition to the director and staff, Boosters volunteer to chaperone all events with the band. A nurse, medical person, or designated first-aid chaperone is available to the students and staff at all events. A first-aid kit is available during marching rehearsals. Contact a Booster Officer if you are interested in helping out with the chaperone duties. It is a great way to meet other students and it is not required to chaperone the same group as your student.

### **What type of supervision is there at band camp?**

Chaperones are carefully selected by the Boosters to ensure the students have adequate and appropriate supervision while at band camp. There is usually a first-aid person available to the students and staff for emergencies.

### **What transportation is used for games and competitions?**

For all local and regional competitions or activities, school buses are used for students and chaperones. All drivers are supplied by the district and meet normal bus driver requirements. All equipment is transported in the band's semi-trailer.

A staff of chaperones always accompanies the band for handling of the equipment, food, water, and general support of the students and staff.

### **When will I ever get to see what my student is doing with the band?**

In general, the marching band will perform their show at each Friday home football game. At home games, the band performs the entire show or the parts that are ready.

The band also performs at various competitions on Saturdays during the fall, progressing towards the state championship.

Parents are able to watch rehearsals from the grassy area by the middle school parking lot at any time. Parents are asked, however, to not disturb students and staff during rehearsals. It is remarkable to see the differences in the marching and music as the season progresses. The students also appreciate the support of the parents who take a few minutes towards the end of rehearsal to see what they are doing.

### **Am I responsible for all transportation of my student to rehearsals?**

Yes. Many students carpool to/from rehearsals and to/from the school before and after events.

### **I am going to be at a band event. Does my student have to ride with the band?**

Students are required to ride to all events with the band. Occasionally, special exceptions are made by **prior arrangement with the director**. Students may ride home from events with their parents **IF** the director has given permission with the schedule for the week of the competition. It is the responsibility of the parent to meet the student at the bus and check-in with the chaperones before taking the student. However, the student is still responsible to make the necessary arrangements to ensure their uniform and instrument is returned to the band room.

### **I never seem to know what is going on with the band. How can I find out?**

There are a variety of ways used to communicate in the band and booster organization. Some of the ways you need to become accustomed to using are:

- North Harrison School web site
- Band Booster meetings, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m.
- Weekly itineraries for Friday games and Saturday competitions are given to students during the marching season, usually by Tuesday
- Other parents

If you still have questions, you can contact any of the Band Booster Officers, listed on our website at [www.nhcougarband.com](http://www.nhcougarband.com).

## **Student Information**

### **What is expected of the students in marching band?**

Marching Band members are required to attend summer band camp. Students are also expected to attend all rehearsals. Memorization of music begins prior to band camp and is expected as the season progresses and the music is modified to fit the program. Students are also expected to *want* to be at rehearsals and strive to do their best at each rehearsal, game, and competition.

### **How easy will it be to get to know other band members?**

The Marching Cougar Band has a history of being a second family to their members. Many of the students who have experienced marching band have developed friendships with students of different grade levels. The students, and parents, try to be friendly and are willing to help each other out.

### **What kind of physical conditioning do I need to march in band?**

Marching is a difficult and physically strenuous activity. BUT it is possible for ALL students who are willing to make the effort to be a part of marching band

### **What kind of recognition is given to marching band members?**

Each spring there is a band awards dinner that students and families are invited to attend. Awards for various categories are given out by the Music Staff.

### **What should I bring to band camp?**

- Sunscreen
- A good pair of tennis shoes (broken in, but not worn out and no sandals) and socks
- Hat and sunglasses
- Water bottle or jug (mark your container)
- Music and instrument

### **What is expected of the student at camp?**

Drink lots of water! It is easy to get dehydrated quickly when marching. Marching is generally done early in the morning and in the evening. Students don't generally march in the middle of the day to help prevent heat-related problems. Students are expected to learn to be on time at all activities, to cooperate with each other and staff to enable the band to perform at the highest possible level. Students are encouraged to push themselves hard and strive for the extra little bit of effort at camp and in all rehearsals and competitions.

### **What is provided for the students at camp?**

The Boosters provide a lot of water during the outside rehearsals. A parent volunteer is always available for overheated students to cool down or provide for basic first-aid needs. Please make sure that students drink lots of water and clear liquids and rest between rehearsals. Please also ensure they get plenty of sleep at night. Many volunteers are needed to support this effort!

### **I have heard horror stories of band camp fatigue. What can I expect?**

It is very possible that you will be very tired after camp. It is recommended that you don't plan for a heavy-duty, action-packed week after camp. On the other hand, some students finish camp with lots of extra energy and excitement. ALL students can expect lots of fun memories and a true sense of accomplishment.