

# Freshman Parent's Guide to the Soaring Eagle Band

*This supplemental guide is basic information only.*

*Please refer to the 23-24 Band Handbook for detailed information regarding our program.*

## Contact Information:

- Chris Brannan, Fine Arts Director | Director of Bands: [chris.brannan@bhisd.net](mailto:chris.brannan@bhisd.net) - Ext. 1215
- Andrew Kier – Associate Band Director | Color Guard Director: [andrew.kier@bhisd.net](mailto:andrew.kier@bhisd.net) - Ext. 2647
- Austin Brannon – Percussion Director | Asst. Band Director: [austin.brannon@bhisd.net](mailto:austin.brannon@bhisd.net) - Ext. 1367
- Juan Rojas – Assistant Percussion Director: [juan.rojas@bhisd.net](mailto:juan.rojas@bhisd.net) - Ext. 1367
- Dwight Watson – Assistant Band Director | Jazz Band Director: [dwight.watson@bhisd.net](mailto:dwight.watson@bhisd.net) - Ext. 1219
- Hope Novosad – Fine Arts, Administrative Assistant: [hope.novosad@bhisd.net](mailto:hope.novosad@bhisd.net) - Ext. 1379

## Is there a band website?

YES - <https://www.bhisd.net/high-school-home/campus-departments/fine-arts>

## Is there a band calendar/schedule?

YES - Specific details per event are sent regularly, but the full 23-24 calendar is on the website. For your convenience, you can also access the Band calendar via this link: <http://bit.ly/BHillBands>

## What is the Barbers Hill Band Booster Club?

The Barbers Hill Band Booster Club is the parent and community support organization for the band and color guard. The main purpose of this organization is to help the band directors and students achieve their goals as a performance group. The booster club provides the extra support, both financial and volunteer, that the band needs to compete at the highest level. Meetings are held monthly and we encourage you to follow the group on social media or contact them at [bhbandbc@gmail.com](mailto:bhbandbc@gmail.com) to get added to the email distribution list.

FaceBook: @BHBandBoosters | Twitter: @BHBandBooster | Instagram: @soaringeaglebandboosters

## Does Marching Band Require a Physical?

YES - If your child is in athletics, band, cheer or dance, they will need a physical. It is your responsibility to provide a copy to each coach, but you only need one original. Rank One Fine Arts and Rank One Athletics are separate platforms, so you will have to complete online participation forms twice. The form is available on the Fine Arts website, and must be dated after May 1, 2023 to be valid for the 23-24 school year.

## **What is the structure of the band?**

A student's placement in the competitive marching show is determined by tryouts in the fall. During the fall semester (marching season) all of these students meet together for rehearsals after school. During the school day, each member will rehearse with their assigned group during their assigned class period.

In the spring, each group will meet during their assigned class time. The difference being that percussion students will now meet with their assigned band instead of as a percussion class.

## **What is Color Guard?**

The Color Guard is an integral part of the visual performance of the marching show. Selection is based on tryouts at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester in the spring. The Color Guard augments the marching show by incorporating flags, rifles, and a variety of props. The group is under the direction of the Guard Director, Andrew Kier. The Guard calendar is on the Guard section of the Fine Arts website.

## **What is Summer Band Camp?**

It is all about learning the band's marching show-music and drill. UIL rules dictate when a high school program can begin working on marching drill. Schedule has been distributed to students, and is posted on the Fine Arts website. Freshmen Camp begins July 24th and we will be on campus all day!

## **Will the band know the entire show by the first football game?**

No. Our shows are very intricate with many parts. Each week of the marching season you will notice new parts and/or additional choreography. After the first three or four games the basic outline of the show will be complete but the directors will continue to "fill in" and add choreography and more interest. It is a fun and intriguing thing to witness.

## **Does the band perform at pep rallies?**

Pep rallies are held during the last class period of the school day for home football games. In the 2018-2019 school year, the district updated the rules regarding guests at pep rallies. Due to security reasons and space limitations, parents are not allowed to attend pep rallies. When your child is a senior, you will have the opportunity to attend one pep rally.

## **Does every band member march in the show?**

Everyone performs at the football games. Color Guard members and those spots in the competitive show will be determined by attendance during summer band, tryouts, and overall attitude. Starting late September, the band

will transition to the "competition show". This number is somewhat less than the number of members in the band. The marching spots will be assigned by the directors during the summer band camp after they have had the opportunity to watch the students march and listen to them play. The members who are not assigned a marching spot will be assigned as JV members, and march in the alternate block.

JV alternates are allowed to challenge for a marching spot. Alternates that do not earn a spot will be utilized to handle props on the field when props are part of the show. The others will be expected to know all of the music or guard work for the show and will be assigned a position on the field they will be expected to learn. When a band member can't march because he/she is ill, he/she becomes ineligible because of low grades, or for any other reason, a director may use an alternate to replace him/her on the field. Alternates are expected to be at every rehearsal and band function.

## **Football Games**

On most Fridays from the end of August until the beginning of November, there will be a football game. The students will be given a set time to meet in the band hall. On away games, the district provides a meal for band students, as they are typically not allowed to go home after school due to bus departure times. On home games, it is your responsibility to feed your student. Game day logistics are sent home with students and posted in Parent Square.

The end of the football game does not mean the band is released. At the end of a game, the band waits until the stands are almost empty before returning to the band hall. If you've never seen the official band dismissal, you are welcome to wait in the stands also. Once in the band hall, all uniforms and equipment is neatly stored. Once complete, the band will be dismissed. If you are picking up your band student please be very patient. This is one of the hardest things for the new band parents to understand.

Students are expected to travel to/from games with the band. They are allowed to leave with a parent or guardian, if the Alternate Travel Request has been completed in advance. Students must be checked out at the buses only. More information in the full band handbook.

## **What if the football team makes the playoffs?**

If the football team makes the playoffs, the band is expected to play at the games. The schedule for these games will be different from the regular season so watch for directions to come from the band directors.

## **What if it rains at a football game?**

Raingear is provided for the band members during a game or competition. The band is expected to attend the game even if it's raining. The district safety regulations are in effect so if lightning is detected, the game will be delayed, paused, rescheduled, or called complete.

## **What is the Winter Guard?**

Winter Guard refers to the competition season for the Color Guard that follows the Marching season. These contests are held indoors and separate routines for groups as well as individuals are learned and performed.

## **Are private lessons necessary?**

Private lessons are not required, but strongly recommended. They are offered on every instrument, pending instructor availability and are conducted at the HS Band Hall. A deposit is required in advance of scheduling lessons. Contact [andrew.kier@bhisd.net](mailto:andrew.kier@bhisd.net), if you are interested in private lessons.

Our instructors are professional players or advanced-level university students who are contracted through BHISD. The lessons are \$25 per session. Students with the benefits of private lessons not only elevate their own play but the musicality of the band as a whole.

## **What are Marching Contests?**

Besides football games, the fall is all about the marching competitions for the BH Band. These competitions are held on Saturdays. They consist of UIL and other marching competitions. Most of the competitions are in the Houston area, with the UIL State competition held in San Antonio, if we are selected.

The 2023 dates for Class 5A are November 6 - 7, 2023, and we compete in Region 19. The district excuses the absence of our students from class and pays many of the expenses for a State trip. You can find more information on the UIL website: [www.uil texas.org](http://www.uil texas.org).

For the local contests, the students will meet at the band hall at an instructed time, they will rehearse, and then load the buses to travel to the competition site. Many competitions have a preliminary contest; they announce winners; and then have a finals competition for those bands that qualify. After the final awards are announced, the band will reload the buses and return to the band hall.

This all means very long days for our band kids! Hydration and nutrition are always a top consideration. You will be notified when a sack meal needs to be sent or if a meal is being provided. It is truly amazing to see what it takes to put on one of these shows and to see how amazing our students are. You will have a newfound respect for your student and how hard he/she works.

## **What is the Concert Season?**

Concert season takes place mostly in the spring semester but begins immediately following the marching season. Concert season is the time when most musical training takes place and each band's performance rating during the UIL concert contest is the basis for evaluating the entire band program. Band members will be placed in a band based on the number of students and their playing abilities.

Tryouts are held in late fall. Concerts and contests are held throughout the spring semester. Extra rehearsals, sectionals and performances will be required for this group. Students will be expected to maintain the highest standards of performance, effort, and discipline.

## **What are All-Region, Area, & State tryouts? (OPTIONAL)**

Individual band members of the Wind Ensemble and the Symphonic bands are required to try out and members of the concert band are strongly encouraged to try out. Pre-selected tryout music is available to all students beginning in July. Region Concert Band tryouts are usually held in November & December in two phases. The students passing the first round (consisting of two phases) of tryouts will perform with the All-Region band. If a student passes the second round they attain area status and therefore are eligible to compete for the All-State band. This competition is usually held in early January.

Band members who become All-State musicians assemble in San Antonio in February to perform at the Texas Music Educators Association convention. The bands and orchestras made up of these wonderful musicians represent the top 1/2 of 1% of the high school band members in the state of Texas. Advancing to All-State is the highest individual honor a high school musician can achieve.

## **What are UIL Solo & Ensemble Contests? (REQUIRED)**

This contest gives the band students another opportunity to progress musically. Participation in this event is not mandatory for any band member but it is highly encouraged. The contest is usually held in February. Each member will choose a piece of music with his/her lesson teacher that is appropriate to their level of play. The students are given a rating of I-V, I being the highest level. If a student chooses a piece of music from an approved list, performs that piece from memory, and receives a rating of I, that student will have the option of progressing to the State UIL Solo & Ensemble competition usually held in late May in Austin.

## **What is the UIL Concert & Sight-Reading Evaluation? (REQUIRED)**

The UIL Concert Evaluations are held in April. These competing bands travel to a local high school where they perform and are critiqued and graded by UIL judges. Each band performs their concert music followed by the sight-reading portion of the evaluation. If you have never been to this event, you will be amazed during sight-reading.

The band is given music that neither they nor the directors have seen or heard and have approximately 8-10 minutes to talk their way through the piece. They then receive a “one-time-shot” at their performance. These contests are open to the public and are fascinating to watch.

## Summer Marching Rehearsal

- Our rehearsal uniform is black shorts and white t-shirts; not provided by the school.
- Students should wear athletic style shoes.
  - Under no circumstance should a student come to marching rehearsal in Crocs, flip-flops, sandals, Converse, Vans, etc.
- Sunglasses and a hat are highly recommended.
- Students should also be sure to put on sunscreen prior to rehearsal.
- Stay hydrated!
  - Breaks will be provided, but drink water before and after rehearsal
  - Sodas and energy drinks are strongly discouraged
  - Come to every rehearsal with a Camelback or a water jug/bottle of water tethered to a strap that you can sling over your shoulder.
- Eat breakfast each morning!
  - Give your body some calories to burn so that you don't crash.
  - Protein and complex ("slow") carbohydrates are suggested versus donuts.
- Boosters will provide an opportunity to pre-order/pay for lunch. If you miss that information, please contact [bhbandbc@gmail.com](mailto:bhbandbc@gmail.com), to make arrangements. Students are welcome to bring their own food, but leaving campus for lunch is not allowed.
- All football players report for band until football practice starts in August. Once football begins, go to football practice and come to band rehearsal only when you do not have football practice.

Every effort is made to minimize summer rehearsal time. PLEASE schedule vacations and trips away from these dates.

Please contact me or any member of the high school band staff, if you have any questions. I look forward to working with the students and families of the Soaring Eagle Band & Color Guard.

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281.576.2221, Ext. 1215

**Summer Band 2023 - Guard: May 30th - June 2nd and July 17th - 19th**

**Percussion: June 5th - 8th and July 11th - 14th**

**Freshmen: July 24th - 26th; Full Band: July 27th - until school starts**