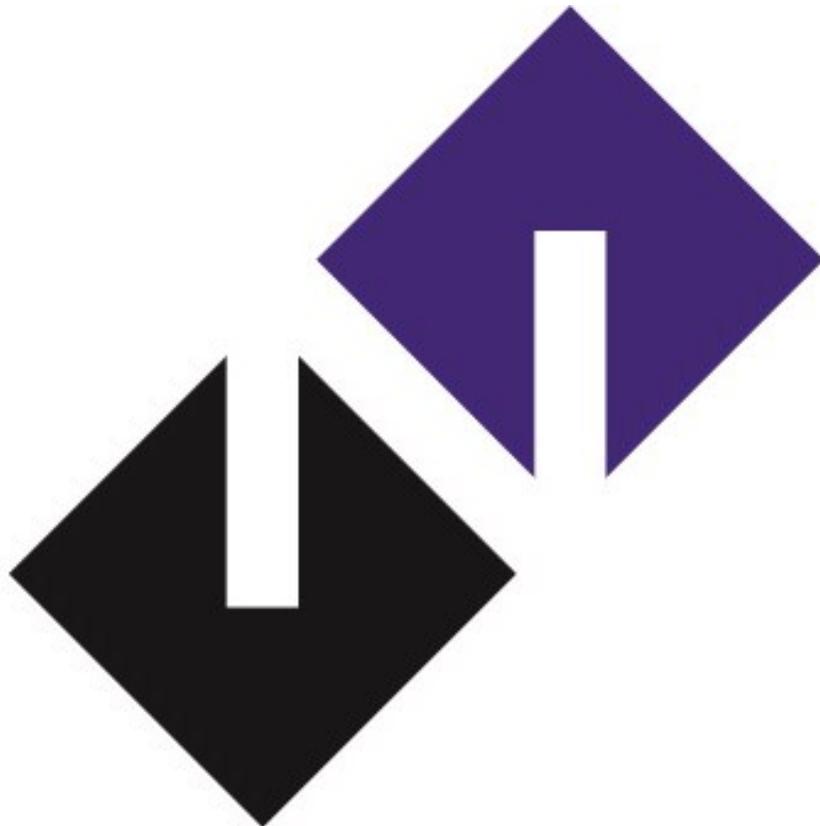
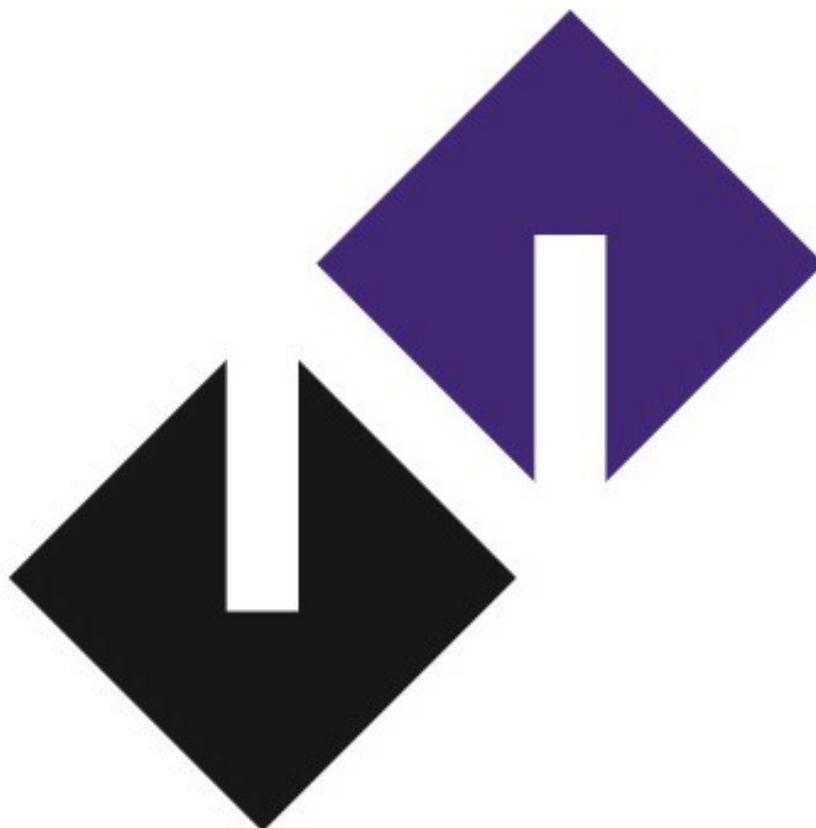


2021
Patriot Brigade
Handbook



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Welcome

Welcome to the Patriot Brigade Family. Welcome to your new family. Welcome to a group that will be your favorite class to come to, your favorite activity to do, and that will provide you with some of the greatest memories you will ever have. Welcome to a group that takes incredible pride in the history of the organization and to a group that always strives to be the absolute best that they can be during performances and in rehearsal. Welcome to the hardest, most exhausting, most frustrating, and most time consuming activity that you will absolutely love and give everything you have to make better.

Welcome to the Patriot Brigade!

The Terre Haute North Patriot Brigade is an experience that students and parents become completely engrossed in and provides both an opportunity to become involved in their school and community. Students will have the opportunity to entertain crowds and students at home Patriot football games, parades, contests (including marching in Lucas Oil Stadium, home of the Indianapolis Colts), and a multitude of community events. Parents are provided with an opportunity to stay involved in their students' lives through volunteer opportunities, coming to rehearsals and watching the hard work being put into the activity, becoming an advocate for the rewards and benefits of music, and through simply cheering on their students as they compete in contests throughout the Midwest.

For those parents who are returning members of the Patriot Brigade Family, welcome back. Please continue to make this one of the most decorated, successful, and respected organizations in the Wabash Valley. For those parents who are new to the Patriot Brigade Family, we encourage you to get involved right now. How? Simply ask, "How can I help?" and we will be sure to find something in which you can contribute. Everyone can help!

For those students who are returning members of the Patriot Brigade Family, welcome back. Please continue to carry on our traditions of hard work, fun, respect, and success. For those students who are new to the Patriot Brigade, jump in and be you. Listen to the "veterans" as they will quickly get you up to speed on our traditions. Play with all the confidence in the world. You are a great player and deserve to be here. Take pride in what you are doing and always do everything (from how you carry yourself, to how you care for your instrument, to how you behave in and out of class, and to how you perform in rehearsals and performances) to the absolute best of your abilities. Listen to the directors and staff. Our job is to make you better at this activity. Ask questions. If you don't understand something, don't try to fake it. Ask the veterans, the student leadership team, the staff, or the directors. Always remember to have fun!

Again, we welcome you to the Patriot Brigade Family. Please read through this handbook and keep it in a prominent place in your home. This book has all of the information you will need for the year and resources and references to find answers to any questions that you may have.

WELCOME TO THE PATRIOT BRIGADE!

John Williams
Director of Bands
Terre Haute North Vigo High School

Zachary McCloud
Assistant Director of Bands
Terre Haute North Vigo High School

Communication Resources

CHARMS www.charmsmusic.com

This is the Patriot Brigade's primary place for students and parents to find documents, announcements, and individual account statements **All students, parents, and guardians are required to register and complete the basic information on the student page. This is to include a parent/guardian email address.**

School Code: THNHSBANDS. Student Logins will be given to you soon.

How to register for charms:

1. Go to www.charmsmusic.com
2. Click [Enter/Login] at the top right-hand side of the screen.
3. Enter THNHSBANDS where it asks you to "Please enter your school code:".
4. Enter your student are password. Your default password is your student's id. Your student's ID consists of the first 3 letters of their first name and the first 3 letters of their last name.
(Example: John Williams = johwil)
5. Please note that you may not have an ID until the end of the second day of band camp.
6. The first thing you will need to do is update your information. Click on the orange box in the bottom left corner.
7. Please update your student's information.
8. Click on [Add a New Adult]
9. Complete the information for at least one parent/guardian. (Repeat steps 8 and 9 for each parent/guardian.)

BAND

Band is a simple, free mass texting application used by the Patriot Brigade to communicate during emergency situations including inclement weather. This app also includes a calendar function as well as a discussion board. Instructions and information are found in the resources section of this handbook. This is our main social media source for information.

FACEBOOK

Please search our Facebook page (THN BANDS). This is a closed group and you must request permission to be added to the page. We update this page frequently with and pictures.

HANDOUTS

Students are given hardcopies of all of the information provided on these alternate resources as well.

YOUTUBE

We have a YouTube channel (Terre Haute North Bands) where we will share videos as possible.

Band Camp

Band camp is the most important part of the Patriot Brigade. This time affords us the unique opportunity to come together as a group and rehearse without the distractions of school, homework, etc. We will learn how to march, how to march and play at the same time, warm-ups and traditions of the Brigade, most (if not all) of the music for the show, much of the drill for the show, and so much more. Because of this, band camp is a required event for all members of the Patriot Brigade.

July 19—July 23

8am—12pm

July 26—July 30

8am—5pm

August 2—August 6

8am—5pm

What to Bring

Through the many years of teaching band camps in the South and the Midwest, Mr. Williams and Mr. McCloud have learned several things about what students will need in order to succeed and remain healthy throughout band camp.

- **Water Bottle/Jug**
 - **(students will not be allowed to participate in camp without one)**
- Sunglasses
- Hat
- **Tennis Shoes**
 - **(Crocs, flip-flops, sandals, etc., are not permissible as students cannot execute the proper marching technique and can actually get injured by wearing these.)**
- Sunscreen
- Comfortable, light colored clothing
 - (Moisture wicking shirts are recommended as are shorts. Avoid black and dark clothing as they can cause students to overheat quickly.)
- Pencil
- Instrument (Winds and Perc. Only)
- Small, Spiral-bound notebook
- Fanny Pack (Required for all)
- Granola Bar/Small snack
- Black 3-Ring Binder (Winds and Perc. Only)
- Sheet Protectors (Winds and Perc. Only)

Band Camp Continued

What to Expect

This will be the hardest, most fun three weeks of your life. Below we have included some extra tips and a schedule.

HYDRATION — This begins before camp has even started. All students need to begin drinking extra water 2-3 days prior to the start of band camp. Heat and dehydration are the biggest enemies of students at all camps and are two of the things that the directors and staff have the least control over. Students need to drink plenty of water before, during, and after rehearsals. IHSAA's guidelines for students athletes have been included in the reference and resource section of this handbook. We have included this because the students will be working as hard as athletes and sweating just as much.

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

Subject to Change

8am — 12pm (Outside)	Marching Fundamentals, Drill Learning
12pm — 1pm (Inside)	Lunch (provided free of charge to all students)
1pm — 5pm (Inside)	Music Rehearsal Inside

LUNCH — Lunch is provided to all students during the two weeks of full day band camp. This is provided through the generosity and hard work of our band boosters and through student donations. Lunch typically consists of turkey, ham, or pb&j sandwich, chips, fruit, small dessert, and water or Gatorade. Students will be asked to bring in veggie trays, chips, sports drinks, or other items to supplement lunch. While this is a provided lunch, students are welcome to bring and or provide their own lunch if they wish.

CAMPUS — Students must remain on Terre Haute North Vigo High School's campus at all times and are not permitted to leave during camp. This policy includes leaving campus with parents or guardians and is in place to ensure the safety and well-being of the students. It also ensures that the directors and staff know where all of the students are at all times.

PARENTS — Parents are always permitted to watch and observe any part of our rehearsals. We only ask that you do not interfere with the directors and staff.

Fees

Did you know it costs THN Patriot Brigade \$30,000 a year to run our program? None of this is covered by the school corporation. It must be brought in through band fees and fundraising. Please take note that without our annual fundraisers, the student fees would be approximately \$450-\$500 per student! However, due to successful fundraising, we are able to lower these fees significantly. As a result, the Patriot Brigade requires each student to pay a Patriot Brigade obligation fee:

All Students: \$350 + Marching Shoes (if needed)
\$50 Volunteer Fee

Each student's parent/guardians must help push equipment, drive trucks, chaperone, etc. (Volunteer Lists to Come Soon) at a minimum of 2 contests or games. Once this obligation has been fulfilled, the \$50 fee will be removed from the account. This \$50 fee is in addition to the regular fees listed above.

This is extremely low compared to other bands in the area. This money is used to offset the cost of running a competitive marching band and to pay for a number of expenses. These fees are needed to cover the following:

- Band T-shirt (Given to each student at Camp)
- Instructional Fees (Covers the cost to hire qualified educators as Staff)
- Transportation: (Helping us get here and there for performances)
- Show: (Covers the cost of writing the show, drill, music, choreography etc)
- Equipment: (Covers the cost of props, instruments and other equipment)
- Uniform maintenance and rental (covers the wear and tear on uniforms)

SHOES

All new wind/percussionists will need to pay a one time fee of \$40.00* for the purchase of uniform marching shoes. These shoes will be the students to keep for the remaining years in marching band.

All Color guard will also need to pay for their pair of dance shoes. These will be approximately \$40. More details will be released soon depending on costume needs.

EXTRAS

The color guard will be asked to obtain a few extra items throughout the season to complete their uniform that are not included in fees such as: makeup, hair accessories, socks, undergarments, etc. Students will also have the option to purchase other items that are not covered by fees such as guard warm-ups. The use of flag poles is included in fees.

*Student account credits from fundraising cannot be used for personal items such as marching shoes.

Fees Continued

INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS

Each member's family is responsible for their fees. All the money collected from fund raising will be credited to individual accounts that helped with that fundraiser. Parents have the obligation to pay the fees that are set by the executive board.

- ◆ All fees will be debited from your child's account automatically just as credits will be added.
- ◆ Students choosing to leave the Patriot Brigade organization with monies owed are still obligated to pay those fees. Failure to pay fees will result in administrative action through the school. Unpaid fees of an older sibling will be added to the younger sibling's account.
- ◆ Students choosing to leave the organization with a credit in their account forfeit this credit to the booster-general fund. Credits may not be transferred to another student's account unless it is a sibling.
- ◆ No funds will be refunded in the case of a student leaving the organization – including seniors.
- ◆ In case of extreme financial hardship, please contact the band director to discuss arrangements.

DISCOUNTS

(discounts are applied to the remaining balance of fees due)

Sibling discount – 10% off remaining balance due for every additional child currently participating
-discount will be applied to the additional child's account

Early Payment in full – \$25 off remaining balance due for all balances paid in full by 1st payment deadline.
-discount does not apply to shoes or any other extras.
-payment must be dropped off at school or postmarked by July 12th .

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

To make a payment towards your child's account, please use the payment schedule listed below. At the end of this handbook, you will also find payment coupons. When turning in money, please attach a payment coupon to your check so that we may credit the amount correctly. Payments over the summer can be dropped off in the main office, placed in the money box (outside band directors office), or mailed.

*Payment #1: Due July 19th - \$100

*shoe fee due this month as well *\$25 discount if all fees paid in full by this date.

Payment #2: Due August 12th - \$90

Payment #3: Due September 9th - \$80

Payment #4: Due October 14th - \$80

Fees Continued

PAYMENT OPTIONS

CHECK or MONEY ORDER: Must be written to THN Bands with your child's name/purpose in the memo. Should be placed in an envelope and turned in to the money box by the band office. This can also be mailed to the school attn: BANDS

PAYPAL: To do so, login to CHARMS and click on "finances." You will then see green tabs next to each ledger that says "Pay Fees." If you plan on paying in full, click on "pay fixed fees." If you plan on making a monthly payment, scroll down and click on "misc payment." This will then direct you to Paypal. You will need to set up a Paypal account but it's free and takes no time. Note: There will be a small fee added to your payment for the online transaction cost.

PLEASE NO CASH! This is to ensure that we have a paper trail of your payments. This protects you, the boosters, and the directors. We understand this is not a convenient way to pay, however, should a cash payment become lost, we have no way of tracking it down. This is not the case with checks or money orders.

TRACKING YOUR PAYMENTS: Due to the volume of monies received, do not expect to see your payment to post immediately after submitting. It can take up to 2 weeks to see payments posted to the CHARMS website account. If more than 2 weeks have passed and the check has not cleared and has not posted to your account, please contact Mr. Williams (jjw2@vigoschools.org) or Mr. McCloud (zachary.mccloud@vigoschools.org).

Fundraising

Without the fundraising events listed below, the band would not be able to put together the season that we have. The school corporation does provide some funding, however, it is not enough for what we really need to have a successful program. Parent involvement for these events is CRUCIAL. Please become familiar with these fundraisers so that we can have as much participation as possible.

SMOOTHIE STAND

We sell smoothies at local Terre Haute events, football, and basketball games. We need a few parent volunteers to run the stand at each game. Signups for each event are handled through CHARMS.

SPIRIT WEAR AND SPIRIT ITEMS

Decals, Apparel, Yard Signs, etc.

We have a variety of Patriot Brigade “Spirit” items that we sell to our fans and community members to support our program. The shirts are great for all family members to have when attending a contest, coming to a concert or just wanting to show Patriot Brigade Pride. Decals (very popular for North parents with kids involved in activities) are available for all family members’ cars.

GUARD and PERCUSSION CONTESTS

We often host a winter guard or indoor percussion competition and need many people to help run this event. Profits from this benefit the booster general funds.

POPS DINNER

Every year, the North Bands and Orchestras combine to perform a night of fun music and great food. Help is needed with silent auctions, obtaining food, organizing ticket sales, etc. A small amount of work for a decent profit.

OTHERS

We are VERY OPEN to new ideas at all times. You may have the next best money maker on your mind – so SPEAK UP! Any ideas can be presented to our 1st Vice president who serves as the fundraising chair as well.

Terre Haute North Vigo Band Boosters

(For all activities within the band program throughout the school year)

Membership – Any and all parents/guardians of band students

Cost of Membership – ABSOLUTLY FREE

Monthly Booster meetings are held the 1st Tuesday of every month throughout the school year at 7:00pm in the band room. The first official meeting of the year will be on August 6, 2019.

At the booster meetings, many important issues are discussed such as: Fundraisers, social events, contests, upcoming events, trips and anything else for the good of the Patriot Brigade. This is where anything and everything can be discussed as far as what direction we want to take the program. Please come and have direct involvement. This is how parents become comfortable with being a part of the show!

Boosters Purpose – (as taken from the By-laws)

1. This organization shall be operated as a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.
2. To provide financial assistance and other support for those projects that are suggested by the instructor or the membership and approved by the membership.
3. To encourage a positive working relationship between the band program, parents, school and
4. To assist the director in obtaining and maintaining facilities, equipment, voluntary manpower and resources for the band program.

How can parents be involved?

There are several ways that the parents/guardians can be involved with the band program. The first and foremost is 1) Be the biggest fan for your child and 2) see that your child is at every practice ON TIME. Good attendance is what will make us a great band! Outside of this, there are some other areas that we need parents to volunteer to help! Many of these committees are in need of a chairperson for the season – Let us know if you are interested in chairing a committee or sign up to be a volunteer. To sign up, just ask.

Parent Expectations

INFORMATION

Our number one complaint is that students do not communicate with their parents/guardians concerning information given to them in rehearsals. Please ask your student on a daily basis if they received any important pieces of information. In fact, many forms that they receive will be required to be signed and will be part of their grade.

TAXI/UBER SERVICE

Unfortunately, this is an unpaid position. As you have probably figured out by now, your students are becoming more and more involved in school and extra-curricular activities. This also means that, by extension, you have become more and more involved in school and extra-curricular activities. Thank you for driving your students to and from rehearsals, concerts, and competitions. Please pay attention to the communications and know when your student needs to be at events.

SUPPORT

Your students work tirelessly to be the best that they can at this activity. There will be times when the smallest thing in their world happens and to them, it becomes the end of the world. Be that voice of support, the voice of encouragement, and the shoulder to cry on. The easiest way to do this is to simply show up to events.

Every rehearsal during the school year will conclude with a performance of the show. Everyone is invited and encouraged to come watch and support all of the students and their efforts.

Medical Conditions

Parents,

It is very important that all information regarding your child's health conditions and medications they are taking be current and given to the directors promptly. Because this is a physical activity similar to a sport, students will be in the heat quite often doing activities comparable to other outdoor sports. To protect your child's health, we ask that you please keep us aware of any medical conditions affected by physical exertion and please inform your child of their own responsibility to maintain their health throughout the heat and activity.

COVID-19

We will follow the VCSC guidelines with regards to dealing with COVID-19. As of printing, if a student arrives at rehearsal with symptoms, or develops symptoms while at rehearsal, they will be separated from other students and staff and will be sent home.

ASTHMA

There are several students that have indicated to us that they are asthmatic or have exercise-induced asthma. While this may seem minor, we have had several asthma attacks throughout past rehearsals and students do not have an inhaler on them. This can be a very scary situation. To alleviate this problem **ALL ASTHMATIC STUDENTS MUST CARRY THEIR OWN INHALER ON THEIR PERSON IN ALL REHEARSAL SETTINGS** or **GIVE THE BAND DIRECTORS AN EXTRA INHALER THAT WE WILL HAVE AT ALL REHEARSALS**. Asthmatic students without an inhaler will be asked to sit out of the rehearsal or dismissed home for their own safety. Students with excessive absences due to this situation may be dismissed from the program. Along those same lines, students must have their own personal inhaler and will not be allowed to share or use someone else's. This is a responsibility we ask all families to follow in order to maintain a healthy band. The band directors will contact parents and potentially 911 if their child is showing signs of asthma or difficulty breathing. We cannot take anything for granted!

DIABETES or LOW BLOOD SUGAR (HYPOGLYCEMIA)

Parents of diabetic children should indicate this on the health form. To ensure the health and safety of diabetic children, **ALL DIABETIC STUDENTS MUST HAVE THEIR INSULIN/INSULIN PUMP AND SOME SORT OF SUGAR SUPPLEMENT IN CASE OF DROP IN BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS**. Parents should bring in some sort of food item or glucose tablet for the band directors to keep on hand in case of a drop in blood sugar. Any special instructions pertaining to the student should be made known to the band directors.

Medical Conditions

Continued

ILLNESS AT REHEARSAL

Often times throughout band camp and in the heat of the summer, we notice several students that feel the need to sit out for a small amount of time due to exhaustion and overheating. While we understand that it is very hot outside, we will do everything we can to ensure that enough water breaks are given to keep everyone hydrated. Students that feel uneasy during rehearsal may sit down and drink water for a short time, but will be asked after about 10 minutes to get back into rehearsal. Students that exceed this amount of recuperation may be dismissed home for their own health and safety. Excessive absenteeism can result in dismissal from the program per the discretion of the directors. It is the responsibility of the students to keep themselves hydrated and healthy at all times. Being a sick band member is not benefiting anyone!

The student and their family are financially responsible if professional medical attention must be summoned (ie ambulance).

Maintaining proper health is the #1 item students need to be responsible for in this activity. Without good health, it doesn't matter what they are doing on the field. We will do our best to always keep the child's safety in mind within this activity however 50% of that responsibility is in both the child's hands and the parent. Eat a decent breakfast, hydrate, sunscreen and a decent night's sleep will ensure the proper health to feel your best at rehearsal! If there are any questions, please feel free to contact the band directors at (812) 462-4320.

Rules

GENERAL BAND ROOM

1. No one may eat in the band room. We must use the cafeteria area unless otherwise told.
2. Practice rooms are for practicing only.
3. Unless permission is given, only percussionists are allowed to use the percussion equipment; as well as guard members the guard equipment; and wind players, wind instruments.
4. Do not leave money or valuables in the building, we accept no financial responsibility. There is no need to bring a large amount of money to practice!
5. Students will be assigned a locker for their instrument. Combination locks are to be purchased through the school at a cost of \$5. These locks must be used because they have a key entry. All other locks will be cut off.
6. Students are not allowed in the academic hallways before 7:30 am or after 3:30 pm. Students may be in the band room provided they are practicing and a director is present.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Attendance at all rehearsals and performances (including the ENTIRE Football game) is required. Previously scheduled events must be brought to the attention of a director at the beginning of the summer.
2. The excuses for absences are as follows:
 - a. A death in the family.
 - b. Hospitalization of student or immediate family member.
 - c. Bedridden illness; band director must be notified by parent – A text message is not acceptable.
 - d. Vacations scheduled in June or July reported to the directors in writing or via email.
 - e. Absence from school on rehearsal day
 - f. Weddings or THN Sponsored Events with a minimum of a 2 week notice.
3. Work is not an excuse for missing rehearsals or performances on the schedule
4. Band students enrolled in Marching Band Class or the Dance Performance Class: Attendance, along with many other factors, will determine your letter grade received for each 6 weeks in this class. You will be allotted 1 unexcused rehearsal absence per 9 weeks. Students missing a performance (such as a contest, football game, or parade) will receive a zero for the 9 weeks.
5. Non-enrolled students: Students with no more than 1 unexcused absence per 9 weeks from rehearsal and no absences from a performance will receive a Brigade Letter. Excessive absences or tardies may result in removal from the organization at the discretion of the directors.
6. Students in good standing will receive a Brigade letter at the close of their first season, and a chevron each additional year. Students missing a performance (such as a contest, football game, or parade) will not receive a letter or chevron.
7. Students with excessive unexcused absences may be dismissed or receive a failing grade at the discretion of the band directors. Strict attendance records will be kept.
8. Students missing the rehearsal before contest day may not be permitted to perform. This will be at the discretion of the directors.
9. Special Circumstances: In extremely rare cases, some extraordinary circumstances may arise that should be brought to the attention of the director. In such cases, the band director will make a decision as to whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

Rules

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is up to you to get any and all handouts.

- a. You need to know all of the information on all handouts and share this information with parents.
- b. Contest and travel information will be made available during the Tuesday rehearsal before the activity.
- c. Be responsible! Let your parents see the handouts!
- d. A newsletter will be sent out weekly to inform you and your parents of upcoming dates and events.

REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

1. It is understood that music must be memorized
 - a. Check-off dates will be posted for each member
 - b. Directors will check for memorization periodically
 - c. Sufficient time and instructions will be given for you to accomplish this.
 - d. A chart will be posted in the band room of music memorization.
2. All students are expected to be quiet throughout the rehearsal. While there will be times when talking is necessary, more is accomplished when we have no talking from students.
3. Proper attire is required for all rehearsals. Students wearing improper attire to rehearsals will incur a grade reduction. Proper attire includes:
 - a. Tennis Shoes (No crocs, flip-flops, boots, etc.)
 - b. All attire must align with the posted VCSC dress-code. This includes after-school rehearsals and color guard members.
4. After school rehearsal attire should be as follows:
 - a. Tennis Shoes (No crocs, flip-flops, boots, etc.)
 - b. All attire must align with the posted VCSC dress-code. This includes after-school rehearsals and color guard members.
5. A working instrument is required for every rehearsal.
6. Students more than 5 minutes late will be counted absent from after-school rehearsals.
7. All VCSC and Terre Haute North High School rules and regulations apply to all rehearsals before, during, or after school.
8. Cell Phones – while we realize that having a cell phone is important, they are not necessary at rehearsals. Any and all phones within sight of an instructor during rehearsals will be taken away immediately. Parents will be responsible for obtaining the child's phone from the director personally.

Rules

FOOTBALL GAMES

1. Sit in your assigned section during the game.
2. Only Brigade members in uniform will be allowed in the assigned section.
3. Be in proper uniform at all times unless otherwise indicated on the itinerary.
4. Do not play instruments when the band is not playing together.
5. No food or drinks allowed in the stands while in uniform.
6. Members tardy from third quarter break will not have the privilege at the next game and may incur further consequences.
7. Eating and drinking while in uniform Jackets is not allowed. Keep in mind that any damage done to the uniform will be charged to your account at the following replacement costs: Jackets \$50, Pants \$25, Hats \$40, and Plumes \$20, gauntlets \$20.
8. Performance dress when not in uniform will be designated by directors.
9. Under their uniform, members are expected to wear a black shirt, black shorts and the appropriate black socks.
10. Only Drum Majors and directors initiate playing of instruments in public situations.
11. Cell Phones – while we realize that having a cell phone is important, they are not necessary at games. Any and all phones within sight of an instructor during games will be taken away immediately. Parents will be responsible for obtaining the child's phone from the director personally.

FOOTBALL FAQs

What is the marching band's responsibility during football games?

The marching band plays an important role in entertaining the crowd and cheering for our team. We perform a pre-game concert that includes the National Anthem, fight song and other crowd pleasers. We play pep tunes and cheer for our team during the game and perform our field show at half-time.

Half-time is over. Can my student leave the game now?

No. All students are expected to attend the entire game. Football games are part of the commitment that all members make to the marching band. Leaving early will result in a lower grade.

Will students get a chance to eat or socialize with friends and family during the game?

Yes! Students will be "off-duty" during the 3rd quarter and are allowed to walk around, talk to friends, grab a drink, etc. Students will need to be back in their seats at the end of the 3rd quarter.

Why does the color guard have to be there? They don't play instruments.

The color guard is an important part of our Patriot Brigade family. Although they don't play instruments, they can still participate by cheering for the team. Also, the color guard may sometimes use the game time for extra practices or to repair equipment, so that they don't have to stay late after rehearsals.

Where does the Patriot Brigade sit? Do the parents sit together?

The Patriot Brigade typically sits in a set of bleachers in the endzone that is specifically designated for them. Patriot Brigade parents usually sit in a group beside the brigade. You can often identify them because they are wearing Patriot Brigade Shirts. We hope parents will come to the games and enjoy socializing with each other,

Rules

CONTEST & TRAVEL

1. Bus assignments: Individuals will remain on the same bus throughout the trip.
2. Chaperones are an extension of the staff and should be respected as such.
3. Males and Females are NOT allowed to sit in the same seat nor are same sex couples.
 - a. Absolutely no intimate contact will be tolerated. When in doubt, don't do it!
 - b. The school policies concerning couples are in full effect at all times.
 - c. Failure to observe these guidelines will result in separation of the couples for the remainder of the trip. This may be done at the request of a chaperone.
4. Possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products will result in immediate expulsion from the band. The school policy for drugs and alcohol will be strictly enforced. The authorities will be notified immediately and the offending student will be turned over to them. Parents/Guardians will be called after the authorities are notified. It will then be the parent's/guardian's responsibility to pick up the student regardless of the location.
5. Students are not allowed to take private cars on any trips.
6. Students may return home with parent/guardian upon the bus chaperone receiving a note signed by the parent/guardians. This note must be submitted no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled trip.
7. Leaving Contest/Trip Early
 - a. Students may choose to leave a contest after our performance with their legal parent/guardian. They may only leave with a legal parent/guardian and WILL NOT be allowed to leave with friends or friend's parents. Students must submit a "Leaving Contest Early" form by the posted deadline. Failure to do so will result in the student having to ride the bus home.
 - b. Parents/Guardians must sign their student out with either a chaperone or a director prior to leaving the contest. Failure to do so will result in the student no longer being allowed to leave future contests.

CONTEST FAQs

Where and when are the competitions?

Marching competitions are usually held on Saturdays, beginning in September and ending with Championships in November. Any school can host a competition (usually called a "show"). The closest shows in our circuit are held throughout Indiana. Most competitive marching bands compete in at least one show per weekend, and some even perform at more than one show (for instance, if there is an afternoon show scheduled near an evening show). THN will try to compete at the closest shows, although there may be times when there are no competitions nearby and we must travel a bit farther.

How do we get to the show?

All Patriot Brigade members and chaperones will travel to and from each show on the bus unless prior arrangements have been made in writing with Mr. Williams. Parents and fans must provide their own transportation. Directions will be made available during the week prior to each show or you are welcome to follow the busses. NOTE: If you choose to follow the buses, you will not arrive at the show until after it has already begun. You may also need to park in a separate area from the busses. There are usually signs or volunteers directing traffic once you arrive at the show.

Do we need tickets for the show?

Patriot Brigade members get in free, but there is an admission fee of approximately \$5-\$10 for spectators. Some shows may cost more such as championships. Tickets can be purchased at the gate.

CONTEST FAQs CONTINUED

What is a typical show like?

Shows usually begin with the smallest bands and end with the largest bands. Due to our size, THN will generally perform toward the middle of the show. Each band has approximately 15 minutes to set up, perform and clean up the field. You will see judges walking around on the field during the show, watching and listening for particular elements. There are also judges in the announcer's booth, who watch for the overall effect of the performance. The stadium will be filled with fans and the performing bands, while areas of the parking lots and athletic fields will be filled with bands warming up. It can be fun to walk around and listen to the groups warming up. It is also nice to support the other performers by watching them from the stands.

How do we get the best seats?

The best seats are as close to the 50 yard line and as high up in the stands as possible. Naturally, these are the first to go. If you want to have the best seats, arrive before the show begins and stake out your spot.

(REMEMBER: If you opt to follow the buses, you will not arrive at the show until after it has begun.) Wear your "BRIGADE WEAR" and look for other THNPB fans so everyone can sit together. This is a great opportunity to see other bands perform and support their hard work. There are some very talented marching bands in our area and it can be a real treat to see them perform. If you don't care about seating, your other option is to arrive late at the show just to watch THN and/or the marching bands in our category.

Is there any special etiquette to being a marching band fan?

Yes! Here are a few things to remember:

1. Please do not enter or exit the stands while a band is performing. If you need to enter or exit, do so while the band is setting up their equipment or exiting the field.
2. Show your support by applauding and cheering all the students, regardless of school. All of the students have worked hard and are excited to perform for an audience that appreciates what they do. Please refrain from making any disparaging remarks about other schools, students, or performances. (This seems obvious, but you'd be surprised how even the most well-intentioned people can get caught up in the heat of competition and make hurtful remarks!)
3. Noisemakers (ex. Cow bells, shakers) are fine before and after a performance, but please do not use them during the performance. They may distract the performers and could even affect a band's score if the judge is unable to hear the music. Please NO AIRHORNS at any time. Cheering and applause are fine during a performance and may be especially appropriate after a solo or when the band or color guard achieves a particularly striking effect.
4. Please do not talk during performances. Turn cell phones to a silent setting. You would be upset if you missed your child's performance because the people sitting nearby were chatting, answering cell phones or otherwise making distracting noises. Please be respectful of others' desire to see their child perform. Hopefully they will be respectful of you, too!
5. Keep in mind that marching band is about putting forth your best performance. It is not about beating another band, winning a trophy or getting a certain score. It's okay to be excited if the band improves their score or wins a certain award; but ultimately we hope the students feel a sense of accomplishment that comes from the heart, not from a trophy.

CONTEST FAQs CONTINUED

I see my child warming up in the parking lot. Is this a good time to say hello?

Sorry, but no. Students have specific instructions about what to do when they arrive at the show, and your arrival may put them into conflict with those instructions. It puts the students in an awkward position if their instructor is telling them one thing and then their parent arrives and tells them to do something different. The staff asks that you respect the following guidelines:

1. Please do not try to talk to your child until after the performance unless you have a very serious situation that absolutely cannot wait. If this is the case, please approach the director or staff person first so that they can help you to work through this situation with your child.
2. Please do not give your child food or drink immediately before the performance. This can get clogged in their instrument and muddy its sound. (Not to mention, it's pretty unsanitary. Yuck!) There will be time for them to meet you after the performance or visit the concession stand. Don't worry too much about finding your child after the performance. They usually have an uncanny ability to find you when they need money for the concession stand! If you wear your "Brigade Wear" and sit with other THN fans, it will make it even easier for them to find you. You can also designate a particular meeting area, such as the concession stand, for after the performance.
3. Please do not interrupt the warm up unless you have an emergency. The students and staff need to focus. If you have specific, non-emergency concerns and need to speak to Mr. Williams or a staff member, this is not the best time. They would be happy to speak with you after the performance or arrange an alternate meeting.
4. The best thing you can do before the show is find a seat and cheer!

What happens at the end of the show?

After the last performance, the drum majors from each band will line up and march down the field. This is called "Retreat." Scores and awards will be presented and students will return to the bus. At this time, directors and staff are invited to meet with the judges to discuss ways to improve their performance. This meeting is called "Critique."

The show is over, why hasn't the bus left yet?

The most likely reason is that the staff is still at Critique. Groups meet with the judges in the order that they performed. Please be patient. The staff is as anxious to get home as you are!

The bus just got back to school. Why can't my child leave yet?

Students are responsible for unloading and properly storing all equipment, even if they do not personally use it. If we work together this process won't take long and everyone can go home. Feel free to help with the unloading.

CONTEST FAQs CONTINUED

Circuit Information

There are several circuits for competitive marching bands in our area. THN competes in Midstates Band Association and ISSMA (Indiana State School Music Association). Mr. Williams and the staff will assess THN's needs each year to determine the best possible circuit for competition based upon: distance of travel, budget concerns, appeal of performing venues, consistency and helpfulness of adjudicators, and level of competition. Marching band is an educational experience, so we want to have a healthy mix of great places to perform, positive critique experiences, appreciative audiences and reasonable travel.

How are bands divided into competitive brackets?

In Midstates, bands are divided according to band size. While our band size is still undetermined at this point, we are hoping to be in Class AAAA – 71-100 playing members. We will only be competing against other bands the same size as us so that we are fairly judged. In ISSMA, bands are classified based on school enrollment. For ISSMA, we are in Scholastic A.

How are the bands scored?

Each circuit has its own approved scoring system, but in general the judges are looking for proficiency in music, visual and overall effect. Judges are assigned to critique Individual Music performance, Ensemble Music performance, Visual Effect, Overall Effect of Music, and Overall Effect of Visual. Within each of these categories, judges are assessing the show design, musical composition, difficulty level, quality of technique, musicianship, and how effectively the performers portray the show concept through their playing, marching and guard work. The best shows are those that are both challenging and well performed. Each circuit has its own formula for adding up scores in the various categories to assign an overall score.

I thought the students did a great job. Why wasn't their score higher?

The students probably did do a great job. The most important thing is that they feel good about their performance and know that they did their best. The judges are professionally trained to look for specific skills that an untrained spectator may not even notice. Tiny discrepancies in marching technique, difficulty level and musical proficiency can make a big difference in score, but might be totally unnoticed by the fans. Judging is fairly subjective, too. Sometimes a judge may simply prefer a different style. Please remember that the most important thing is that our students push themselves to reach their highest potential. **In the end, a score is just a number and a trophy is just a piece of plastic. Both are soon forgotten, but hard work, perseverance and pride of accomplishment are lessons for a lifetime!**

ISSMA Scholastic Prelims and Finals

For ISSMA, there is a prelims event held in early October with groups advancing to Finals in late October.

Bands of America Super Regional – Lucas Oil

The competition we will be at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, IN, where we will compete in Prelims against bands from all over the country. The top scoring bands will advance onto Finals.

Mid-States Prelims and Finals

For Mid-States, prelims and finals are held on the same day. Prelims take place in the morning with the top scoring bands advancing to finals later that evening.

Parental Top Ten List

10. Your student is probably more capable than you realize.

Even if you have all the time in the world, you will start to feel like a personal servant if you don't ask your kids to take some responsibility for their own stuff. Water jugs, lunches, props, laundry -- it never ends. Your student can make a sandwich, fill up a water jug, and set out their 'stuff'. It's up to you if you want them using your washer and dryer, but they've got to learn someday. When you see what they accomplish and how hard they work for someone else, you will be amazed. This is an excellent time to start teaching (if you haven't already) self-management techniques that will serve them well throughout life. If you are inclined, help them create checklists so that they remember everything they need to bring. It will be a lot of stuff, so be ready.

9. Get out of the car and come join us.

Sounds odd, doesn't it? Many parents do not realize that they can enter the band room without ill effect. Be respectful of practices going on, but come on in and see what is happening. Frequently, there are parents working on projects or hanging around. It is a great time to make introductions and let people know you are new to the band program. Park the car and come over to the field. The last 15-20 minutes of practice will be a run through of what the kids have learned so far. Thursday nights are the traditional nights to view, but you will find parents in the stands many nights. Watching the evolution of the band and the kids is really inspiring. It will blow your mind what your kid can do! And believe it or not, you will not see the same *exact* show week after week. Bring the family and enjoy the show, but remember to stay quiet so you don't distract the kids. On competition days, come inside after the students return. This is a good time to congratulate or encourage your student. Drop by before they leave to let them know you support them. Bring lunch mid-day (there is usually a practice before the competition) and stay a few minutes. You may feel a bit more like a spectator than a parent, but the kids know you are there and they appreciate it.

8. Learn to manage your time and teach your student how to manage theirs.

You WILL be busy -- especially from August until the beginning of November. You will receive calendars in emails, but you MUST find a way to keep track of everything that works for you. More importantly, your student will have to balance their participation in the Patriot Brigade and school work. It is not easy, but it can be done. Most students carry a full load of classes; many are honor students with AP classes. You will have to find pockets of time for homework and other responsibilities. Some students do homework on the bus when necessary. The freshman year is already a big adjustment. Between Patriot Brigade activities and school there won't be much time for anything else. But it doesn't last forever

7. Bring cash, warm clothes and something to sit on.

Most school functions require that you bring cash. Contests charge admission, anywhere from \$5 to \$10 per person. Children under 5 are usually admitted free. You MUST bring cash. Concessions are cash only, as are some souvenir vendors. Aluminum benches are hard and COLD, especially in October. Many of the events are outside. Plan accordingly. Many parents bring a blanket or fleece to ward off the chill. Hats, gloves, scarves will help keep you comfortable. Obviously, if it is sunny out, remember sunscreen, hats and sunglasses. Just like the scouting motto: BE PREPARED.

Parental Top Ten List

6. Help out at competitions/football games.

The ideal parent volunteer would have six arms, three heads, and a heart of pure gold. Remarkably, our volunteers accomplish amazing things without the extra appendages. These are the people who dress your student, fix their hair, and mend uniforms. They dispense wisdom, encouragement and snacks with laughter and generosity. They are the people on the front lines that make sure your student is ready to go on the field. This is a job that deserves far more recognition than most parents give. As soon as you see ways we need help, jump on in. At the end of every competition volunteers need to gather up all the uniform parts and pieces and load up all of the props and equipment. Each piece is specific to a student and is numbered. They need help loading, unloading and sorting. It's a big, important job and you can make it easier.

5. Band Directors are people, too.

But they are BUSY people. They work long hours and their main focus is the kids. If you have a specific concern about your child and the program, set up a time to discuss it. On another note: The Patriot Brigade requires dedication and discipline from your student. The job of the directors is to help your student excel. Directors speak loudly, pointedly and sometimes without pleasantries. When mistakes are made, especially due to inattention or lack of effort, there are consequences. Try to relax and allow the process to work. Encourage your student to do their best, listen, and work hard. Everyone wants your child to be successful. You will learn this as you move through the season.

4. You are not alone...Unless you want to be.

Every parent -- okay, MOST parents- feel overwhelmed at first. The whole first year is a scramble to keep up. Here are some good phrases to put into use: "Excuse me, I'm new and I was wondering ...", "Hi, I'm a freshman parent, my name is ...". "I'm Ben's mom and I heard ...". You will be surprised how quickly you will be pulled into the fold. Timing is everything, of course. If you ask someone who is obviously busy, you may not get the welcome you hoped for. Rarely are other parents too busy to help you. We want you to join us and we love to share our experience with you. Your student will be making all kinds of new friends, why shouldn't you? You can find people to carpool with, volunteer with, celebrate with, and commiserate with. Other parents are valuable resources. They can help you find solutions to your dilemmas, and there will be dilemmas. You will also get to know the parents of the kids your student is hanging around. What a bonus!

3. We can't do it without you—volunteer and come to the booster meetings.

You will be asked to commit time, energy, donations and the band fees to the band program. Unlike many sports programs, the Patriot Brigade must have parent volunteers for the programs to run smoothly -- and it is the best way to get to know others. Plan to attend as many Booster meetings as you can. They are only once a month for about an hour. Mr. Williams usually addresses the parents with updates on the show and will answer parent questions. It is time well spent. About volunteering ... no experience necessary. No, REALLY! There are some tasks that require specific skills, but most opportunities do not. If you can pull a soda from a cooler, take tickets at a gate, use scissors, sew or build props - you have all the skills you need. Better yet, there is so much to do, you are bound to find something you actually enjoy doing. At first it looks like everyone else knows what is going on but you. We will put you to work straight away at something that is not far outside your comfort zone.

Parental Top Ten List

2. Join CHARMS and READ YOUR EMAIL.

This could be said a thousand times and still not be said enough. As the season progresses, you will get multiple messages each day. READ THEM. CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY. You may not always completely understand the emails, but READ THEM. If you are completely lost, you can ask a director or Booster officers for more info. We want you to understand what is going on, but you have to read your email and ask questions. If you don't, you may have unfortunate results, miss something important, or miss something fun.

1. Yes, it's worth it!

All of the rides, time, and effort (and it is extraordinarily a lot) that as a parent, you put into getting your child to practices are worth every second. You may not be able to appreciate that in the beginning. Your student may get discouraged at first. There is a lot of repetition, hot sweaty days, failures, and disappointments. Then the show starts to come together and everything changes. This is the point where they will either LOVE it, or plan a different activity next year. Most of the kids LOVE the marching band experience by the end of the season, so make them tough it out for the whole season. It will be worth it. You may be uncomfortable at points. You will feel unsure. If you can push past the confusion and the chaos, you will probably get hooked like the rest of us. There is no way to describe how amazing this experience can be, but if you get involved you will find out for yourself.