

Important Information for New Band Families:

Practice: *“To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late.”*

Practices are an important part of the marching band regimen. All practices are listed on the calendar although practices may be added during the season and are mandatory for all members. Band members should arrive to the high school in enough time to prepare their instruments and be ready to go at 6p. Practices end promptly at 9p with a brief meeting wrap up. It takes a bit to put instruments away and gather up props and equipment. Parents usually gather to watch the last 15-20 minutes of practice. This is also a great time to mingle with other band parents, ask questions, gather information, and watch the performance grow week by week.

PIT: *“I used to have a life. Now I’m a Pit dad.”*

Pit is the term used for the Front Ensemble of the marching band. These are instruments that are stationary. Pits vary in size from band to band. Our Pit is rather large and therefore requires a lot of help. We ask for volunteers to be Pit moms and dads. These parents help set up our Pit instruments and whatever props may be used during the show. During competitions, the set-up and break down is timed. So our Pit parents are a crucial part of our program.

Donations: *“We keep these kids well hydrated and well fed. But we can’t do it alone.”*

Ginger Morgan, our BSA Vice President, is also our “snack mom”. She makes sure our kids have a snack and drink at every football game and every competition. We ask that every family donate to this cause, everything from cases of chips from Costco to cases of water to containers of iced tea mix to cupcakes or cookies! Whatever you can donate is appreciated! There are also a few times during the year when we ask for trays of food, whether it be to feed our kids before or after a big competition OR to feed the judges during our home shows or to be used in our snack stand during our home shows. Whatever you can donate, we will take! Lists will be sent out via email and Facebook. And if you can’t donate food or drink, cash or check donations are also accepted.

Home Shows: *“Rain or shine, these bands are coming.”*

Home shows are competitions that take place at our school and are important fundraisers for our band. We host 2 Marching Band home shows (during marching band season) and 1 Indoor Winter Guard home show (in the spring). The Marching Band home shows are for the US Bands competition circuit and the TOB (Tournament of Bands) competition circuit. The number of other bands and indoor guards who come to our school varies. We all work together to run very successful home shows which include running the snack stand, bake table, gift tables, air grams, and candy grams. Our Marching Band goes on in exhibition but still receives a score. They are long days but we have fun and earn lots of money for the band. Any and all help on those days is very much appreciated.

Fundraisers: *“Keep calm and fundraise on!”*

The Marching Mustangs is not a “pay to play” organization. Many bands throughout the state charge their members to participate. We do not. And while the Board of Education allots funds to our band, these funds do not sufficiently cover the costs of running a successful and active marching band. It is for this reason that the BSA actively fundraises throughout the entire year. Everything from our home shows, to our gift auction, to Shop-Rite bagging, to selling candy, flowers, pies, candles, etc. We also participate in the Amazon Smiles program. If you shop on Amazon, anything you buy can potentially earn the band money at NO EXTRA COST TO YOU! This is one of the easiest and most efficient ways we can earn extra dollars, since almost everybody shops on Amazon! Not sure how to get started? Ask a board member OR any other parent already enrolled. We are also open to any and all fundraising ideas. Please do not be hesitant to share a fundraising idea with the membership. Every little bit helps.

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Chaperones: *“One cannot call oneself a chaperone until a gauntlet has been taped.”*

Chaperones are parents who volunteer to be available for football games and competitions. Each time our band performs, whether it be at a home football game, an away football game, or a competition, we have parents who ride the busses and sit in the stands with the band. Chaperones are responsible for making sure the band has everything they need and are where they are supposed to be. Chaperones are also responsible for the first aid bag in the event of a minor medical situation.

The Gift Auction: *“Got a birthday gift you don’t like? Wicker baskets laying around? We’ll take it!”*

Our Luck O’ the Mustangs Gift Auction takes place each March. This year’s event will be held on March 24th at the Eagle Ridge Golf Club in Lakewood and is a huge fundraiser for our band. It requires donations from each band family as well as hundreds of donations from outside sources. We solicit local businesses as well as large companies/corporations for donations.

Any and all gift donations are accepted. We also need help putting gift baskets together as well as help on the day of the auction. We have already started preparing for the 2019 auction! Not sure what you can do? Just ask a board member or any other band parent who has been involved.

Competitions: *“Drum Major, is your band ready?”*

Our band is a highly competitive Marching Band. We compete in both the TOB (Tournament of Bands) and US Bands circuits although we are primarily a TOB band. We also occasionally participate in Bands of America competitions.

Our band is an “Open” band which is listed as “O” in the schedules.

An “O” band is a band that has an expanded skill set, is highly competitive, and has earned their placement in the Open class.

A number precedes the “O” and that number can change from year to year. The number is based on the number of musicians and color guard who make up the band. The groupings vary slightly between TOB and US Bands. For the 2018 season, the Marching Mustangs will be a 4-O group in TOB and a 5-O group in US Bands.

Competitions are usually on Saturdays, but can also sometimes be on Sundays. Competition days are long and often end late. The specifics of each competition (report time, performance time, etc) are announced the week before the competition although all schedules are listed on the TOB and US BANDS websites well ahead of time.

Sometimes we compete in a competition with no other band in our group, which means, we win 1st place. And although that seems odd, the reason for it is not. Each competition is a competition against every other band in our group, no matter where they are competing. We are performing for a score. And that score gets posted on the circuit’s website. So if we are a 4-O TOB band, we look to see all the 4-O bands in our region who competed that weekend, and how we scored in comparison. All scores matter as we advance toward the Tournament of Bands Atlantic Coast Championship, which is like our “Super Bowl”. It is held the end of October/beginning of November in Hershey, Pennsylvania. When you hear talk of “Hershey” or “ACCs”, this is what is being referred to.

- ***Do parents and families go to competitions?*** Yes. We strongly encourage that families attend as many competitions as possible. Competitions can sometimes be far away so we encourage carpooling. And if you look at a schedule, competitions can be long! You do not have to attend the entire competition. You can go and stay as long or as little as you like, keeping in mind that awards are always at the end of the night. We also strongly encourage Mustang families sit together in the stands and to wear our show shirt. This shows solidarity and support for our kids. Sometimes it is not possible due to crowded bleachers, but do not be shy about finding Mustangs in the stands, coming up, introducing yourself, and joining the fun. We are a family!

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- **How much do competitions cost?** Competitions require tickets. Ticket prices vary. They are usually in the \$10 range. However the larger, end of season competitions can be a bit more. We will always let you know the price of the competitions AND we sometimes have the tickets to sell ahead of time.
- **What are “candy grams” and “air grams”?** At competitions, you can buy your child a “gram”. A candy gram is a piece of candy purchased for your child with a hand written note attached to it. Your child will receive it on the bus after the competition. An air gram is a message that the announcer reads aloud as our band is taking the field. Our kids LOVE to hear encouraging, funny, or silly messages as they are getting ready to perform. These grams vary at competitions and in addition to candy and messages, they can include flowers, stuffed animals, toys, etc. Find the “gram” tables at each competition to see what’s available! Prices are low, usually in the \$1-\$2 range. These are fundraisers for the host band. We always encourage support of all marching bands.

Merchandise: *“Hope you look good in Mustang green, you’ll be wearing a lot of it.”*

Our Marching Mustang Merchandise is NOT mandatory. There is NO purchase required. However, there are a few items that we highly recommend.

- Each band member gets a dry fit, short-sleeved shirt from the BSA that is specific to the season’s show. This shirt is required to wear under the band uniform. They **must** wear it when they represent the band. We **STRONGLY** recommend purchasing **AT LEAST** 1 additional shirt, if not 2.
- We also have a t shirt version of the show shirt that we recommend purchasing one for yourself and other members of the family. Most band parents wear these shirts to games and competitions and are available in long or short sleeves.

There are MANY other great items available! We offer these items in August and November. The band earns 10% back on those group purchases, which goes toward our general fund. We are always working on new items and trying to keep costs down as well as making purchases easy and convenient for you!

Talk to a board member about what items are best for your new Marching Mustang!

Band Support Association (BSA) Meetings: *“Are we in the green or gold cafeteria?”*

The BSA holds monthly meetings. They are usually the 3rd Wednesday of the month and are held in one of the high school’s cafeterias. They are held year round. At these meetings, we discuss the budget, any upcoming events, fundraisers, and anything else that may come up. We strongly encourage attendance at these meetings. It is a chance to get to know other parents and it keeps members up to date on all important information.

Facebook Pages: *“Soooo, what time is the competition on Saturday?”*

There are a few Facebook pages that are used to disseminate important information throughout the year. These pages are private and cannot be found by searching. You must be added to them. The main page is called “Brick Memorial Marching Mustangs”. This page is utilized by students, parents, instructors, and alumni. The other pages are BTMHS Band Support Association (parents and instructors only) and BTMHS Guard (guard members, parents, instructors, and alumni). You must be a member of the BSA to view this page which will contain all photos taken throughout the season.

All three of these pages are monitored and must remain focused on all things band/guard. We understand if you do not want your child on social media. These pages are NOT mandatory. We do recommend, however, that you, the parent, join one of them. Weekly notices are posted and Facebook is an easy and immediate way to get information out to the members. Please let a Board member know if you’d like to be added.

Important Information for New Band Families:

The Pasta Dinner, The End of Season Dinner & The Band

Banquet: *"We focus on food around here. And lots of it."*

The "Pasta Dinner" is a Marching Mustang tradition. Before the cross-town rivalry football game of Brick v. Brick Memorial, we feed our band members an amazing pasta dinner. We will be asking for all band families to donate towards this event. Whether it's a half a tray of baked ziti or a bag of dinner rolls, we'll take it. Lists are sent out so that we can make sure we have enough of everything. This is a great, fun, yummy day for the kids!

The "End of Season Dinner" is held on a Sunday in January after the outdoor season ends. It's held in the high school cafeteria and once again, we ask for donations of food. All families are invited! It's a time for us all to get together and enjoy each other's company and celebrate the end of the outdoor season in a relaxed and fun setting.

The "Band Banquet" will be held on June 6th at the Eagle Ridge Golf Club and is a semi-formal evening of great food and lots of dancing. We have photo opportunities and a professional DJ. We say farewell to our outgoing seniors and recognize the parents who have dedicated themselves to the band. The Director and the instructors give out awards and Varsity letters. We show a montage of pictures from both the outdoor and indoor seasons. It is truly a fun and rewarding evening. We encourage all families to attend. Band members are paid for by the BSA. Price for family members is announced closer to the date.