

**O'CONNOR HIGH SCHOOL  
"EAGLE PRIDE" MARCHING BAND**

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Hello!

You are receiving this because you have registered for BAND at O'Connor HS. This letter is an **INVITATION TO AUDITION** for the EAGLE PRIDE MARCHING BAND! In this letter you will find LOTS of valuable information, dates, and answers to questions you may have. **PLEASE READ IT ALL ☺** At O'Connor you are NOT required to do marching band to be in band, however I believe you will find it is the best way to make new friends, travel, and be part of one of O'Connor High School's most successful programs and former State Champions! **PLEASE NOTE THAT BAND STARTS JULY 25 with Pre Band Camp Sectionals. Band Camp is BEFORE school Aug 4 – 7. Regular classes begin Wednesday, August 10!!!** I want to make sure you make an educated decision about the commitment involved in the Marching Band. It is EXTREMELY rewarding. We are recognized as one of Arizona's most successful programs, winning national and international competitions with the highest ratings, always rating in the Top 10 and even State Champions in 2014 – and we would like that honor back with YOU as a part of our band. Being a member of the Marching Band will be very different from any previous band experience because the time and work that goes into making a successful marching band really builds incredible friendships and a sense of "team" that you will never forget. The bond that you will have with each other by the end of the season will far exceed what you can even imagine right now. This is also the best way to make friends before school even starts. Whether a Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, or Senior, you are all on the same field, respected together, working toward a common goal. The friendships you build before school even starts is so worth it. Trust me, it sure is nice to know someone else in a big school on the first day and have someone you know with the same lunch period. For those of you who will be new to the school this year, I can assure you that the band students here are AWESOME and the school student body voted BAND one of the best things at O'Connor – a huge compliment! I highly respect my students who truly understand the value of hard work, but especially that we are able to laugh and enjoy ourselves at the same time. It's a great band and we look forward to having you join us.

Should you decide that marching band is **NOT** for you, simply email me at [Melanie.britton@dvusd.org](mailto:Melanie.britton@dvusd.org) and I will make sure you are placed in Concert Band – the band that does NOT march.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT DISCIPLINE AND STRICT ADHERENCE TO RULES BE FOLLOWED FROM DAY ONE. THIS WILL INSURE FAIRNESS, DEDICATION, COMMITMENT AND STRONG WORK ETHIC AS THE EXPECTATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE MARCHING BAND PROGRAM!!!**

**WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE MARCHING BAND**  
**“AUDITION”?**

EVERYONE, including prior members, will be required to audition for marching band. In order to maintain the high level of competition and discipline needed to be a successful program it is essential that students be completely dedicated and devoted to the program through group practice, private practice, discipline and attendance. We will spend several days learning music and marching basics. If after this time there are students struggling with reading music, playing music and marching (coordination) or any type of discipline or attendance issues, then marching band is not the best place at this time. We will provide several options – depending on the student – so that everyone still has the opportunity to be a part of the band program at O’Connor HS. This is not something to stress about – we are simply making sure everyone is here for the right reasons. Mrs. Britton will help each student with the schedule change process – if necessary – to avoid having to wait in any lines in the counseling department.

**MEETING TIMES AND ATTENDANCE – The Honest Truth**

\*\*\* Our MAIN rehearsals are on Monday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm. There will be some IN CLASS rehearsing for marching band outside in the mornings, but that will be intermixed with the concert setting rehearsals. So yes, you will still have some “sweaty” mornings...just not before school ☺

**ATTENDANCE:** A HUGE part of your grade is attendance – yes, ESPECIALLY the evening practices. Attendance will be taken ON THE FIELD in your warm up circle PROMPTLY at the scheduled time of rehearsal. After the 5th tardy you risk losing credit for the class or being moved to Concert Band. I just want to be upfront on the importance of being on time. You have to remember there are over 160 other people who are giving up their time to get to practice as well – hey, sports do it every day, and we are most certainly athletes as well. We count on each other. When learning drill you need the people who stand next to you to be there or it makes it harder to march because you line up off of each other. Please consider this as you make the commitment. If you are tardy, and circumstances will occur, you must bring a note signed by your parent, for documentation. Also understand that, if you skip band, but show up to your regular classes, other students in the band who did make the effort to show up don’t like that and resentment starts to build up. Example: Not showing up to night rehearsal because you were “too tired” or needed to finish a project. EVERYONE has to discipline their time. You are a team, and you need to make the effort not only for your grade, but for each other. **\*Some of you may be in club sports, other activities, etc., PLEASE**

**CONTACT ME before deciding “no” on band and let’s see what we can work out! ☺**

**ALL PERFORMANCES ARE MANDATORY.** Missing any performance will result in the dropping of your grade by 2 letter grades. For example, if you have a B and then miss a game or competition, you now have a D. I must receive notification of any absence at least TWO WEEKS prior to an absence for consideration of excusal, with the understanding that **Mrs. Britton reserves the right to excuse the absence or not.** The band needs to be prepared for missing spots (holes) in the marching drill. It makes it difficult to align spacing, which is a huge part of the points we receive in competitions, if a person is missing.

***\*I DO NOT excuse for jobs, babysitting, birthdays, or anniversaries. I expect to you to plan ahead and around scheduled rehearsals.***

**SECTIONALS:** All students are REQUIRED to attend a 45 minute sectional once a week after school. Sectional rehearsals are run by the section leader or instructor where musical details are worked on, marching is rehearsed if necessary, and memorization of the music is perfected. Each section will decide the best day for their sectional depending on each member’s schedules, sports, etc. This is incredibly important time for the rehearsing of details. I DO make exceptions for students involved in sports, BUT the student must make arrangements with their section leader and Mrs. Britton as to when they will make up their missed rehearsals, memorization tests, etc. If you are auditioning for the **PERCUSSION** section it is much more difficult to be in sports as well. Please know **Percussion and Colorguard sectionals** run longer and are held *at least* TWICE a week for 2 or more hours.

**MONDAY & THURSDAY NIGHT PRACTICES:** We will begin Evening practices Monday, August 15 - and will run every Monday night and THURSDAY night until the FINAL State Competition is completed which is November 21. Practice will run from 6:00 – 9:00 pm. Again, these rehearsals are MANDATORY and are excusable only through prior notification. Sports members ARE allowed to be late in order to have time to eat because I know they come straight from their team practice. The smartest thing to do is form study groups or have your sectionals on these days so you have the other days free.

## **TRANSPORTATION ISSUES**

During sectionals week I will post a list on the band room door where you can sign up to carpool if necessary. I suggest you sign up if you can give rides and if you will need rides – this is especially helpful for West Wing students. Talk to your parents to see if they are willing to help kids get here for practices.

## **BAND PARENTS/ BAND BOOSTERS**

Band programs don’t work without a band booster program. I am certainly proud to say that I believe our booster organization is **THE BEST!** It is so awesome to see all the parents so involved with their kids (it means a lot to your kids whether they would ever

admit that or not), but we ALWAYS NEED HELP!!! There is so much to do that one person cannot possibly handle. There are BOOSTER MEETINGS EVERY MONDAY NIGHT while the kids are practicing so you, as a parent, are never left out of opportunities to volunteer or find out what is happening. Our NEW Booster Coordinator is Mrs. Audra Nuttall and she can be reached at [boosters@eagleprideband.org](mailto:boosters@eagleprideband.org). We need prop builders, fundraising organizers, uniform fitting help, water crew, chaperones, nurses, etc. We own TWO Large Trailers that take our equipment to all competitions so we need people to drive trailers to every performance, etc. On **MONDAY, JULY 25** at 7:00 pm, I will hold a parent informational meeting to answer questions about band, sign permission slips, and talk about the wonderful band booster organization. Undoubtedly, one of our biggest jobs is raising money to help these kids be able to do all the activities that come along. I want them to leave high school with amazing memories of all the cool things they were able to do by being a member of the band. Regular parent meetings will be on the same night as Monday night practices for the students starting at 7:00 pm. That way, as the meeting finishes up, the kids will be done at the same time and you can go home together.

This really is a great way to have fun WITH the kids!!!

**COMMUNICATION:** Obviously with an organization this large, communication is key. PARENTS, you will want to get signed up for the regular emails that go out several times a week and also cover what kids need, report times, loads of information, etc. This email will come from our Booster Coordinator, Audra Nuttall, at [boosters@eagleprideband.org](mailto:boosters@eagleprideband.org) so you are always updated with information. We have a BAND WEBSITE: [www.eagleprideband.org](http://www.eagleprideband.org) with a running calendar. Our Webmaster does his best to keep it updated. We also have a PRIVATE Facebook page for parents to ask questions or post pictures. Please keep the comments positive and not personal. We are about UPLIFTING each other and the program. I also post “last minute” changes on the page. The students also have a PRIVATE Facebook page and can only be invited to the page by their Section Leaders once they have made the band after the Performathon. Parents are not to be on the student page. You know how kids are, “Gosh Mom, why did you post that?”...so we give parents their own page. We also have Twitter, Remind101 and Instagram for posting pictures and fun events ☺ These pages are never to be used to post negative or questionable materials. Students and Parents will lose their privilege to use the pages if this happens. We will also start what is called “**Remind 101**” where students/parents sign up through their cell phones to get automatic updates and information through text. The phone numbers remain private.

**BAND CAMP: August 4-7.** For all students who PASS the band audition, Band Camp will be held the first weekend BEFORE school starts in August at Camp Pinerock in Prescott. We will leave Thursday morning and return Sunday late afternoon. This is a weekend that will be one of the most memorable times of high school for the kids. We do major music rehearsing, and aim to learn the entire opener of the marching show where the weather is a little cooler and more bearable. Students who are unable to attend **will not** be written into the opening number. It would be too hard to catch up on all the missed drill. Missing band camp is very hard on kids because they do miss out on so much, especially the friendship bonding time. Students will receive all camp info,

what to pack, etc, during Sectional Week. We ask that you download the CODE of CONDUCT, PERMISSION SLIPS and all other paperwork from the website at [www.eagleprideband.org](http://www.eagleprideband.org). In our attempt to be a “Tech Rich” school we try to eliminate sending home papers with the kids.

**PERFORMATHON: FRIDAY, July 29 from 4:00 pm until 10:00 pm.**

Please see the Performathon sheet for more info. It is so important that you bring your pledge sheets and permission slips and first ½ of FAIR SHARE \$250.00 on this day in order to pay for camp.

**What to bring to the Performathon:** You MUST ALWAYS WEAR TENNIS SHOES!

All shoes must be properly laced and tied. I **do not** allow you to march in the loose/floppy trendy skater shoes that are worn these days. **LACE YOUR SHOES TIGHT!!!!** Marching in loose shoes is a liability to you and everyone else’s safety. We move WAY to fast on the field and unlaced or untied shoes will not be tolerated. Imagine how bad you would feel if your shoe caused a broken ankle and cost someone else their marching season. Make sure your shoes are comfortable because you will get good use out of them. You will learn to march this day and you will never be allowed to wear flip flops, boots, sandals, or bare feet AND, *once school starts, if you ever wear loose fitting shoes, it WILL count against your grade.* Bring a water JUG, labeled with your name as well. You will need your instrument and music. ***Please bring an ADDITIONAL \$5.00 for Pizza and Soda for dinner or a sack dinner and drink if you don’t like pizza.***

**BAND KICK-OFF PARTY: Saturday, July 30 for ALL kids and parents. More info will be available on the website and during sectional week.**

**FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS & FAIR SHARE:**

Our district has adopted what is called “Fair Share”. It is the amount of money required for each student to pay to be involved in an extracurricular activity. Our band is a Division I (biggest of the bands in the State) and currently Top 5 in the State. The average Fair Share for the Top 10 is upwards of \$1,000.00 (Desert Vista HS, Mesa Mtn. View HS). **The O’Connor HS cost to participate in marching band is \$500.00.** This is the FAIR SHARE amount that ALL STUDENTS must pay to cover the costs incurred. This covers band camp, marching shoes, summer uniform, gloves, additional staff members, specialists, competition entry fees, costuming and props, gas for transporting the band to competitions (it takes TWO large trailers, which we now OWN (YAY!) and 4 busses to transport our band!). **By participating in the Tax Credit Program and/or the Performathon there should be no out of pocket expense to be in the band.** The tax credit program is such an awesome way to have all your child’s expenses paid and then get all that money back at tax time. You can write a check for any amount up to \$400, and then you claim that all back at tax time! ALSO, you can have ANY Arizona Resident donate money to the band in any amount up to \$400. Any additional money you raise through tax credits will go towards your account

for future trips, etc – so go for it on the fundraising!!! \*If your child does not make marching band you will get a full refund.

\*\*\*This year the band and colorguard will be performing on CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES during Spring Break. Cost is estimated at \$800, so as many tax credits as you can gather can all be saved up in your “personal” account. *The parent in charge of Finances is Jennifer Scott who can be reached at [accounting@eagleprideband.org](mailto:accounting@eagleprideband.org).*

**PERFORMATHON AS A FUNDRAISER:** The Performathon should be used to raise the additional \$100.00 so, again, your parents are not paying out of pocket. Simply use the form in this packet to gather pledges for the 6 hours you are marching and playing. You can put this money toward your FAIR SHARE fees OR if you are doing the tax credit raise the additional \$100.00. BE SMART! If you can raise MORE that only helps our band have more great music, props and pizzazz!

### **WHAT YOU’LL RECEIVE:**

**DRILLMASTERS MARCHING SHOES:** \$40.00 – **included** in FAIR SHARE. If your shoes fit from last year you do NOT have to get another pair. But, since you all grow like weeds, make sure they fit so you aren’t in pain!

**GLOVES:** \$4.00 per pair **included** in FAIR SHARE.

**SUMMER UNIFORM:** \$30.00 **Included** in FAIR SHARE. This is the outfit the kids wear while it is too hot to wear a marching uniform, and then wear it underneath their uniform at performances. It is a specially designed T-Shirt and Shorts and is the student’s to keep.

**BAND CAMP:** \$180.00 **included in Fair Share**

**SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTORS:** A band of our size and quality requires a STAFF of amazing Technicians to keep everything in check. Staff includes: (as of 5/25/16).

Mr. Ryan Salcido – Asst. Director of Bands

Mr. Davis Smith – Brass Caption Head

Mr. and Mrs. Shad and Alison Balot – Percussion Caption Heads

Mr. Dylan Melanson – Asst. Percussion Instructor

Miss Kelsey Mitchell – Colorguard Caption Head

Miss Hally Rost – Asst. Colorguard Instructor

Miss Ashley Kelroy – Asst. Coorguard Instructor

### **NOT INCLUDED IN FAIR SHARE:**

**BLACK SOCKS!!!** – Your child needs to have a **good supply** of **LONG black dress socks**...not grey, not short, not white, LONG BLACK SOCKS with NO LOGOS on them! This has become a problem where students expect the band parents to have socks available for them and it has become costly. **BUY YOUR OWN SOCKS!** This

year, if you forget socks, your account will be charged \$5.00 per pair when you forget. No student is allowed to march without the proper uniform required – which includes black socks. You will be pulled from the performance and your grade **WILL** be dropped 2 letter grades. Can you tell I want you to have your own black socks? ☺

**LYRE & FLIP FOLDERS:** Students need to purchase these on their own at any music store. It is the little metal music holder that attaches to each instrument and the flip folder holds the music – bring your instrument to the music store to make sure it fits. Students will be **required** to have these by the first day of practice (July 26). **NOT REQUIRED** for percussion and colorguard!

**MEALS BEFORE GAMES:** There are lots of food options across the street at the Safeway shopping center. This is where most kids eat.

**TRIPS:** The band takes a large trip every other year. The trip being planned at this time is to perform on Carnival Cruise Line, which is also a judged festival. The trip will be during Spring Break and goes to Catalina Island and Ensenada, Mexico (we will have chaperoned groups if students leave the ship in Mexico. I may just have us stay on the ship. We did this same trip in 2006 and it was a **BLAST** to have everyone all together for fancy meals, kids love eating 24/7, we have a very organized system of check in processes and extremely strict rules the kids are under so we will keep them safe. Also, this festival runs the entire year. In 2006 we ended up **WINNING** the Grand Champion Award for both Symphonic Band and Jazz Band, beating all the bands from across the country that do this Festival at Sea at all ports around the country. It was an exciting experience!!! Approx. cost is between \$700-\$800 and includes **EVERYTHING!** More info to come...

**FUNDRAISING** will always be a part of band and it is expected that students participate. Students **MUST** participate in fundraisers to get the benefits of those profits and additional fundraising will be provided to help cover the other ½ of the Fair Share or raising extra funds for the trip.

## **WHEN DO WE START?**

### **The Week of JULY 25th**

**WE START TWO WEEKS BEFORE SCHOOL BEGINS. CHECK IT OUT!!!!**  
***YES YOU MUST ATTEND ALL DAYS!!!***

**SECTIONAL WEEK:** Here is the schedule for sectional week. Attendance is mandatory unless you email me with reasons for your absence. I know some people are still out of town, which if you are, you are of course excused. Just let me know. You need this time to get your lips, chops, wrists, etc. back in shape. You only need to attend your sections rehearsals!!!

**WHAT IF YOU HAVE ALREADY MADE PLANS FOR SUMMER  
VACATION THAT CUT INTO THIS WEEK?**

Don't freak out! Please contact me by email and we will get you set up with your Section Leaders to go over all that you would miss. We REALLY need you to be here the day of the Performathon, Friday, July 29...but I will do a "Last Chance" audition for people, if necessary on Monday, August 1 by appointment from 6 – 8:30 pm. Remember, you DO have to attend Band Camp to be in marching band. Only those who make the Final Roster will go to band camp.

**WHERE DO I GO?**

Find the TALLEST building on WEST side of campus next to the mountain and that is where we will be – it is the PERFORMING ARTS COMPLEX

**COLORGUARD:** July 25, 26, 27, 28 from 3:30 to 7:00 pm. On July 29 you need to report from 4pm – 10 pm. If you have questions regarding Colorguard, still want to join, have friends who want to join, etc., please contact Kelsey Mitchell at [klmitch6@asu.edu](mailto:klmitch6@asu.edu) or Mrs. Britton @ [Melanie.britton@dvusd.org](mailto:Melanie.britton@dvusd.org) You will also practice the full 6 hours on the day of the Performathon. *Please feel free to bring a friend you think they might want to join!*

**Head Colorguard Instructor:** Miss Kelsey Mitchell

**RECRUIT YOUR NON-BAND FRIENDS!!!!!! 😊**

**DRUMLINE (BATTERIE) and FRONTLINE Percussion AUDITIONS:**

We have THE BEST percussion instructors! Our Percussion sections is recognized as one of the best in the state! DRUMLINE and FRONTLINE rehearse TOGETHER which brings so much cohesion to the section.

AUDITIONS: July 25, July 26, 27, 28 from 3:30 pm – 7:00 pm. Bring Sticks! **\*The actual audition happens JULY 25 with sight reading and then testing students on multiple instruments if necessary. The remaining days are rehearsals!!!** No matter what instrument you end up on you are ESSENTIAL to the showmanship of an O'Connor performance. People come to football games and Competitions JUST to watch our shows which are always different from the style of other bands.

IN ADDITION you must come from 4-10 pm Friday, July 29 for the Performathon.

**\*If you want a place in the Percussion Section – this includes snare, quads, bass, timpani, mallets, auxiliary instruments you must attend. Also, if you have electronic skills (mixing, sound, especially keyboard/piano, Bass Guitar...this section is for you....you must attend.** Please understand it is VERY RARE for freshmen to be placed in the marching batterie (snare, quads, bass drums). These are highly competitive positions and require superior counting and coordination skills. Most students spend their 1<sup>st</sup> year in the frontline learning the skills necessary to be in the batterie the following year.



**\* This section is by far the most difficult and time consuming and students who make this section must be prepared for a big time commitment not only to the band but to additional rehearsals as well** *Confused? DRUMLINE BATTERIE is the snare, quads and bass drums that MARCH on the field. FRONTLINE are the mallet instruments, timpani, field bass drum, chimes and aux percussion, electronics set at the FRONT of the field.*

***PERCUSSION DOES MEET OVER THE SUMMER!!!! If you would like to be involved in the extra rehearsals please email: pnutmusic@hotmail.com***

**Instructors: Alison Brightwell-Ballot and Shad Ballot**

**\* BIG BONUS – all percussionists who make marching band are placed into 3rd hour Percussion Ensemble so you meet as a class every day!**

**ALL BRASS:** July 26, 27, 28 from 6:00 – 8:30 pm AND

**Performathon: July 29 from 4:00 – 10 pm**

**FLUTES, CLARINETS, SAXOPHONES:** July 26, 27, 28 from 4:00 – 6:00 pm

AND the **Performathon July 29 from 4:00 pm – 10 pm**

**PERFORMATHON – July 29 (Friday) from 4:00 – 10:00 pm. First FULL music rehearsal and marching practice!!! Turn in first ½ of FAIR SHARE (\$250.00) this day to cover band camp. All permission slips due!!! Bring \$5.00 for pizza dinner and soda/bottled water or sack dinner.**

**\*This is the final audition day! I will post a list of all members who have made the band by Monday Night, Aug. 1 (after “last chance” auditions....and then we go to band camp that upcoming Thursday!**

**BAND CAMP: Aug. 4-7 at Camp Pinerock for CONFIRMED members of the marching band.**

**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: Wednesday, Aug. 10**

**FIRST NIGHT PRACTICE: Monday, August 15**

**FINAL ROSTER FOR MARCHING BAND POSTED: Monday night, August 1. Posted online, facebook and in email.**

**\*I will answer all questions at the Parent Information Meeting on MONDAY JULY 25 at 7:00 pm in the MAIN AUDITORIUM. I highly recommend this meeting to all incoming Freshmen parents and parents new to the band program. Returning parents and students are always welcome to attend! I’m looking forward to meeting you all. This is going to be another AWESOME year!**

**\*\*\*PLEASE CONTACT MRS. BRITTON BY EMAIL IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND ANY OF THE SUMMER REHEARSALS!**

**[Melanie.britton@dvusd.org](mailto:Melanie.britton@dvusd.org)**

**ALL PAPERWORK AND INFO CAN BE DOWNLOADED AT:**

**[www.eagleprideband.org](http://www.eagleprideband.org)**

**PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR MUSIC THAT MAY BE AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FOR YOU TO PRACTICE OVER THE SUMMER**

**[www.eagleprideband.org](http://www.eagleprideband.org)**

**QUESTIONS ABOUT BEING A BAND BOOSTER and GETTING ON THE PARENT EMAIL LIST?**

**[www.boosters@eagleprideband.org](http://www.boosters@eagleprideband.org)**

**QUESTIONS REGARDING MONEY, BALANCE OF FUNDS, EARLY DEPOSITS, ETC.**

**[www.accounting@eagleprideband.org](http://www.accounting@eagleprideband.org)**

**CONTACT YOUR SECTION LEADERS SO THEY KNOW WHO YOU ARE! They plan cool “bonding” activities over the summer so you can get to know each other before band starts. Don’t be afraid! We kinda like each other a lot! Teehee! List included in packet!**

***ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!* ☺**

*P.S. – Remember Percussion and Colorguard DO have NON-mandatory rehearsals over the summer so make sure you contact your instructors. These are not required, but definitely will make YOU and the ENTIRE band better. OH, and you woodwind and brass players...dust off your instruments and at least practice scales to keep your*

*lips in shape! You have to be able to play a chromatic scale for me as part of your audition!*

**ENJOY YOUR  
SUMMER!!!**

