Benefits of Being in Band

Family

*Band provides another environment and family atmosphere for band members to lean on.*

As with any family, there will be ups and downs, but band provides its members with a unique habitat that will support students both during good times and bad. For our underclassmen, there are many upperclassmen to learn from who have been through what they will experience. For our upperclassmen, they will learn to develop leadership skills and give back to others in the way someone gave to them.

Camaraderie in the joy of music making

*While the band members and staff do work hard, we also enjoy one another’s company on a daily basis, making great music, and enjoying sharing our musical gifts with others.*

Our primary goal as musicians is to entertain and share great music with our parents, alumni, and community. Whether it is playing stand tunes at the football game to fire the team and the crowd up, performing our unique and high energy competitive show at half time or contests, jamming out with our jazz bands or percussion ensembles, lightening the mood of the season through pops music on a concert, or sharing passionate and sophisticated literature through our concert bands, there is no end to the wonderful music that we enjoy with one another. We strive to perform at the highest level, and of course, there is great joy in doing so.

Self Confidence

*Band affords its members to benefit enormously from participating on a team that breeds excellence.*

All of the students are a part of the greater whole. We experience success and failure together. We learn how to handle ups and downs together. Most importantly, our band students can take pride in knowing that they contributed to something greater then he or she could do on their own. They can take ownership in the group. Band also provides our members with a model of excellence that can boost their confidence in their own abilities in other classes or activities. Band members will learn they really can accomplish goals with a clear plan and a high level of discipline, and will be able to tackle other projects outside of band with direction and purpose.
Commitment

Band teaches the ability to practice and learn follow through. “Doing what I say I will do when I say I will do it”

Band members learn by committing to a practice schedule, accepting responsibility to complete a task, and making a promise to their team mates to see a task through to its conclusion. Participation in a team sport, and sticking it out when it isn’t always fun or the rewards aren’t always tangible in the moment, is a lesson that benefits band members far beyond the music classroom.

Discipline

Long rehearsals, memorize drill, memorize music, "Early is on time; on time is late", manners, and respect

The discipline you experience and practice is a foundation for discipline later, through college, the workplace, and as a parent. Students represent both the school and community when at performances and competitions. Our band is expected to be respectful in all situations, from rehearsals, to football games, to competitions. While the parents may be going nuts in the stands, band members learn to remain perfectly still in situations where we all know they wanted to dance and scream.

Conflict Resolution

Band members will face conflict in their lives within their families, with friends, and will also have to learn how to deal and work with people they just plain don’t like.

With 100+ members on the team, conflicts are bound to happen. Learning to work through these challenges is a unique opportunity posed through participating in a large team sport. Band members will not just “learn concepts” of conflict resolution, but will practice them through the course of their season. They will gain valuable coping skills both in learning how to “blow off steam” productively and also in how to resolve disputes as they arise.
**Prioritizing**

Facebook, social media, television, and other activities are often more fun than the “to-do” list, and band will help its members learn the importance of giving up unnecessary distractions and prioritizing.

For many, video games are fun. They develop hand eye coordination, and are a great stress release. Unfortunately, they can also become a detriment to productivity. Time management experience will serve you well throughout your life.

**Life is not fair or always fun**

*Despite our best efforts, sometimes life isn’t fair and it isn’t always fun. Learning how to handle disappointments as well as developing systems for dealing with disappointment is an important part of being in band.*

We won’t win every competition. Band members won’t win every chair test, and sometimes they will do *everything to the best of their ability* and things still won’t go their way. Learning how to bounce back from these disappointments will benefit them long beyond their time wearing a band uniform.

**There is always a “Brighter Star”**

*No matter how good you are, there is almost always a “brighter star”. There is almost always someone better. In the competitive world we live in, many strive to be at the top. Learning how to handle the fact that you will not win every competition, and you will not always be the best is an important skill.*

Whether it is through competition in marching band, chair tests, or the region process, band enables your student to learn that striving for personal excellence is a far more important goal than “being first place.” While it is always great fun to win or see our names at the top, an equal amount can be gained through simply achieving personal goals, and we shouldn’t be discouraged or feel as though the only priority is to be the best. Learning how to handle when we aren’t always on top teaches that the world will not end if we do not win, or if we aren’t number one in our class. We can celebrate others accomplishments when they are doing well as we would want others to celebrate with us as we achieve goals.
**Instant Gratification or Shortcut Patience**

*There is no shortcut to excellence at playing a sport or an instrument or achieving high marks in the classroom.*

Each requires diligent study, focused practice, and a high level of commitment, as well as patience. Band members will learn the level of dedication required to achieve excellence in any one skill. Music provides a wonderful outlet for this as it is something than can provide a great deal of enjoyment at all levels and can take the edge off the pursuit of excellence. However, the pursuit of excellence often comes with bumps in the road, and demands perseverance and patience. Farming, hunting, sports, sculpting, crafts, and music all can provide outlets for students to develop patience. In their future jobs and pursuits, “slow and steady wins the race” will benefit them enormously over those who give up long before your student will.

**Workforce**

*While some students are “intrinsically motivated,” others benefit greatly from the structure and discipline band provides.*

The real world expects its employees to show up on time. It expects a level of discipline and follow through, and it expects that if an employee gets paid to do a job, they will do it. There are bosses, co-workers, data reports, and plenty of detractors. Employees who perform at a high level are promoted, those who do not perform well are demoted, and those who do not follow the rules or become complacent are replaced. Band is truly a “miniature playground for the real world” and places real world expectations on its students that build character and teach independence.

**Balancing Act**

*Ultimately, learning how to balance the many requirements of school and band is no different than learning to balance a job, mortgage payments, taking the kids to activities, building in vacation or family time, and other skills that adults face in their lives.*

It often seems like our band members who are involved in the most activities, AP classes, and top bands are also the kids who achieve the highest grades. Of course, high school will be different for each and every student. While they are “just teenagers”, learning to balance on their own will prepare them as they head off to college. College requires a high level of independence, and many college students either fail after their first semester or burn out under the stress of work. Band will provide students with tools to help overcome these stresses, and ensure they learn how much is possible in a day, and how to manage their time efficiently.
Rewards

A great sense of joy and satisfaction comes from achieving goals either as an individual or as a team.

Band members will be able to celebrate their victories at all levels, whether it is simply overcoming the hurdle of checking off a single measure of music, achieving a personal victory they did not believe was ever possible, or learning the exuberance and exhilaration that comes from a team winning an event together.

Sometimes, the greatest rewards are those that come from gaining strength through failure or realizing that the sun will indeed come up tomorrow, and you get a fresh chance with each time you start over. These rewards become even sweeter the older our students get and they learn how to truly cherish the rewards of hard work heading into college and the real world.