



Fort Calhoun Pioneer Band



A Tradition of Quality, Class and Pride

[This letter will be posted online as well, so if you misplace this, you will still have access to this information. It will be in the “Announcements! Updates!” section of our Band webpages.]

June 28, 2017

Dear Senior High Band Members:

HELLO, everyone... Well, I’m seeing some of you walk in the door as I start on this, but hope the younger class is having a good summer as well! It is very busy here of course.

The start of the 201-2018 Senior High Band season will be here before we know it. It will begin on July 31, 2017, with three days of class instruction we call simply SESSION ONE. These dates have been printed in all our band “future dates” lists on programs, etc., since the middle of last March, and they were on all the school’s summer events lists, so there are no surprises here.

This long letter is basically a form letter and contains the “nuts and bolts” of the fall program. Experienced members, review it as necessary. Newer members need to read carefully for important information about the start of our new season. EVERYONE... PLEASE READ THE “food for thought” on the SEPARATE ORANGE SHEET, and the ALL STATE information on PAGE SIX.

VERY IMPORTANT: Our Mentor Program. Older students, be sure to continue to be in contact with the freshman you volunteered to mentor. Freshmen, don’t be bashful. Feel free to ask your mentor any questions you have about the program!

SESSION ONE is exactly what it implies—the time in which we do that first, absolutely necessary work required for the whole class to get a new season started. It is the first step toward building yet another championship season. It is the start of establishing and developing new leadership. Albeit an early date, **Session One is part of the regular season.** The first marching show is learned completely and performed, the first attendance records are kept, including tardies, and the first grades of the season are actually recorded during these first full and productive days. Work is begun on the field marching show for the season, and pep band music for the season is read and put out for individual work. The session concludes with THE FIRST PERFORMANCE of the season, as the band presents to the public a sampler of their progress on the final evening. This makes for a busy three days requiring every bit of student leadership that can be mustered!

[Please note: Basically every quality band program I know of that is competitive at all has numerous rehearsals and sectionals throughout the summer. Some occupy partial days for three to four weeks of the summer; others basically go on all summer. We have kept our work time to a very, very condensed schedule. Consequently, in turn for not disrupting everyone’s schedule all summer, it is very important that EVERYONE comply with the very brief time we have scheduled. There are approximately 21 hours and 45 minutes of instructional time during SESSION ONE; making it up later will take an individual about an hour after school every day for four weeks.]

1. Note that attendance is required at ALL “SESSION ONE” activities. 2. Here’s how it all works....

First of all...WELCOME to our incoming Ninth graders. We urgently NEED each and every member that we have spent the last four years training and we look forward to having you in Senior High. As we tell each new class at this point: We have long held a tradition of high and exacting standards in our organization and we expect no different in the future. As you join us now, we trust that you are ready, able, and willing to help us maintain this outstanding quality level. But... Please!... Do NOT be worried about your ability to perform. You WILL BE TAUGHT what you need to know and OTHERS WILL HELP YOU get it all down. Everyone is apprehensive at first. You will feel much more comfortable by the end of SESSION ONE. We will have entirely learned our State Fair Show by the end of camp as well.

We also urgently need experienced Juniors and Seniors “giving back” to the program—being there now to provide leadership, mentorship, and encouragement for the young 9th and 10th graders coming up. You are needed to make sure that the program continues to run at the same high levels of performance expectation that have made the Band a championship program for your first two years of high school and the many years prior to that.

SESSION ONE REHEARSALS. SESSION ONE will follow a format similar to past years, beginning the preparations for our fall performances. It is important that we make sure our fundamentals are as solid as possible. We will be discussing the essential elements of POSITIVE LEADERSHIP and how we **all** can have a role in it. Positive leadership is of prime importance if we are to be a strong and successful group. We will continually be working on ideas to help us all take more responsibility and ownership in the overall project.

During SESSION ONE we will work on a variety of activities to: a) review playing fundamentals, b) try to revive rusty embouchures, c) learn and review correct marching fundamentals, d) introduce and work on new music, and e) review some of our standards. We will be alternating activities frequently, spending time both indoors and out--so dress accordingly in cool, comfortable clothes and good marching shoes, being sure you have whatever you need to be out in the sun (hats, sunglasses, sun screen, etc.) **ABSOLUTELY DO NOT WEAR SANDALS. To be the most successful we can be, everyone must come in with an attitude of wanting to do the very best you can in every rehearsal. You CANNOT march successfully in sandals.** In consideration of proper attitude and leadership, **section leaders wearing sandals will most likely lose their position.**

You know the dates from our spring concert programs and school publications. Here (and on the next page) is the tentative outline of the schedule:

Monday, July 31	--	8:45 to 12:00	Part ONE
		12:00 to 12:55	Lunch--Sack lunch
		1:00 to 4:30	Part TWO
Tuesday, August 1	--	8:45 to 12:00	Part THREE
		12:00 to 12:55	Lunch--Sack lunch
		1:00 to 4:30	Part FOUR and Business meeting

(schedule continues on next page)

TUESDAY EVENING -- 7:30 p.m. **BAND PARENT'S MEETING**
(All persons interested in the future of the Fort Calhoun Band program are invited to attend.)

Wednesday, August 2 -- 9:15 to 12:30 Part FIVE
12:30 to 1:25 Lunch--Sack lunch
1:30 to end Part SIX, election of officers,
(6:15) Performance at the City Park, followed by evening meal, and.....

SWIM PARTY/SOCIAL TIME,
buses return by 11:30 p.m.

Again, Everyone is EXPECTED to be present at ALL activities listed, including social times. Please be advised that this means exactly what it says. (If you have a serious problem, you need to notify me immediately. Make-up time will need to be assigned.) YOU HAVE ADEQUATE TIME TO PLAN. Everyone must be at the social time; it is important for the group to get acquainted and to share some recreational interaction time after three hard days of work. (There are reasons for ALL requirements--whether you understand them or not. You may not think you need to get to know someone better, but YOU may be the role model SOMEONE ELSE needs to get to know.)

Given the right attitude, hard work really CAN be FUN. Making progress is fun. Achieving excellence is fun. Winning is FUN. Therefore, I DO expect to have some FUN along with getting a lot of work done. Some of our goals for the three days include:

1. A careful start on tone production/embouchure training for the new season.
2. To review good playing fundamental—the good old basics.
3. To know and be able to execute properly, consistently and uniformly the marching fundamentals--again the basics. The BASICS are it—they are A MUST!
4. To review and shape up parade marching.
5. To learn our State Fair show COMPLETELY.
6. To start learning music for our fall field performances.
7. If time, to start on our field performance choreography.
8. To learn our parade marching music.
9. To meet, get to know, and make welcome our incoming 9th grade class and any other new members of our ensemble.

AS ALWAYS we have some paperwork in the form of Uniform Fees, Contracts, and Permission Forms to be turned in as we start the season. According to our Uniform Contract the payment at this point is already PAST DUE. The Uniform Rental Fee is 30.00 for the year. A minimum of \$15.00

deposit is due at check-out time, with the balance due by the end of the third quarter. You will NOT receive a uniform until your deposit is paid--BRING IT TO SESSION ONE. New students will also need to order shoes during this time.

Without Session One it would be nearly impossible to be ready for our first performances. Realize that we have only a handful of regular school days before we have to present two major performances! A successful kickoff in SESSION ONE produces a smoother, easier, and less frustrating season after school starts, and hopefully, with less practice.

Also enclosed is the schedule of major fall performances. Please take note of them. A complete schedule for the entire school year will be available when school starts. BE RESPONSIBLE—inform your employers (and your families!) at the appropriate time--it will make life more pleasant for everyone. FAILURE TO BE AWARE OF THE SCHEDULE causes more problems than any other factor in the entire program. We may have to make some performance decisions again; we are currently verbally committed to the Papillion- South Marching contest. (There is a week less between Labor Day and this contest this year. There are two options the following Saturday, but we probably have more internal conflicts.)

Woodwind players, if your horn has not been in the shop during the past year, you should take it in NOW to have it checked over before the season starts. Brass players, if anything is wrong with your horn, get it into the shop--now. You should also have the inside of your horn cleaned out at least every other year!!! Be sure not to let your slides and valves freeze up! TAKE THEM OUT AND GREASE THEM—TODAY. **DO NOT BRING BRASS HORNS WITH STUCK SLIDES!!!**

ENJOY what's left of your summer vacation--don't work too hard! Relax a little. Otherwise, you'll never be ready for school to start. At the same time, though, do NOT let your embouchure get completely out of shape over this long break—play your horn once in awhile. (Buy some music you know and like; then, play it. Try learning your scales—its very advantageous to know them!)

PLEASE NOTE THE ANNUAL BAND PARENTS MEETING that is scheduled during Band Camp. Help pass the word around to parents! These meetings are few in number, but significant policy matters are discussed. A discussion of this summer's Washington, D.C., Trip will be among the agenda topics. Jr High Band parents and anyone else just interested in the future of the Band Program at Fort Calhoun are urged to attend. You students are also welcome to attend and provide input.

At ANY point in the season...If you have any questions, feel free to get in touch with me, your mentor, or any responsible upperclassman. As always, 1) ASK questions—don't wander around in a fog or get yourself in a bind by being too bashful to ask; and 2) COMMUNICATE—with your section, your section leader, and with me. (E-mail works well. I can get it from anywhere in the country I happen to be. mjones@ftcpioneers.org)

We have discussed YOUR taking ownership in the band. We have discussed our instrumentation and personnel needs, how it affects all of us, and how you can play a part. These situations are different from year to year, but as always, from this point on, **how the new year actually turns out is very much up to each of you—its in your hands.** And, like always, it all starts....now.

In closing, I—as always—want to issue this same challenge to all of you. **Put into action** every bit of potential energy, potential leadership, and potential talent you have. Remember, **nothing was ever accomplished with “potential.”** Then, combine those assets with hard work... and create an outstanding final product that may be even greater than anything you can imagine on your own!!

FULLY EXPECTING OUTSTANDING RESULTS,
I LOOK FORWARD TO YET ANOTHER GREAT SEASON—
And to seeing all of you on July 31st....

—*Mr. Jones*

~~ **IMPORTANT FIRST SEMESTER DATES** ~~

- July 31 – August 2 — SESSION ONE: Sr Hi Band Starts
- August 1 — Annual Band Parents Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- August 30 — Fort Calhoun Band at the NE State Fairgrounds
- September 4 — SEPTEMBERFEST PARADE in Omaha
- September 23 — Papillion South Marching Invitational** (verbally committed)
- September 30 — Columbus Marching Festival OR Capitol City Marching Festival (both are options)**
- October 7 — Links Invitational Marching Festival, Lincoln High
- [October 14 — Final Deadline for All-State Honor Band Auditions]
- October 14 — O.P.S. Invitational Marching Festival at Burke High
- October 21 — N.S.B.A. State Marching Festival at Seacrest Field, Lincoln
- [November 16-18 — All-State Honor Band]
- December 10 — Christmas Concert (3:00 p.m.)

** We will again be making some decisions between these events.

**A REMINDER TO THOSE OF YOU INTERESTED
IN ALL-STATE:**

**FIRST OF ALL, READ THE ALL-STATE INFORMATION ON THE
BACK OF THIS SHEET. Then...**

Don't forget this fact about your competitors from other schools.....

Most of the people you are auditioning against DO take private lessons.....AND, most people taking private lessons DO NOT take the summer off—especially right before important auditions!

You might want to keep this in mind when you are considering how much dust to let your horn case collect! I can teach you how to score higher than some of your competition, but only you can provide muscle tone and technique!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

EXCELLENCE: Many Times The Difference Between Failure and Success Is Doing
Something Nearly Right . . .Or Doing It Exactly Right.

QUALITY: The race for Quality has no finish line!