

GREENEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL BAND

January 2008

Dear Eighth Grade Band Students and Parents:

Welcome to Greeneville High School! This letter is to introduce you to the band program and to answer questions you may have. I hope *many* of you will be part of our group next year!

The band meets daily. All marching band members sign up for band as part of their schedule, and earn credit toward graduation. After marching season we automatically switch to concert season. Girls in the flag corps who play instruments begin playing with the band at this time. *We want flag corps members to continue to play their instruments in the band during concert season.* Under the "block schedule", the entire band will meet together first semester (or term). Second term, the band will be divided into two separate groups that will meet daily. This makes the groups a more manageable size and gives everyone a better experience. All freshmen will be together in one of the bands. ***Each band member will earn two units of credit toward graduation each year.***

Students in the marching band perform at all varsity football games, both at home and away. In addition to football games, the band usually competes in 3 marching contests, held on Saturdays in late September or early October (likely dates are September 27, October 11, 2008). Our own marching festival will be held on October 4, 2008. Our band will participate in exhibition that evening. We also march in the Greeneville Christmas parade. All band members are required to participate at all football games, contests and parades. Students will be excused for illness or family emergencies.

THE MARCHING BAND: The marching band is the most visible part of the high school band program and, therefore, one of its most important elements. Many students enjoy the marching band more than anything else we do. Freshmen who plan to be in the high school band program must be members of the marching band, unless they have a physical problem which precludes this type of activity. *Freshmen are expected to participate in band both semesters in order to experience all of what we do.*

PRACTICE SCHEDULE: During the summer, we have band practice on **Tuesday afternoons** for an hour and a half (**1:00-2:30 pm**) so that we can begin to learn the marching music, give freshmen an opportunity to adjust to high school band before things really get busy, and to keep us from getting completely out of playing shape. Practice is low-key and most students enjoy being here and seeing their friends. Students are, of course, excused for family vacations and summer camps, but are expected to come to practice when they are in town. **During the two weeks immediately before camp** we will practice more often so that we'll have our music and our marching fundamentals in good shape before we leave for camp. **AFTER SCHOOL STARTS, THE FULL BAND HAS A REQUIRED PRACTICE ON TUESDAY NIGHTS DURING FOOTBALL SEASON. AFTER FOOTBALL SEASON IS OVER, WE HAVE FEW, IF ANY, EXTRA PRACTICES.**

BAND CAMP: Band camp will be held during the week of **Sunday, July 27, through Friday, August 1, at Mars Hill College.** Band camp is *essential* to the success of our marching band. At camp we will learn our competition show. Band camp gives freshmen an opportunity to really begin to feel a part of the high school band. We work as a group -- we develop the "esprit de corps" so essential for a performing group. Camp also gives us the chance for concentrated work away from the distractions so common at home. We hire enough teaching staff so that every instrument group has its own instructor, giving students some special attention by someone who plays *their* instrument. All students who plan to be in the marching band must go to band camp.

COST OF CAMP: Camp costs around **\$250.00**. This includes 5 nights lodging, 16 meals, *all instruction*, transportation, your band T-shirt, and kool-aid for breaks. Each student is responsible for his/her own expenses. **WE DO NOT WANT TO LEAVE ANYONE HOME BECAUSE THEY CANNOT AFFORD THE COST.** If you feel that you cannot afford camp, please contact Mr. Price in private so that we can work out arrangements for you. Your request for assistance will be kept confidential; you will not be embarrassed.

ABOUT THE CAMP: Our main objective at camp is to learn our marching show, so we do work very hard. But there is ample time for rest and recreation. You will be able to *choose your own roommate*. Students are housed two per room in an air conditioned college dormitory. Freshmen need not fear "hazing" from the older students. We do not allow hazing, nor does the camp. **We encourage our younger players, we don't embarrass them.** You will have a squad leader who is responsible for helping you to learn your music and marching. **We want you to succeed and enjoy being a part of our band.**

OTHER EXPENSES: You will need a lyre for your instrument and white marching shoes for your uniform. The shoes generally cost around \$25 - we'll help you make arrangements to get the shoes. There is also a \$20.00 uniform cleaning fee that is collected in May.

FINE ARTS GRADUATION REQUIREMENT: Participation in band satisfies the State of Tennessee's Fine Arts requirement for graduation. Please don't be concerned that you cannot handle the band requirements and still make good grades. We have several band members who are honor students and easily meeting all of the requirements of band membership. If you want to play in the band, you can handle it. Keeping up with your work should be easier than ever.

I hope that you will give careful consideration to joining our band. Our program is a good one. I feel that we can offer you an exciting experience that you will enjoy and profit from. I will meet privately with each student before school is out to find out if they plan to play in the high school band and to evaluate their level of preparation. At that time I will give the students an updated calendar of events for the full year as we know them. We will also keep our band web site updated with calendars, current letters and forms (<http://www.gcschools.net/ghs/Band/band.htm>). Also, you should also be receiving the band booster newsletter that should have current dates for our program. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. My office telephone is 787-8027 and my email is priced@gcschools.net. The best times to reach me are generally from 7:00-7:30 am, 12:00-1:00 and after 3:00.

Sincerely,

David A. Price, Band Director
Greeneville High School