

WELCOME TO THE MEDFORD MUSTANG MARCHING BAND!



Our tag line is ***The Power and Pride of Medford***, but it's also a group in which your child has the chance to accomplish things you never imagined possible. Below is information from a parent's perspective that we hope you will find helpful as you navigate through the season.

If you have other questions as we go through the season. Please ask!!!

WHO DOES WHAT AND WHEN:

The Fall **Marching Band** season runs from mid-August – early November. This includes both the Band and the Color Guard. Practices are on Tuesdays and Wednesday, 5-8 and practice and/or competitions are on Saturdays. (Much more info on this below!)

After the fall competitive season, **Concert Band** begins and runs through the end of the school year. Wednesday night practice continues and sometimes Tuesday evenings, as well.

Winter Guard begins with practices in December, usually a couple nights a week – this could include a weekend evening. The competition season starts in February and runs through early April (competitions are not necessarily every weekend.)

Winter Percussion begins with practices in December, usually Tuesday & Thursdays. The competition season starts in February and runs through early April (competitions are not necessarily every weekend.)

NOTE: It is not required for children to continue with Concert band or the winter groups. Children who want to join Winter Percussion or Winter guard can do one but not both groups since most competitions overlap on the same weekends.

COMMUNICATION (How to Stay in the Loop) AND THE BPO:

Band Director- If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation in the program please email Mr. Dampier @ mdampier@medford.k12.ma.us to schedule a time to meet. He is happy to talk to parents and is always willing to set up a meeting or have a phone call.

Remind App: To join, send a text to 81010 and text this message: @mdampier

Make sure you and your child (*if they have their own phone*) are on the Remind App. While Mr. Dampier's posts are mainly directed towards the band members, it will be helpful to see what is happening. This is where he will post schedules for competition days, changes to practice schedule, etc. Middle and high schoolers have a funny way of not sharing crucial information - even

if they just heard it before they get in the car to go home. Again, make sure you have access to this app.

BPO (Band Parent Organization): The BPO organizes and executes all fundraising and home shows for the band. This includes the fall marching season and the winter color guard season. And we need A LOT of funds to ensure that our instruments, uniforms and props are in top shape, to get our band and trailer to competitions, to support our staff, etc. There are many ways to help out with fundraisers and shows. When we all bring our skills and strengths to the table, it makes a big difference to our program. Band and Guard parents are all encouraged to participate.

BPO meetings are held once a month during the academic year and minutes are distributed after each meeting. Helpful information for band and guard parents is shared at each meeting. Make sure you are receiving BPO emails (email medfordbandbpo@gmail.com to get on the list). Check your junk mail if you don't see any in your inbox. The BPO sends out meeting notices, minutes from meetings, volunteer sign-ups for events and general info via this email.

Fundraisers include the annual Christmas Tree & Wreath sale, Sponsor the Season, Parades and others vary each year. These fundraisers pay for various items such as uniforms, music & instruments.

Medford Mustang Marching Band Private Caregiver Group on Facebook: Also, make sure you join this group if you are on Facebook. This is a private group for parents to ask questions, share information, etc. The more ways to get information, the better!

Every season we learn and try some new things. When that happens, always trust Mr. Dampier and the Remind notification over other information.

Athletic Registration, Physicals & Band Dues: Each parent must register their child on the MPS Athletic site under Band. (sometimes it says Band Varsity or Band Fall) A current physical will also need to be sent to the school nurses at the high school for your child to be cleared to participate.

<https://medford-ar.rschooltoday.com/> There is no fee due to register with the Athletic Department.

Band dues are \$150.00 for each child for the fall. A link from Zeffy will be available for payments and cash or check is also accepted- checks should be made out to Medford BPO. The Medford BPO has implemented a \$500.00 cap for band dues per year so if your child(ren) will continue will the winter season your dues may be less. An Exec board member can update you if you fall into this category.

If you have any concerns with this payment please see the Treasurer to discuss a reduced fee.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

Practice/Event Times: Practice may be listed at a certain time, but your child will tell you they need to be there 15 minutes ahead of time. This is correct. This ensures that everyone is ready to start on

time. There is a bit of prep with instruments and equipment, checking in with bandmates, etc. that needs to happen before practice begins.

“When you are 15 minutes early you are on time, when you are on time you are late, when you are late you are hurting the bands progress.”

Spring Band Camp: Spring band camp is a chance for the band to come together to review music for the fall’s show before the school year ends. The band camp usually runs the last full week of the school year (planned before snow days) and is from 5:00 – 8:00. We recommend that your child arrives in between 4:30-4:45 to allow time to get settled and be ready for a start time of 5:00 pm. Camp ends at 8:00 pm and your child may not be ready to leave until 8:30 depending on what section they are in and what they have to put away, etc.. The camp will be in the high school band room.

Summer Band Camp: Band camp is typically 1:00pm – 8:00pm Monday through Friday the last two full weeks of summer vacation. It is held either at Hormel Stadium (by the McGlynn School) or at the high school and is Mandatory for all members.

Yes, the days are long, but the team building is incredible! It may seem like a lot of time devoted to band on a hot August day but when you think about learning music, routines, AND drill for an eight-to-ten-minute show, it does start to make sense. And when you see the show at the end of camp you will be amazed at what your child and the whole band have done in these two weeks.

All members should arrive daily in black shorts/pants & sneakers. (no open-toed shoes)
During Spring Band Camp each section will be assigned a color shirt to wear everyday. (No crop tops will be allowed). Please send **A LOT** of water with your child each day to camp. Think of one or two of those half gallon water jugs. They should also have dinner, sunscreen, music, and a waist pouch (if desired). Snacks are provided with donations from families as well as water for them to refill their jugs.

And yes, loading the trailer at the end of practice does take time. Feel free to get out of the car and come chat with other waiting parents. We are all in this together!

Marching Band Season Practice: From the end of Band Camp until Finals, practices are on both Tuesday and Wednesday evenings 5:00pm – 8:00pm at the high school. (again, children should arrive between 4:30-4:45 to get settled) Practice will also be held the two middle Saturdays in September before competitions start. (There may be an additional Saturday at the request of the Band Director depending on the fall schedule) These are typically scheduled from noon – 4:00pm but could be earlier. No practice on Labor Day Weekend.

UNIFORM INFORMATION

Uniforms – Marching Band: The band will provide and care for your child’s uniform. We measure members at the start of the school year. **HOWEVER, FAMILIES WILL NEED TO PROVIDE:**

- **black marching shoes**
- **black gloves (brass and woodwinds only)**
- black socks**

-black clothing to wear under the uniform (for colder competitions later in the season compression shirts and pants are ideal).

-Brass players- A black hand towel

-Woodwinds- A white hand towel

If the band has show uniforms (bought specifically for the season's show) occasionally the color of the shirt worn underneath the uniform may change but you will be made aware of this as soon as possible.

Shoes and gloves can be purchased at National Music in Woburn. <https://nationalmusicinc.com/> If you can make it there, it's great to support this local small business. If not, shoes are available on Amazon. Start working on getting shoes in August in case sizes are running low and need to be ordered. **Please note:** Graduating band members or ones who have outgrown their old shoes sometimes leave them behind for incoming students. They are usually out when uniforms are being measured. Members are welcome to look through the bin.

Band (not guard) member families are **not** responsible for washing or upkeep of the uniform – only the under clothing, socks and gloves. Band uniforms always stay at the school. Members are welcome to keep their marching shoes in their uniform bag. If anything happens to their uniform during the season they should see the uniform parents who will help them.

Uniforms – Color Guard: Every year, the guard has a different uniform provided by the BPO.

Families need to provide: a body tight, guard [gloves](#), and shoes (from National Music in Woburn). <https://nationalmusicinc.com/> We do our best to reuse them from year to year, but sometimes a different color is necessary. Students will be told what they need to get. Guard members do take home their uniforms each week.

THE COMPETITION SEASON

Competition Days: The Medford Marching Band competes in the NESBA (New England Scholastic Band Assoc.) fall Marching Band competitions. For more info on NESBA please go to nesba.org. Mr. Dampier will hand out a schedule of the shows we will be attending.

Competition season usually starts on the last Saturday in September, and the band is usually at a competition every Saturday through October. Finals are now the first Sunday of November. As mentioned above, Mr. Dampier will post the schedule for each individual competition day a few days ahead of time on the Remind App.

Plan on your child needing to be dropped off at the high school mid-to-late morning and picked up later that night. A lot of the timing depends on the location and size of each competition. Generally, the day runs as follows:

- Rehearsal at the high school,
- Eat lunch (that is packed from home)
- Hair and makeup (for guard, and if needed for band)
- Change into uniforms.

- Load the trailer.
- Drive to the show together on school buses.
- Warm up by section
- Perform their hearts out.
- Load trailer and change out of uniforms.
- Watch the rest of the show and the awards.
- Return to school on the bus.

On the way back, there will be a reminder from staff to members to text parents as they get close to the school so you will know when to be at the high school for pick up. If your child needs to leave early and you will be picking them up, you will need to send an email to Mr. Dampier ahead of time. You will also need to connect with him at the show before taking your child.

While at the shows, if your child needs to leave the group (go to the restroom, get food) they must leave with another student. The buddy system is in full use at events. Please let your child know this prior.

For competition days your child will need to bring with them:

- lunch and snacks
- money, only if they want to buy some food at the show.
- a good amount of water
- **MARCHING SHOES, GLOVES, INSTRUMENT, MOUTHPIECE/REEDS**
- Psych bags (see below)
- **warm clothing** for watching in the stands.

Please note that they will put their uniforms over what they are wearing at the beginning of the day, so nothing is too baggy! As said above, tight fitting shirts and pants are best (shorts for warm competition days). The competitions go well after sundown and during the fall it can get quite chilly even if the day is warm. Please have them bring an extra layer or two.

Quick note for the Guard: wear your body tights when you show up for the day. Bring your:

- shoes
- gloves
- unifrom
- equipment
- hair and makeup things.

Please come to competitions and support other bands! It's always exciting when there is a large Medford crowd cheering on our band. And if you are new to the world of marching band competitions, it is a whole new level of entertainment and fun. At many shows, area college bands perform at the end, and they really put on a show. It costs \$15 (\$10 for seniors and students) to get into the show and there is always food to buy that usually goes to the host school's band – **bring cash!**

- (Your child will get in for free as a performer). Check www.nesba.org for all show schedules and other information. Click on "Learn More" under the correct date to get the address and

line up of bands. Note that admission to Finals is slightly higher - \$20/\$15 seniors/kids. (Also see the section “Hints to Competition Locations” below.)

If you can come early to the competitions, help is always needed with unloading the trailer, setting up props and helping get everything to the field. Sign-ups for this help will be discussed at BPO meetings and a Sign-Up Genius will be sent via email.

Psych Bags: Band and guard members will be paired as “psych buddies” for the competition season. Before each show, buddies will exchange a bag with candy, trinkets, words of encouragement, etc. Hit the dollar store, early Halloween sales. (Non-candy items have included were glow sticks, plastic rings, hand sanitizer, pens, stickers, stress balls, etc.) Brown paper lunch bags work well, and you can buy a whole bunch at once to last their marching band career.

Home Show: When Medford gets to host a home show (competition is at Hormel), it is always helpful to have **ALL** hands-on deck!!! No experience needed! We need help with preparing and selling concessions, parking, selling tickets, guiding/helping bands. It’s a busy day but teamwork makes the “shows” work. Details regarding the home show will be discussed at a BPO meeting of the year. (typically, in the beginning of the season)

Finals: As mentioned above, Finals is always a **Sunday** at the end of October/beginning of November. (There will be rehearsal at the high school the day before and if scheduling allows a chance to see their last run-throughs of the show before the big day.) **All** NESBA bands perform that day, so the start time of the day is usually much earlier. Medford will perform earlier than during the regular season. To get the band ready for their last performance and to thank them for their hard work throughout the season, band parents provide a hearty breakfast/brunch for them at the high school before they head out. Sign-ups for food and help will be shared a couple weeks prior.

Scoring: Our band will be assigned a division within the NESBA organization based on our final number of members. We will compete only against bands within our division. NESBA judges will be located on the field and in the announcer’s box at the top of the stands. There are different categories that each band will be scored on and then those numbers are tallied for our final score. Scores and awards will be announced at the end of the show, or for larger shows, at the end of each half. Band staff will have the opportunity to hear feedback from the judges that will inform them of what to work on for the coming week’s practice. To learn more about this please visit www.nesba.org.

Weather: Oh, the Fall weather can be tricky sometimes! If a competition on Saturday is a wet one NESBA may decide to cancel the competition (for safety purposes) Or if a school that have access to a large enough gymnasium, the competition may become a non-scored standstill. A standstill is when the band plays the music but does not do drill (movement). Guard will complete their routines in place in time with the music. The band will receive feedback from judges but as stated above, they will not receive a score.

OTHER FUN THINGS

Football Games: We only play Medford High's home games which are played at Hormel. Depending on the year, games are Thursday or Friday nights. The band members usually need to be at Hormel at 3:15. Middle schoolers can walk over directly after school dismissal. During the game, the band sits together. They play the national anthem, stand tunes and perform their show at half-time.

Students should bring dinner, water, instruments, mouthpieces/reeds, gloves, marching shoes, and wear clothing that will be comfortable under their uniform. Guard note: wear your body tights, bring shoes, gloves, costume, equipment, and hair and makeup things.

We also play every Thanksgiving Game against Malden- regardless of the location of the game. These games are held before Thanksgiving each year and the 2025 Game will be on Thursday November 27, 2025 at Hormel Stadium. The location alternates year to year between Hormel and Malden stadium. The Malden High School football stadium is located near the Malden Center T Station and Pisa Pizza.

Winter Concert and more: Just when you are starting to really miss the season's show and the music no longer goes through your head non-stop, the band will perform a standstill of their show at the MPS Bands' Winter Concert held in December. It is always amazing! Sometimes the guard has the opportunity to spin during this show as well. Details will be shared as it gets closer.

Parades: Occasionally Medford is invited to participate at various local parades such as the Annual Woburn Halloween parade & the North End Christmas parade. These parades are a fundraising opportunity for the Band Parent Organization and are always a lot of fun to attend. It's rewarding for the band member to see families cheer them!

It may feel like a lot reading all this, and your child may feel overwhelmed at times – but they have their bandmates to pick them up. And they really do help each other out. It's impressive to see how supportive the older members are of the younger/new members.

Information on PAST COMPETITION LOCATIONS

For the most up to date and thorough information, please check www.nesba.org.

Townsend, MA

The North Middlesex High School show is located in Townsend, about an hour northwest of Medford. Enjoy the beautiful fall foliage as you wind your way on some back country roads. Note that the town of Groton often has their Fall Festival that weekend and traffic could be backed up getting through the town's center. Plan for some extra time.

Once at the high school, follow signs for parking. There is plenty of space. And will note that the restrooms at the stadium are some of the season's nicest.

Melrose, MA

Our closest show that we travel to, particularly for those in North Medford. It's located at the Melrose High School/Middle School/Athletic complex. Parking can usually be found along Lynn Fells Parkway or surrounding streets. There is also a small lot on LFP across from the school. The football stadium is next to the middle school. It will be hard to miss.

In the event of a standstill, it will be located in the gym of the Middle School. Parking will be the same.

Dartmouth, MA

Dartmouth is about an hour and a half to two hours to our south. A long drive yes, but the Dartmouth Marching Band also competes on a national level and their show is always fun to watch. There is limited parking in front of Dartmouth Town Hall/Middle School, or you can park along the street. Their stadium is on the smaller side. Concessions are located underneath the stands. And I hear their pumpkin whoopie pies also make the drive worth it!

Wakefield, MA

We will need any and all help moving our pit and props to the field. There is a large hill between warmups and the field. Parking is located up the hill by the schools. The stadium is one of the larger ones. Concessions are to the right just after admissions. Bathrooms are located there as well.

Reading, MA

Not too far of drive and definitely worth it because there is always a lovely backdrop of foliage behind the field. Parking is available by the school complexes and along the roads. Concessions are right after admission. The bathrooms are in the fieldhouse behind the stadium. Also, very nice.

Lawrence, MA

Lawrence has hosted finals off and on over the last few years (Reading has also hosted). A few things to note about finals:

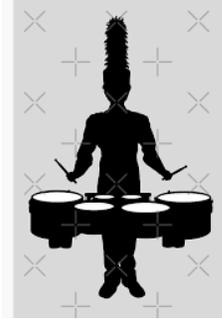
- It is a long day because all bands compete
- We will usually perform earlier because they start much earlier to accommodate all the bands
- Admission is \$5 higher than other shows
- Food is provided by usually just 2-3 carnival-type food vendors. It is a different fare, more expensive and the lines can **very, very** long. Feel free to bring your own food for you and your child (who can meet up with you after performing).

GUIDE TO OUR MARCHING INSTRUMENTS

Drum Line

Bass Drum – Large drums carried on the front of the player.

There are multiple sizes, each drum marched is a different size.



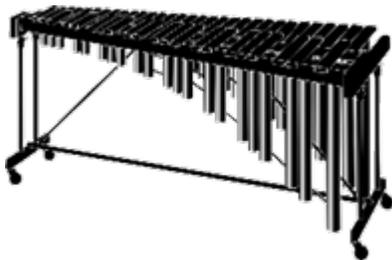
Tenor Drum – Set of smaller drums worn on the front of the player.



Snare Drum – Single drum about a foot long worn on the front of the player.

Front Ensemble/Pit

Marimba – Wooden keys (bars) that are struck with a mallet. Similar to a piano, the accidentals (sharp/flat) are raised above the natural keys.



Vibraphone – Like a marimba but made with metal keys and a little smaller.



Chimes – Like the vibraphone in appearance but smaller.



Drum set.



Keyboard – electronic piano



Electric Bass



Brass Line

Trumpet – Highest pitched brass instrument that is marched.



Mellophone – Lower pitched than the trumpet. It is the marching version of the French Horn.



Baritone – The tenor voice of the brass section. Similar range to the slide trombone. A larger bell than the mellophone.



Contra Bass – The lowest pitched brass that is marched. It is also called a “contra” or “marching tuba”.



French Horn



Woodwind Line

Alto and Tenor Saxophones – Single reed woodwind instrument.



Clarinet – Single reed woodwind instrument that has a slightly flared bell.



Flute – Typically made of metal and held out to the player's side.



Piccolo – Higher range than a flute.



Guard



Flag



Rifle



Sabre

MEDFORD BAND PARENT ORGANIZAION