

NORTHSTARS BAND PARENTS, INC.

# Parent Handbook

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## **CNS Northstars Marching Band**

2017-2018



This document should be reviewed yearly and updated accordingly.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Dear Parents,

This handbook was developed to help you better understand the CNS Northstars Marching Band Organization and its functions. In 1995, after realizing there was a need to publish information to our families, the first edition was printed. A great deal of time and effort has been spent over the years to try to make this as accurate and up to date as possible. If you have any questions, additions or find errors, please let me know. I will correct any errors in the next edition. Each year, a current calendar of events is added, and names changed in key positions. Please read this package entirely as it contains important information.

New for the 2017-2018 season, we will be holding “Spotlight” meetings to focus on key topics of interest such as Band Communication, Band Camp, Competitions, Uniform Care, etc. The “Spotlight” meetings are optional and open to anyone looking for more information about a specific topic. For more information on the meeting schedule, visit the marching band calendar at [www.cnsmarchingband.org/calendar](http://www.cnsmarchingband.org/calendar).

I want the Northstars Marching Band experience to be as good for you, the parent or guardian, as it is for your child. Our parent board is here to represent you and your input and comments are important to us. I hope you make the choice to become involved in this organization - it's a great experience that you won't regret, and we always need your help!

Sincerely,

Jeff Swanson

President, Northstars Band Parents, Inc.

# **NORTHSTARS BAND PARENTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

2017-2018

**PRESIDENT - Jeff Swanson**

Board of Directors - 4 years

315-427-0482 [president@cnsmarchingband.org](mailto:president@cnsmarchingband.org)

**VICE PRESIDENT - Don Patterson**

Board of Directors - 2 years

315-484-6348 [vicepresident@cnsmarchingband.org](mailto:vicepresident@cnsmarchingband.org)

**TREASURER - Breah Dawkins**

Board of Directors - 2 years

315-383-0235 [treasurer@cnsmarchingband.org](mailto:treasurer@cnsmarchingband.org)

**SECRETARY - Angelique Crouse**

Board of Directors - 1st year

[secretary@cnsmarchingband.org](mailto:secretary@cnsmarchingband.org)

**WAYS AND MEANS - Karen Calkins**

Board of Directors - 2 years

315-552-4071 [fundraising@cnsmarchingband.org](mailto:fundraising@cnsmarchingband.org)

**BOARD MEMBER - Brian Rosen**

Board of Directors - 1st year

315-456-8502 [brosen24@yahoo.com](mailto:brosen24@yahoo.com)

**Karen Seamans**

Band Director

KSeamans@nscsd.org (school)

cusechick@aol.com (summer)

## **THOUGHT ABOUT COMPETITION**

Though the CNS Northstars participate in a competitive area, we do not measure our success solely in terms of “wins and losses” or how many times we “beat the other bands.” Rather, our success or failure is determined by our ability to reach our own potential and continue to improve throughout the season. As a band, we will set our own goals and strive to achieve them. We cannot control how other bands perform.

The reason for this view of competition is based on the subjective nature of the adjudication process. While there is a very specific set of criteria upon which we are judged, there is much room for opinion in determining the extent to which we have met it. We will not base the success or failure of our program solely on the opinion of seven people. We will use judges' input as a critique to help us strive to improve.

Consequently, though we strive for perfection and possible championships, that view leaves room for only one "winner". Victory is a state of mind- our collective state of mind. The thing that we really strive for is that everyone involved does their personal best and learns lessons that will serve them both on and off the field, both now and in the future.

## **CNS MARCHING BAND POLICY STATEMENT**

### **Marching Band Expenses**

1. Any expenses in excess of the dollars provided by the North Syracuse School District, Northstars Parent Group or direct donation are the responsibility of each participating student of the Northstars Marching Band and not the Parent Group.
2. Expenses include, but are not limited to: a) the equipment fee, b) personal items required for the participation in the ensemble and c) the cost of the annual performance trip. The Parent Board determines the total amount of the items each year.
  - An annual equipment fee is charged to each participant for the maintenance of costuming and/or props and equipment.
  - Any items required for participation in the CNS Northstars Marching Band that are of a personal nature such as shoes, shorts, socks, gloves, undergarments or make up are considered personal items and may not be purchased using fundraised money.

- The cost of the annual trip is determined at the beginning of each performance season. Factors taken into consideration are: the number of nights spent in the competition city, lodging, meals, transportation and other costs incurred by the entire group.
3. Payment of these expenses can be made as follows: direct payment, fund raising opportunities or with a rollover of monies previously fund raised by themselves or by an older sibling that has graduated, become academically ineligible or for any reason, has left the Northstars Marching Band.
    - a. Direct payments made on the participant's behalf will go directly towards the cost of that participant's trip.
    - b. The Ways and Means chairperson establishes the fund raising programs at the beginning of the Marching Band season with the guidance of the Band Parent Board and the approval of the North Syracuse school district. The amount of each fundraiser to be assigned as student portion is determined by the CNS Band Parent Board at the beginning of the season.
    - c. Rollover of monies: After ALL Marching Band obligations have been met, any remaining balance may be transferred to another North Syracuse Central School District Fine Arts program to be used for the cost of participation in those programs (ex. Winter guard, Drumline, Dance Ensemble, Orchestra, etc.). Any balance at the end of the performance season is carried over from one year to the next. If a participant graduates, becomes academically ineligible, or leaves the Northstar Marching Band for any reason, then the remaining monies earned by that participant (after meeting all financial obligations) can only be rolled over to a sibling participating in any fine arts program in the North Syracuse School District. This balance can be held for a period no longer than one marching band season. This balance is a NON-REFUNDABLE entity due to the Marching Band's tax-exempt status.
  4. In the event that a student encounters a financial hardship that is so dire that the student cannot participate in the annual trip, the parent is encouraged to speak to the CNS Northstars Parent Board to discuss financing options. Financing options will not be available to any student who has not participated in the many fundraising activities offered throughout the marching band season.

## **KEYS TO SUCCESS**

Make sure the kids eat a good meal before practice and bring a water bottle to practice so they can rehydrate whenever needed. It takes a great deal of energy to practice and perform a show.

Proper attire is required at practice. We follow the same dress code that the district sets. Sneakers are the proper footwear – no sandals or flip flops. During the summer months, sunscreen (for daytime) and insect repellent (for the evening) are required.

Parents are encouraged to view the run-through performance at the conclusion of each rehearsal. It is usually the last 15 minutes of practice, so if you're coming to pick up your child, you may go out to the practice field around 8:45 and watch. **Important announcements are also made at this time.** Attending at other times is discouraged, as it is distracting to the band and staff. Saturday is **NOT** the best time to attend practice since it is show day. **If you need to speak with Ms. Seamans she will be available 5:30pm - 6pm and 9pm-9:30pm during weeknight practices. It is imperative that the staff is not distracted during practice.**

## **ATTENDANCE**

No band can enter the competition without many hours of practice. The band is judged as a unit, not as individuals, though each individual is an important, contributing member of the team. THERE IS NO BENCH. Each member's position on the field is integral and related to the one next to him/her, so it becomes difficult to improve if someone is missing. It is important to try to schedule family vacations, events and appointments around practice; however, we do realize that in the summer, many families take vacations, so please let Ms. Seamans know **in writing as soon as possible** if your child will be missing practices due to vacations. A schedule is included at the back of this handbook and is posted on the website.

Additionally, once school begins, time management is crucial. Students **MUST** plan responsibly to get schoolwork done immediately after school on rehearsal nights and plan ahead for long-term projects. Missing rehearsals hurts the whole team and it is very difficult, if not impossible, to make up instruction that is missed. Students will have their spots reduced or be pulled

from competitions if they miss too much instruction or if it is deemed in the best interest of the TEAM.

Finally, marching band is a wonderful tool to teach students the concepts of responsibility, accountability, dedication, and commitment. "Punishing" students by not letting them attend rehearsals or shows is only teaching them that they do not have to fulfill their commitments and it punishes the whole team.

## **ILLNESS**

Notify the Director, Ms. Seamans, or other staff member of illness prior to practice (no later than 3:00 for 6:00 rehearsals). If you are in school you are expected to be at practice. In the case of a prolonged illness or injury, please send a parent or doctor's note when the student returns. **They may not rehearse without one. Please do not post on internet sites that you will be absent.**

## **ABSENCES**

Written notes are required if a member anticipates missing practice. Please send these AS SOON AS YOU ARE AWARE OF THE CONFLICT. Notes are to be given to the Band Director or section instructor. The notes help the staff and parents know if a member is supposed to be at practice or not and also help in planning for practices. Phone calls may be made home if a student is missing from practice unexpectedly.

## **BAND CAMP**

This is a 2 session period with double rehearsals 12:00 – 4:00 and 5:00 – 9:00, when the band learns the bulk of the show (music, guard work, and drill). It is a time for members and staff to get to know each other and to build trust and a rapport that is vital to any successful organization. This year's BAND CAMP will be held August 15-17 and August 22-24.

## **MEDICAL**

Staff members trained in first aid and CPR are at every practice and show. They are allowed to give general first aid. If a student becomes ill at practice,



a parent will be called and the student sent home. A doctor's note is required before a student is allowed to practice after an injury which causes them not to be able to attend rehearsal or school.

**A medical authorization form is required for each student in the event emergency medical treatment is necessary. Each band member MUST have completed physical exam. The physical exam can be performed by the school physician or the band member's personal physician. The completed physical form MUST be on file with the school nurse, where the band member attends school.**

## **UNIFORMS**

A uniform is issued to each member. Each piece is numbered and each student is responsible for keeping it clean and in performance condition when in his or her possession. If they lose or damage it beyond repair due to negligence, they will have to replace it. A great deal of time and money goes into the uniforms. If a student has a problem with a uniform, do not try to fix it, contact the Uniform Committee Chairperson.

Each musician must purchase:

- Gloves (we will order)
- Shoes (we will order)
- Socks

Each colorguard member must purchase: (This varies because of uniform requirements.)

- Makeup
- Shoes (we will measure and order)
- Misc. Items (i.e. Leotards, hairpieces)

## **WEBSITE**

The CNS Marching Band website ([cnsmarchingband.org](http://cnsmarchingband.org)) is the primary source for information and communication within the marching band community. On the website, you will find information about the following:

- Calendar of Events
  - Includes rehearsal and performance schedules

- News
- Dome Concession Stand
- Co-Curricular Forms
- Band Parents Organization
- Contacts
- Links
- Alumni
- Member Forum\*

Most information is available to view without special access. For private communication within the marching band organization, the website utilizes a discussion forum powered by Google Groups. The forum is a restricted webpage within the website and access to the forum is by invitation only. To obtain access, email the webmaster at **webmaster@cnsmarchingband.org**. You will be required to have a Google account to access the forum. Please note that a Google account can be linked to ANY email account and does not require a new Gmail address; therefore, you can utilize any preferred email address (Verizon, twny, yahoo, etc.), if desired. If you don't have a Google account and need assistance creating a Google account, step by step instructions will be provided.

## **REMIND**

The Director will often utilize the Remind text alert service to send important information about events, reminders, or emergencies. All parents and students are encouraged to sign-up for Remind text alerts. To receive text alerts, text the message "@cnsm" to 81010. If done correctly, you should receive a response soon after you have sent the text. Note: This is an anonymous program that does not show your phone number.

The Band Parents group also utilizes the Remind text alert service to occasionally send important information. All parents are encouraged to sign-up for the Band Parents Remind account. To receive text alerts, text the message "@cnsbp" to 81010.

You can also sign up for both Remind services, or view all recent Remind posts, on the "Member Forum" page of the website.

## **STARBURST**

Every local band competition is hosted by a different school. Starburst is the name of the competition that we host here at CNS. This is our "home show" and main fund raiser. This year's show will take place at the CNS High School Stadium on Saturday, September 17th. The funds generated by this show help support the band's General Fund (see fundraising). It is important that as many parents as possible help at this show. It is a show to work, not to watch. The more people that help, the less work for all. There will be other shows you can attend to see the band. There is a Starburst Committee that will be calling you to help.

Some of the areas where we need help are:

- Band Check -In (Greeting buses and stamping band member hands)
- Security
- Concessions
- Ticket Sales
- Parking
- Hospitality (Offering refreshments to visiting chaperones and bus drivers)

A complete description of the responsibilities of these functions is posted on the band website.

## **DRESS-UP**

The school day before a show, all band members wear dress clothes to school.

## **SHOW DAY**

This is what a typical show day for band members will look like, times will vary based on distance and performance order:

- 11:45 - Arrive at CNS for practice
- 12:00-2:00 - Practice
- 2:00-3:00 - Lunch, get ready for show
- 3:15-3:30 - Board Buses with bus chaperones (see below)

- 4:00-9:30 - Arrive at competition, warm up, perform, awards (called "retreat") at the end
- 10:00 - Board buses, return to CNS

Parents will most likely arrive at CNS to pick up their child before the buses do. When the buses pull in to CNS, there is a tradition of honking your car horns and flashing your lights to let the kids know how proud you are of them.

There is also an informal tradition that many of the kids (and parents as well) go to Applebee's upon return to CNS. This is certainly not required, but it is lots of fun!

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Band members must ride to all band events on a school-provided bus. Written permission from a parent/guardian must be presented to the **BUS CHAPERONE** (Not given to instructors) **before** leaving school, if a student is not returning on the bus. Parents must sign out band member **at the bus, with the bus chaperone**, at the end of the show and band members must return any necessary equipment before leaving, if the band is directed to do so. We have this policy for your child's safety, so please follow these rules.

## **PARENT SUPPORT**

**Our students need your support at every show**, on the field or off. The parents are asked to try to sit together at the competitions, and make a lot of noise- cheer, clap, and yell! Show the band members and the other fans how much you support the band. It helps the kids perform better when they can hear your applause.

### Parent Help and Responsibilities at Practice and Show days:

The Northstar Marching Band Organization is always happy to have adult help at practices and on show days. Help is needed to create props, visuals, to assist as volunteers and prepare the Northstars for the competition season.

**\*\*The Northstar Marching Band cannot have young children left unattended during practice and on show days\*\***

Due to potential liability issues, if you bring a younger child with you when you come to help, your child must stay with you **at all times**. In addition, younger siblings cannot be on the field with their parents where they can be a distraction to our band members.

## **BAND ETIQUETTE**

When other bands are performing it is important to show respect and not talk or move from the stands. Please remember that our fans represent our band as much as our students do!

## **FUNDRAISING**

The band is a self-supporting school activity. The school supplies operating funds (i.e. instruction), practice field, field lights, buses (for local shows) and some instruments through the school budget. All other items are supplied through the Northstars Band Parents General Fund.

Profit generated by Fund-raisers is split between the General Fund and the Student Trip Fund (see below). There are exceptions to this rule and they will be noted on the paper work sent home for the fund-raiser.

We encourage participation in fund raisers. They help pay for the trip, and support the general fund. There are a variety of fund raisers available. The board tries to do different types. One type may be easy for you, but difficult for someone else to do and vice versa. Doing all the fund raisers may not be necessary. However, many parents / band members pay for the cost of their trip solely by fund raising.

Some of the fund raisers that have been done in past years are:

- STARBURST SHOW
- S. U. CARRIER DOME CONCESSION STAND – See the Dome Concessions Coordinator for details
- Car Washes
- Bottle Drive
- Fruit sale (November)
- Starburst Program Ads
- Candy Bar Sales

**If a fund raiser is not turned in on time, the full amount may be deducted from the student's account**, unless written approval is given by the Band Director or Band Parent President. *Remember to write separate checks for each fund raiser.*

## **GENERAL FUND**

The cost of uniforms, flags, visual props, publicity, and other miscellaneous costs are paid for by the General Fund. This money is raised by the students and parents through fund raising. **This money is used for the benefit of the entire band. The band cannot exist without this account.**

## **STUDENT TRIP FUND**

These are accounts which keep track of money earned by each Band Member for their trip. After all Marching Band obligations have been met, any remaining balance may be transferred to another Fine Arts program account. The balance is carried over from one year to the next if the student remains in band. If a member has a balance in June of their SENIOR YEAR, that balance gets transferred to the General Fund or may be transferred to a sibling in band prior to June 30. This is a non-refundable account. (Due to our tax exempt status.)

## **TRIPS**

The band usually participates in a special competition every band season. This is the band competition that all the Band Members look forward to every year. We incorporate several fun activities into this trip- the kids deserve it!

The destination of the band trip will be available at the July parent meeting. The Trip Chairperson, the Band Director and Parent Board are responsible for determining the cost of the trip. Cost is kept to a minimum. The total cost is divided equally between the numbers of members. **There is a payment schedule established for each Band Season and will be available at the Parent meeting.** There will be payments due at regular intervals for your convenience during the band season. It is VERY important that you make these regular payments. Prepayments for the total cost of the trip are discouraged as the total cost of the trip could be reduced and **any**

**overpayment of money is non-refundable and will be carried over in the student's trip fund.**

A detailed parent meeting about the trip will be held prior to the trip. You will be informed of the specific date and time of this meeting. We will thoroughly cover everything you need to know about the trip at that time, and we will answer all your questions and concerns.

**Each student must turn in a signed code of conduct form (Date to be determined by the Band Director).**

While the Band is traveling, there are occasions when Parents can pick up their student early. When the Parent chooses to do this, there are NO refunds or credits made to the Student's account. This will be covered in depth at the trip meeting.

## **PAYMENTS**

Checks are the preferred method of all payments to assist in tracking of any mistakes. Any check concerning marching band can be made payable to:

**NORTHSTARS BAND PARENTS, INC.**

**Returned checks will be charged \$10.00.**

Payments due during Field Band season are for equipment fees, the student trip fund and various fund raisers. **Please do not combine amounts for different payments. Write separate checks, please. Put checks in separate envelopes marked with the band member's name in full and what the check is for.** This makes things much easier for the treasurer.

All payment envelopes **MUST** be given directly to a Band Board member or the Treasurer. A Band Board member or the treasurer will be available immediately **BEFORE** practice and also at the **END** of practice. **Please do not give any payments to Ms. Seamans or any other instructional staff.**

**If you have any questions concerning payments, contact the Treasurer, Breah Dawkins.**

## **DOMEDAY**

This is the NYSFBC Championship Show at the Carrier Dome approximately the last Sunday in October. Most bands in the Field Band conference in New York State will compete there. It starts at 9 am and finishes well into the evening. There are no pre-sale tickets and the cost is higher than the weekly shows.

None of the following are allowed in the Dome for this event: balloons, pom poms with sticks, noisemakers, hanging banners

On the last rehearsal before dome day there will be a pep rally to watch the band do their final "run through" of the show before the competition at the Dome. All parents, guardians, family members and friends are invited. This is the time to cheer, yell and let the band members know how proud we are of them. You can bring balloons, noisemakers, etc. Please come and show your support- it means a lot to the kids!



On Sunday, the day of the championships, the band will practice from TBA. At the end of practice, there will be a special indoor soup kitchen. Each band member and instructor will have a bag with their name on it for “star notes.” Star notes are written notes wishing the band members good luck, and telling the instructors “thank you.” These may be written by band members, instructors, families or friends. You can be as creative as you wish in writing these notes. The notes are usually brought in ahead of time and distributed by parent volunteers into the labeled bags. **Star notes need to be submitted by start of practice on Sunday Dome day.** Star notes may be given to any board member. This is a time when we acknowledge all band members, but especially the Seniors. You are welcome to come and bring your cameras. After soup kitchen, the band members get ready and board the buses for the Dome. All band members **must** ride the bus to and from the Dome-**no exceptions.** If you are interested in helping with Dome Day activities, contact any of the Parent Board members.

## **FOOTBALL GAMES**

The Band will perform their show **at CNS football game half-time shows this year. The shows are on Friday nights. Refer to the calendar on our website for specific dates and times.**

## **BANQUET**

The Banquet is held at the end of the show season. There is no charge for band members to attend the Banquet. Parents and guests are welcome to attend but must pay for their dinner. The band members receive certificates and awards at this time. This year's Banquet will be held in mid November, after the Band trip and Dome Championships. More information will be available at a later date.

## **NORTH STARS BAND-PARENT ORGANIZATION**

### **NORTHSTARS BAND PARENTS, INC.**

The Northstars Band Parents, Inc. is an incorporated not-for-profit, tax exempt organization.

### **PURPOSE:**

To support and promote the instrumental music co-curricular programs of the Junior and Senior high school bands and its auxiliary units, as an integral part of the education of young people. To embrace a philosophy of commitment, discipline, unselfishness, pride and dignity.

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

There are three types of membership:

Parent or Guardian (full voting rights)

Associate Member, all Alumni & Alumni Parents (no voting rights)

Honorary Member, all Past Board of Directors (no voting rights)

All parents or guardians of any member of the Northstars Marching Band are automatically a member of the Northstars Band Parents, Inc.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Consists of people elected from the voting membership plus three permanent members: House 1 Principal, the Marching Band Director, and the Director of Fine Arts.

See Directory of Board Members in the front of this handbook.

### **CONSTITUTION:**

The Northstars Band Parents, Inc. has a constitution and by-laws. These are available from the Band Director or the President of the Northstars Band Parents, Inc.

### **PARENT MEETINGS:**

There must be at least two meetings per year. The Annual Meeting is in February. It primarily deals with election of officers and required reports from the Band Director and the treasurer. The second is in July to report on the band and the band trip, as well as establish Chairpersons for the many committees.