

LOARA HIGH SCHOOL BAND FAMILY
ORIENTATION INFORMATION
2023-24

INTRODUCTION

If you want to be a member of the Loara band program, then it is very important that you read, understand, and agree to abide by the rules. Our program is built on a foundation of everyone understanding program expectations and following through. It is important that everyone does their fair share, and knows that everyone else is doing what they have agreed to by agreeing to the program contract. We have a well-developed system of accountability for both students and parent boosters. So, please read this carefully and ask questions. We all want your involvement with the program to be positive and with as few surprises as possible.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The Loara Band Family is made up of several different parts. We are a parade band and a field band and three different concert bands. All students are in the field band (there are no auditions). All students who can march in step and play the parade march are in the parade band (many freshmen are not). Students are placed in one of the three different concert bands according to their ability level (students audition in December).

There are summer practices (see calendar). There is band camp two weeks before school starts (August 9th). The school year begins with "marching season" (parade and field), which ends with the Thanksgiving break. We do a Christmas concert in December. We audition in December. The second semester is for concert band and going to district and regional festival and indoor Drums and Guard. April and May are for going on the trip and a spring concert along with the banquet and other year-end activities.

Basically, you will find yourself to be very busy with band during the first three months of the school year. After that, things slow down a great deal. Please see our calendar (www.loaraband.com) for a synopsis of how the year goes.

FOURTH PERIOD COVENANT

Of all of the different parts to the Loara Band program, the centerpiece is the 4th Period Band. Loara's 4th Period Band is among the elite bands in the entire country both in terms of the literature it plays and the quality they produce. There are none finer. Students who accept a position in the 4th Period Band must agree to the following things:

- 4th period band members must go to band camp
- 4th period band members must go on the band trip
- 4th period band members must always keep their band accounts current
- 4th period band members must attend symphonic band camp

Band members who do not wish to go to camp or on the trip should stay in 2nd or 3rd period band.

Parents of band members who accept a position in 4th period band must be supportive of this concept and not use the band to punish the student or affect the student's ability to perform with the band.

THE STUDENT

Students are required to be at all rehearsals and performances. Students are responsible for communicating with their parents and keeping them informed about program events and responsibilities. Students must dedicate themselves to the development and improvement of their musical skills through practice on their own.

Music, friends, dedication, dependability, and integrity are the focus of the program. Students should be interested in working on developing these qualities through practice, good citizenship, a strong work ethic, and acceptance of responsibility.

THE PARENT/FAMILY

Parent involvement is the expectation. Whether through direct participation at booster fundraisers or by "paying rather than working", involvement is key to providing the program for the students.

When parents have questions or concerns, proper protocol should be followed. If you have a concern that is student oriented, the director should be contacted. Other issues have an appropriate booster position to address your question or concern. See our website (www.loaraband.com) for our by-laws, which will outline

our organization's structure and define areas of responsibility for you. Of course, you can always contact the Band Office (714-999-3677)

BAND OFFICE/FAMILY ACCOUNT COORDINATOR

Since 1968, the Loara Band has been fortunate to have a volunteer parent work in the band office. This is an excellent resource for the families of our program.

These parents have always volunteered their time and are in the band office on a daily basis. They are there to answer your calls and help you with questions and concerns. If they don't have the answer you need, they know how to get it for you.

THE LOARA BAND, COLOR GUARD, AND DANCE TEAM BOOSTER CLUB, INC.

The booster club exists to serve and support ALL of the students in the program. Membership in the booster club is free and automatic when your child signs up for the program. The booster club holds regular meetings, which you are encouraged to attend. The booster club is incorporated and is a 501-c3, non-profit and tax-exempt entity in the State of California. Boosters serve and support the needs of the students and are not a policy-making entity. They have autonomy and control over their structure, operating procedures, and the money that is earned through booster sponsored fund-raisers. Instructional staff and student related matters are not under the purview of the booster club.

PARENT REPS

In totality, we are the Loara Band Family. But we are composed of several sub groups. These include the Band, the Color Guard, and the Drumline. Even though the Drumline is a part of the Band, they function on their own during much of the second semester. Each of these groups has a parent representative to the booster board. They advocate for their group and are a major source of communication between the booster club, the program families, and the band office. Without these reps in place and committed the group cannot function!

YOUR FAMILY ACCOUNT

When you become a member of the band program, a "family account" is opened up for you automatically. It is housed in the Charms App. Almost all of your financial transactions with the program will go through your "family account". It is called a "family account" because the money can be used by parents as well as students for trips and camps and anything that is program related.

The family account is there for your program related expenses. You can pay for camps, trips, attire, and even private lessons or instruments through your account. You cannot buy yearbooks, class rings, pay for prom, or other non-program related expenses through your account. You can access all of your information as well as Calendar and News updates through our charms program (More info on a separate sheet).

COMMUNICATION

Communication is one of the most important aspects of a program like ours. The band has developed several ways of communicating with you and keeping you up to date in a timely manner.

General and Booster Board meetings are on the first Wednesday of the month. All meetings are open and everyone is encouraged to attend. Each time we have a performance (other than football games) a flier is produced which includes maps, schedules, and anything else you need to know and placed on the bookshelf by the door. The best source of communication is done through our Charms program. There, I will send weekly updates on Sunday's that outline the upcoming week. It is beyond important that each family member set up a charms account ASAP.

TIME COMMITMENT

There are times when we are very busy, and there are times when we are not. The important thing is that you be aware of the fact that there will be occasions when the demand on your time will be more than you might be used to, and that you should be ready and willing to give the time it takes to be a member of our highly successful program. Perusing a calendar of events for the program will give you a good idea how our year goes. You can do that by accessing the Program's web site at www.loaraband.com and clicking on the calendar page.

We are active throughout the summer, although summer activities are not required until we begin "band camp" (July 31st, 2023). The student section leader will contact you about "summer sectionals". You are encouraged to attend these sectionals unless you are out of town on vacation. They really help give you a head start. About two weeks before school starts, we begin what we call "band camp". All students wishing

to participate in the marching band portion of the program need to attend band camp. There will be more about band camp later in these materials.

Time management becomes an important issue when entering high school. There are so many more school and social activities available to the students than there were in junior high school. The Loara Band program supports students being involved in a variety of activities and structures its program with this in mind. Students are supported in their academic endeavors through an appropriate rehearsal schedule and calendar of events that allows a healthy and well-rounded lifestyle.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

With the passing of Prop 28 in California, we are able to offer you the bulk of the program at NO COST. We still do three fundraisers to make up the rest (fireworks stand, Cow Chip Bingo, Loara Tournament).

Personal items such as shirts, hats, shoes, and trips are the responsibility of the family. Scholarships can be provided and we have a sponsorship form available on our website under the "Sponsor A Saxon" tab.

FUNDRAISING

Booster club fundraisers meet the general needs of the program as represented in the annual budget, and your participation in their efforts is expected.

The mandatory booster club fundraisers that meet the booster budget are detailed in other supplementary materials.

UNIFORMS/ATTIRE

We need to have attire for three different kinds of performances. We need a uniform for marching in competitions, we need something to wear at more informal marching performances, and we need concert attire.

The Band provides the competitive marching uniform. There is a small/ fee for hemming the pants to a uniform length and general uniform maintenance including dry cleaning depending on usage. You must purchase the personal items that you would not want to share with others like shoes, gloves, and socks. The uniform stays at school and is checked out and back in before and after each competitive performance. We dry clean the uniforms in bulk for you, but you pay for the cleaning.

For non-competitive marching events you will need to have the Band's sweatshirt, t-shirt, and hat. These items along with long denim jeans and any kind of shoes are what we wear to many of our more informal performances. The order form for these items will be included with your registration materials.

We wear "black and white" formal attire to concert performances. Students will be given more specific instructions during the second semester, but it's basically semi formal/formal Black and White Concert Dress.

BAND CAMP

Of all the things we do during the year, Band Camp would be the one thing that most of the students would single out as their favorite. This is also where the group bonds and becomes a family. Most of the group's traditions and foundations are established at band camp. Even though there is expense attached to the experience, it is well worth it. Students who do not go to camp take longer to assimilate fully into the group once school starts. By going to camp, your student will begin school with over 100 new friends and a sense of security and belonging that few freshmen experience as they enter high school, not to mention the performing skills they develop and music that is learned at camp. Going to camp in the mountains is not required, but is strongly recommended. Parents wishing to be chaperones at camp just need to contact the band office to get on the list

BAND TRIP

The Band takes a trip most years. Sometimes several. Next to Band Camp, this is their second favorite activity. Everything said about camp goes for the trip as well. Going on the trip is optional as well (except for 4th period band members). All parents have to do to chaperone is let us know (and pay). The trips are usually as far away as we can get on a bus in one day. San Francisco, Phoenix, and Las Vegas and the mountains are regular venues.

BAND AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

The program's philosophy is that high school age students need the opportunity to explore and experience a wide variety of activities. Most band members are involved in other groups and/or organizations.

We consider what you are doing at school to be of the greatest importance. Of course things like your family, religion, and health take priority over anything. Family situations must be of an emergency or tragic nature. Weekend trips to the mountains do not qualify. Religious excuses must be of a dogmatic nature such as religious holidays. Weekend church retreats do not qualify. Health excuses must be serious enough to warrant absence. Runny noses do not qualify. DOCTOR APPOINTMENTS MUST BE SCHEDULED AROUND REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES.

For exceptions to be warranted, we must hear from you in a timely fashion. Letting us know of conflicts at the last minute prevents us from being able to cover your absence and causes problems for the rest of the group. In general, two weeks' notice is required.

GRADES

Per AUHSD policy, students must maintain a 2.0 GPA at each grading period (quarter) to be eligible to participate in any school activity. A GPA below 2.0 does not remove the student from the class, but from participating in extra and co-curricular activities. Raising the GPA on the following report card reinstates your ability to participate. There is a one time only opportunity to use "probation".

WHAT CLASSES TO SIGN UP FOR

All freshmen and sophomores sign up for PE/MARCHING BAND. Enrolling in PE/MARCHING BAND gives you the PE credits you need for graduation. Students signing up for PE/MARCHING BAND do not have to take a regular PE class during the day.

Freshmen who wish to participate in the competitive parade and field bands should sign up for CONCERT BAND. Freshmen percussionists (drummers) who wish to participate in the competitive parade and field bands should sign up for PERCUSSION 2.

Sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have auditioned and can play their major scales should sign up for SYMPHONIC BAND. Sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have auditioned and can play their harmonic minor scales should sign up for WIND ENSEMBLE. Color Guard members all sign up for MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS.

Our website has a section dedicated to the Band Family "Pathway" and this is your best resource to plan your four years at Loara. Following this pathway and getting good grades will get you into the best colleges in the country.

The most important thing is that you consider the classes you are taking from the time you are a freshman (7th grade would be better) to make sure that you are taking all of the classes you need and are taking them in the correct year so you don't find yourself in your Junior and Senior year behind in your classes with no chance for taking electives or enrolling in advanced courses.