

## **For: New Band Parents**

### **Tips from a few past music parents, that were confused new band parents at one time:**

#### **How to know what's happening in Ferris Band:**

First, don't freak out that the Music Department yearly calendar has so many dates listed! Many of those days will not include your student, and there are a lot of things listed that will happen during zero hour or during the school day. You don't have to put ALL the dates on your family calendar!

Read your email, visit the band website, get on remind (both the Ferris Music Parent Association, and the directors), read newsletters sent by the FMPA Secretary through Mail Chimp (automatically signed up when your student is part of the program), follow the Ferris Music Parent Association Facebook Page, read the handbook.

*\*FMPA (Ferris Music Parent Association) is a parent group that helps directors in whatever they need, and the group participates in helping students raise funds for their music department expenses (trips, retreats, camp, etc.). Meetings are open to all parents and are held every couple of months during the school year. There is a board consisting of the three Ferris Music Department Directors (band, choir, orchestra), and four music department parents: President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Fundraising. FMPA is also the group that manages the money for the directors and students. FMPA collects payments, keeps track of fundraising, and handles payments for activities. All music students are served by FMPA.*

#### **Groups under the band umbrella / How do I know what group I'm in? Here are the band options:**

- Drum Line: no audition necessary
- Advanced Percussion: Audition only
- Concert Band: no audition necessary
- Wind Ensemble: Audition only
- Jazz Band: Auditions happen only if necessary, meets before school Tues-Fri. at 7am.
- Jazz Orchestra (AKA: JEFJO – pronounced "Jeff-Joe"): Audition only, meets before school M-F at 7am.

**How to letter in Band?** The more music activities you do, the more points you receive. If you meet the minimum number of points per year, you will letter. Play at all pep-band games, attend non-school concerts, private lessons, playing in extra groups outside of school, playing in pit for the school musical, competing in Solo & Ensemble, Spokane Youth Symphony, etc. A form to help you keep track of activities will be provided.

**Band Camp** – kids go up to Camp Spalding and learn all their pep-band music, Aug. 21-23. Any band kid can go, camp costs \$160. This is a fun time where new kids get to meet everyone. Two nights without great cell service! The kids meet at Ferris and take a bus up to camp. If your student has a conflict with scheduling, parents can drive them up to camp late or pick them up early. Camp Spalding is run by fabulous people! Your student will be well looked after and cared for, they have great food (and will help out with special dietary needs). There will be lots of staff and parent supervision, and a lifeguard at the beach. Students can do all the outdoor activities like kayaking, swimming, volleyball, capture the flag, etc. They will make lots of friends and become part of the band community before school even starts!

**Pep band** - plays at football and basketball games. Band camp is when students learn the music.

***Tips for new Band Parents continued:***

**Music Parent Meeting** – In September there will be a special Music Department Parent Meeting. Parents learn about program, volunteer opportunities, fund raising to help you/your student pay their music activities. You can get an updated yearlong calendar, sign-up for remind with your director to get last-minute updates, make sure your contact information is accurate.

**Fall Concert** – all band groups perform (drum line, advanced percussion, jazz band, JEFJO, concert band, wind ensemble). Concert is late in October.

**Winter Concert**- some groups from Choir, Band, and Orchestra perform. This concert is so popular with both the Ferris community and the Spokane community that tickets are sold (with proceeds used in place of music department fees), **there are actually two concerts that are identical and are given two nights in a row**. Tickets go on sale just after Thanksgiving, and will sell out quickly! Please be aware and watch for details from the directors and FMPA. Concerts are late in December.

**Retreats** – some of the music groups go on 2-3 day retreats outside of Spokane (Typically at Ross Point or Camp Spalding). Students may get to work with guest artists and/or guest conductors, and spend a lot of time working hard on performance music. Advanced Percussion, Wind Ensemble, and Jazz are groups that typically go on the weekend retreats. Retreats occur in January.

**Solo and Ensemble Contest** – Regional event occurs in February, at a high school in Spokane. Any student that wants to prepare solo music may participate. Students sometimes also organize small ensembles (such as duets, or quartets), or play in larger ensembles. There is a need to register, which happens late in the fall. If a student or a group wins their category, they are invited to participate in the State Solo and Ensemble Contest. This one is in Ellensburg, in April.

**All-State and All-Northwest** – students may audition (via recording) in the fall, to earn a spot in either of these groups. Band, Choir, and Orchestra students all may participate. The spring events take place in different cities, depending on the year.

**Feeder school concerts**- In the spring the middle school and elementary schools in the Ferris district will have a concert. The middle school group will play a few songs, the high school will play a couple songs, then the elementary schools will come play. This is a chance for the elementary schools to hear what the middle school sounds like, and the middle school kids to hear what the high schoolers sound like.

**Lilac parade practices** – The week before the Lilac Parade practices will be in the evenings, 6:30-8:00pm. Any band member can participate in the parade. Each night will have a dress-up theme, with the seniors deciding on the themes.

**Awards Concert** – happens in May. The choir, band, and orchestra groups meet separately prior to the evening concert and hand out their letters and some of their awards (all students will attend, parents are also invited to the first part of the night if they would like to attend). At 7pm, everyone heads to the auditorium for the main concert and additional awards.

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***Tips from a few past music parents, that were confused new band parents at one time:***

***Ask questions! Attend meetings! Read emails! Connect on Facebook! We have all been new parents, with lots of questions and would love to help you navigate your freshman year of music successfully 😊***