



Central Bucks West Marching Band

Fall 2020

Return to Play Information: Fall 2020

We are excited to announce plans for the 2020-2021 CBWMB! The following information is provided below. Don't hesitate to reach out with your questions or concerns and we will do our best to provide responses as soon as possible.

- Season Overview
- Band Camp
- Safety protocols
- Registration
- Q&A responses

Season Overview

Although this season will undoubtedly look and feel different than those of the past, we will still spend time together in rehearsal working with your dedicated staff to develop the talents of each and every member of the CBWMB.

The ensemble will focus on our playing and marching fundamentals, stand tunes, and portions of our show music. Percussionists will also play cadences, stand jams, and percussion ensemble pieces. Color Guard members will also learn spinning and dancing choreography. Although we will not be able to prepare a "traditional" field show, we still plan to put together a flexible field performance similar to the pre-game show we have done in the past. We also plan to prepare some parade-style performance routine that would be more involved than marching in straight lines like we have done in previous parades.

Assuming we find safe ways to navigate our camps and a return to school, we will seek appropriate performance opportunities for the group. Due to occupancy restrictions, these will most likely will not include football games, but we will seek opportunities to play in the community and for our school. We will also leave open the possibility of continuing rehearsals and performances longer into the winter and spring to allow students to have a more complete Marching Band experience.

We will provide everyone with a complete schedule for the entire season as soon as possible. Our traditional participation expectations (see band handbook) remain in place, but we are aware that the current circumstances surrounding Covid-19 and the ever-changing school guidelines may impact our students' ability to attend every event. We plan to be as flexible as we can with attendance this season to account for these uncertain times.

August Band Camp (two weeks)

Monday, August 10 - Thursday, August 13

Monday, August 17 - Thursday, August 20

Each section/group will follow a specific schedule. Please see attached document for details. All activities will run within the safety plans established by the district. As such, almost all rehearsals during camp will take place in small ensemble groups. All live instruction at the school will occur in two-hour blocks that include check-in, set-up, and cleaning/sanitation. There will also be a 30-minute break between all rehearsal blocks to allow adequate time for transportation and minimize overlapping groups of students.

During the first week, everyone will engage in at least one in-person rehearsal session and another virtually connected rehearsal. Some groups may have additional virtual rehearsals. During the second week, everyone will engage in at least two in-person rehearsal sessions and a virtually connected session. During both weeks of camp all outdoor rehearsals are subject to cancellation in the event of extreme weather. Indoor rehearsal space is limited and it is not feasible to move a previously scheduled outdoor rehearsal indoors. Specifics about what Virtual Rehearsals will look like (as well as Teams invites) will be provided in the coming days.

A copy of the schedule is attached to this communication and can also be found on our band's website.

Safety Procedures

Safety is essential for the successful return to play for all athletes, Marching Band participants, coaches, instructors, and the general school population. This is an unprecedented time, and our dedication to each other and the ensemble will be tested as never before.

- The Marching Band safety plan and the CB athletic safety plan are available on [our website](#).
- All staff members and essential volunteers will complete COVID-19 safety training provided by the school district.
- All participating students must review the safety protocols and complete a [Student Pledge form](#).
- All staff and students will wear a mask whenever possible throughout rehearsal. When playing, wind instruments will have bell covers or sleeves. These will be made available by the band program, but must be purchased individually.
- [Instrument Cleaning Guidelines](#) provided by the National Association for Music Education will be adhered to throughout all activities. Specific reminders of these procedures will be shared as our first rehearsals approach. Instruments and equipment will be cleaned regularly.

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- Prior to **every rehearsal**, students/parents must complete a [Symptom Check Form](#) via MS Forms. This electronic form will be made available on the website and via email. Attendance will be taken every day and compliance with the symptom form will be part of the check-in process every day.
- Students must have their own water bottles. There will be no community water jugs.
- Students will not share instruments. Students using school owned instruments will not be asked to share them with another student.
- Students will not share food. Snacks brought for the time between rehearsal sessions will be consumed only by the person bringing the food. Students may gather outside, but must maintain 6-feet between each other. There will be no organized indoor congregating until further notice. Students may NOT leave campus to get food!
- Students who are showing any symptoms of Covid-19 may not attend rehearsal. It is very important that everyone participating understand that the health of our students and our community is our first priority. There will be no negative ramifications for missing practice due to virus symptoms or virus related concerns.

Registration and Participation Fee

At this point, everyone should have completed the [CBWMB Registration Form](#).

In recognition that this is a highly unusual year, both in that we will likely not be able to offer all of the aspects of a traditional season, and that many families are not in the position to invest the normal registration fee of \$225 at this time, we have decided to move forward with a **voluntary registration fee** at a reduced amount of \$125. This will help us to cover critical expenses, including the costs of maintaining our talented and dedicated staff and emphasizing the most important and intensive instructional opportunity of band camp.

Further, if you are willing and able to do so, we are offering an option to sponsor a second student that may not be able to pay for an additional \$125. If necessary, we can provide confirmation of a charitable donation for tax purposes.

Percussionists will be asked to pay a \$20 stick/mallet fee to cover the cost of providing each individual student the appropriate sticks and mallets required for rehearsal and performance. Color guard members may require gloves.

All correspondence regarding finances remain confidential and are reviewed only by the organization director and treasurer.

The invoice for the Registration Fee can be found at the end of this document and has also been attached to this email.

Additional Questions and Answers

What is the after school rehearsal schedule and what will happen if my son/daughter doesn't have a ride?

The district has said that participation in extracurricular activities will continue as long as the district can sustain a hybrid schedule. Currently the hybrid schedule calls for students attending school on Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday. We understand that this will create complications for some families. Currently, we are focused on providing a camp experience that is as complete as possible and we will work on an after school plan as soon as more details from the district are available. Nonetheless, the staff and executive board are well aware that flexibility is critical to a successful experience. Ultimately, we believe that the students engaged in Marching Band are going to make every effort to participate to the fullest possible extent as a way to maintain a sense of normalcy and connection with their peers and the band program.

How will students be transported to and from events?

Right now, there are no plans to travel to and from events. If we are able to safely open schools and community spread of the virus remains minimal, we will explore safe transportation options to participate in appropriate and authentic performance opportunities.

How does a 250-person event limit prohibit the participation of the band at football games?

There are approximately 70 players on our football team. Some visiting teams have as many as 90-100 players. There are 10-12 coaches per team. There are an additional 10 people involved as officials and game management staff. With cheerleaders and a limited band playing, there would be no parents at the game. While the band obviously adds a very important element to the game, for whom would the band perform if there is no audience? This isn't meant to diminish the team's appreciation for our band – the West Football team and Athletic Department has always been supportive of the Band. We have been communicating with coaches and the Athletic Director about alternative performance possibilities that we will assess as this situation develops.

How will students wear masks and play their instruments?

Preliminary findings of an important study on the aerosol spread of band members playing wind instruments was recently released. The findings encouraged players using masks with a flap that allowed the instrument to fit between folds of a mask while playing. This should be encouraged if such a mask is available. In addition to face masks, there are bell covers and instrument shields being developed by our uniform manufacturer. We are currently arranging for the availability of these shields and expect participating wind players to purchase a shield. Each item costs approximately \$10 per shield.

Is there a way to keep our students socially & musically engaged throughout the year?

We believe that if schools can sustain a safe hybrid schedule that our Concert, Symphonic, and Jazz Ensembles, as well as the Marching Band can continue successfully. We will consider opportunities to continue the Marching Band throughout the winter and spring to provide the fullest opportunities available for our kids. However, these will be balanced with other activities in the building, including winter/spring athletics, theater productions, etc.

If the school moves to a virtual format is it possible to continue producing performance videos of the Marching Band or rehearse using apps like a capella, etc.?

Would it be possible to use this opportunity to have all 3 high school bands play together?

The already positive relationships between the three high school bands in our district are stronger than ever. Our directors have worked together at every step of this return to Marching Band activities. The directors are well aware that a collaboration of the three programs would be a positive experience for our students and our community and will pursue such a collaboration if we can safely do so.

If anyone in our household has travelled to a state on the Pennsylvania's travel restrictions, is my son or daughter allowed to participate in practice?

According to our health and safety plan, if a student or member of the student's household has travelled to a state identified on the Pennsylvania travel restriction list, then that student cannot participate in practice until the 14-day quarantine is complete. Currently, the states on that list include: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming. Please note that the list is subject to change.

How will rehearsal spaces be cleaned between rehearsals?

The facilities will be cleaned by the custodial staff following the protocols provided in the Central Bucks Health and Safety Plan approved on July 21. During the 30-minute break between student rehearsal blocks, the staff will use appropriate cleaning supplies to clean high frequency touch points.

What if there's bad weather? Can the rehearsals be moved indoors?

Unfortunately inclement weather will cancel outdoor practices. We cannot move the entire group indoors at this time. If we have the opportunity to reevaluate the protocol later in the season, we will certainly do what we can to rehearse as regularly as possible. If there is threatening weather in the forecast, the staff will make every effort possible to communicate changes in the rehearsal plan with as much notice as possible.

Will there still be Picture Day? Will we wear uniforms for our pictures?

Yes! We are working with the photographer to arrange for a "composite" picture in which everyone's portrait appears in a mosaic, kind of like your elementary school class photo. We will definitely wear uniforms for the photo as well.

Will there be a Picnic or Preview Night performance this year?

At this time, we are unable to host the band picnic due to restrictions on large gatherings. We DO hope to hold a preview performance, but it will not occur during Band Camp, as it usually would. We will keep everyone informed and up to date once the full fall schedule has been approved by administration.