



UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL BAND

THIS
ISSUE

LaunchED@Home

Band Face-to-Face

The Locker Room

Start of the School Year

FROM THE DESK OF MR. BROWN

Although I've dropped in from time to time throughout the summer, checking out instruments or doing equipment inventory, today was my first full day "back" in the band room. The state of the room can best be described as surreal... everything is right where we left it back in March, on the first day of spring break (which ironically happened to be Friday the 13th), from which we never came back. In a normal year, we would have just wrapped up our first week of band camp with a full music ensemble of the opener, but this is not going to be a normal year.

I am sure many of you are feeling a lot of disappointment about band, in a year when disappointment already seems to be one of the prevailing experiences. However, back in the band office today, Mr. Willis and I had our first substantial conversation about some of the things we will be able to do, and I did begin to recover just a twinge of excitement as we started brainstorming. This year may be different, but I encourage everyone to look at it as an opportunity to explore our activity from some different angles.

"I used to think," said Sam, "that adventures were things the wonderful folk of the stories went out and looked for, because they wanted them, because they were exciting and life was a bit dull, a kind of a sport, as you might say. But that's not the way of it with the tales that really mattered, or the ones that stay in the mind. Folk seem to have been just landed in them, usually - their paths were laid that way, as you put it. But I expect they had lots of chances, like us, of turning back, only they didn't. And if they had, we shouldn't know, because they'd have been forgotten. We hear about those as just went on." – J. R. R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings

I, for one, am looking forward to many adventures this year!



LEADERSHIP MEETING

The band directors met with our student leadership team last week after the announcement about marching band. Although everyone was sad and disappointed, we all agreed it was the right decision. Most of the conversation focused on staying positive and discussing some of the possibilities the coming year may bring. We talked about the importance of interacting not just with each other, but with the bands from other schools, and are looking at ways to do this. Stay tuned!

THE FIRST WEEK

For the first two weeks of school (August 10 – 20), everybody, including those who chose the Face-to-Face option, will be doing LaunchED. Here are a few thoughts for these first two weeks:

Expect technical difficulties. OCPS has never done online learning on this scale before.

Expect your teachers to be figuring this out as we go along. We have never done this before, either!

Expect all the typical announcements, safety drills, and administrative stuff that usually comes with the first week of school.

If you are in the wrong band class, please email Mr. Brown right away so that we can communicate with guidance and get it fixed.

THE LAUNCH@HOME OPTION

The Launch@Home “Innovative” plan seems primarily designed for lecture-format classes. How will this work for band classes?

Here’s what we are expecting at the moment. Our ensemble classes will be focusing primarily on solo literature at the beginning of the year. Most days, your band class time slot will be your designated personal practice session. We recommend having your instrument assembled and ready to go so that you can maximize your practice time. The band directors will connect with the whole class weekly to discuss music selection, practice strategies, and performance techniques. Students will then have scheduled one-on-one sessions with a band director to assess progress and get feedback.

The following classes will be taught this way:

- Concert Band
- Symphonic Band
- Wind Ensemble
- Jazz Ensemble
- Big Band
- Percussion Ensemble (all levels)
- Steel Drums

Music History will be livestreamed like most other classes. IB Music may require some after school meetings so that students can access special programs and equipment.

THE FACE-TO-FACE OPTION

For students who will be returning to campus on August 21, band is going to look rather different. Here is what you should expect on a day-to-day basis.

- Upon arrival in the band room, you will get your instrument.
- Once a week, a band director will livestream announcements and lessons both to the students who are physically present and students who are attending via LaunchED. On these days, students who are present face-to-face will sit in the classroom spaced as far apart as possible.
- We will not be playing instruments in the band room. Most days, you will take your music, a stand, and your instrument in its case, and spread out outside to practice individually. Once in your individual practice area, you can remove your face-covering and practice.
- When class is over, you will put your instrument back in its case, replace your face-covering, and come back into the band room.
- Throughout the year, there will be no sharing of instruments.

BAND LOCKER ROOM

The band locker room will be open on Monday, August 10 and Tuesday, August 11 from 2:30 pm until 5:00 pm. If you have instruments or personal items, please come and clear them out!

The locker room will be limited to one student at a time and will have a clearly marked "in" and "out" door.

At dawn on Wednesday, August 12, the locker room will be purged. Everything inside becomes the property of the University High School Band.

MUSIC FOLDERS

All music folders should be in the band room. If you have a music folder in your position, please bring it to school and place it in the music folder cabinet.



We would like to give a special shout-out to **Rob and Rachel Cassidy**, who have provided the band with a great deal of medical and sanitization supplies to help keep our students safe.

This year will certainly be an adventure and we will most likely have more information for you at the end of teacher planning this week. Stay patient and positive but be ready to work just as hard as ever to make another great year for the University Band!


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