



**The Plymouth-Canton Educational
Park**

High School Band Program

Student & Parent/Booster Handbook

Version 12042009

Introduction

The Plymouth-Canton Education Park (“PCEP”) is a unique combination of three high schools on one campus, encompassing an area of 305-acres. While each school is accredited by the state and offers an extensive curriculum of study to its individual student bodies, the campus boasts one unified instrumental arts program. This instrumental arts program, shared by the three high schools, currently consists of the following:

- Curricular Programs:
 - Varsity Band
 - Concert Band
 - Symphony Band
 - Wind Ensemble
 - Directed Studies Classes
 - Orchestra
 - Percussion Ensemble
- Extra-curricular:
 - Marching Band
 - Winter Guard
 - Winter Percussion
 - Pep Band

These programs are only a part of a broader Fine Arts program offered in the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools (“PCCS”). The successes of the instrumental arts programs have consistently rated it one of the best in the state. The marching band, winter guard and winter percussion programs are nationally recognized, competitive programs whose awards place them consistently in the top of their respective classifications.

This handbook is designed to give parent and student a general overview of these programs and to outline the level of support needed in order to maintain them. There is additional information regarding the Plymouth-Canton Music Boosters, the parent support organization that works in support of all PCEP instrumental arts programs.

Curricular Programs

Placement in curricular programs is based, in part, on individual auditions. Audition sheet music is made available prior to the end of each academic school year. Specific instructions concerning date/time/logistics for the auditions are made available prior to scheduled auditions. Students will need to reach out to their current band director(s) to obtain this information and further instructions.

Varsity Band

This ensemble/class is designed to further enhance a general musical skill level of band student(s) through chosen literature, fundamentals, and exposure to various professional and collegiate ensembles.

Concert Band

This ensemble/class is designed to further enhance a moderate musical skill level of band student(s) through chosen literature, fundamentals, and exposure to various professional and collegiate ensembles. This ensemble depends on the successful efforts of each individual to do their part to flourish. We ask that every individual contribute his or her part.

Symphony Band

This ensemble/class is designed to further enhance more intermediate musical skill levels of band student(s) through chosen literature, fundamentals, and exposure to various professional and collegiate ensembles. This ensemble is generally considered the final step toward development for inclusion in Wind Ensemble.

Wind Ensemble

This premier ensemble/class is designed to further enhance advanced musical skill levels of band student(s) through chosen literature, fundamentals, and exposure to various professional and collegiate ensembles. Maintaining membership in this course requires extensive effort.

Throughout the school year, the above ensembles will participate in the following activities:

- Concerts – several throughout the year with schedule to be determined by directors.
- Solo/Ensemble Festivals – students will receive instruction from directors concerning sign-up, dates, etc.
- Community Performances – occasionally, corporate members from our community offer PCEP bands the opportunity to perform. These are also generally regarded as fundraising opportunities.

Parental Support

Parent support is needed throughout the school year to support the curricular programs. Just some of the ways in which parents can lend their support of these programs include:

- Chaperone for concerts and field trips – the music booster organization (PCMB) will generally appoint a “Chaperone Coordinator” for the year. This person will work with the band directors to determine what events require parent chaperones and will then work to coordinate the required number of parents to assist. Chaperone duties may include riding the bus as well as general supervision of our students.
- Private lessons – Many students take private lessons on their instruments both in the summer and during the school year. Private lessons are highly encouraged as they can help students understand advanced rhythms, develop better technique and tone, and enhance music enjoyment. You or your child should inquire with the band directors for assistance in getting started. Some upperclassmen who qualify may be able to give lessons to Beginning Band students. Students who take private lessons usually develop into some of Plymouth-Canton’s most proficient performers and leaders.
- Transportation to events that are not facilitated by PCCS school busses – occasionally, there are events to which school or charter bus transportation is not provided. There will be communication regarding these circumstances, if they do occur, and parents will be asked to help with transporting the students to, and from, the event. Required paperwork will be provided, as needed.
- Participation in attending all events open to the public – there’s nothing better in showing our students how much we support them than being there when they’re up front and center in performance. School calendars are updated regularly with dates and times of events.

There are more opportunities for parental involvement in support of the extra-curricular activities. These will be discussed later.

Extra-Curricular Programs

Marching Band

The Plymouth-Canton Marching Band (PCMB) is a nationally-recognized marching band program. Its membership is open to all interested students. There is no audition required for the instrumental sections of the program. The color guard section routinely conducts annual tryouts prior to the commencement of each year's program. Details will be provided by color guard director.

Since appearing on the competitive circuits in the mid 1970's, the Plymouth Canton Marching Band has become one of the most successful programs in the state's history. The program is a member of the Michigan Competing Bands Association as well as Bands of America. Within the state of Michigan, the PCMB has been a state champion 21 times, an honor shared with no other groups in Michigan, (both Fine Arts and Athletics). Upon entering the Bands of America in 1986, Plymouth-Canton has been a National Finalist (Top 12) all but two years since 1988. The band has also been to the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl Tournament of Bands in 1992 & 1996, winning the prestigious competition both years.

Outside of the competition, the band has had the distinction of playing for Presidents Ronald Reagan, and George H. W. Bush, in 1992, the 1973 Rose Bowl Parade, and many other prominent performing opportunities.

Winter Guard

When art and athletics meet, the combination can be dazzling, which is exactly the effect Plymouth-Canton winter guard strives to achieve. Using music, colorful flags, rifles, sabers and dance, the PCEP winter guard offers up a delightful feast for the senses.

The Winter Guard is an extracurricular activity that runs December thru April. It is open to all students at PCEP. The winter guard is a member of the Michigan Color Circuit and Winter Guard International. Past winter guard ensembles have been state champions and national finalists.

Winter Percussion

Also known as Indoor Percussion, this sport combines the elements of music performance, marching and theater creating a one-of-a-kind ensemble. Winter Drumline consists of the marching percussion (or battery) and front ensemble (or pit) sections of a marching band or drum corps. The activity is sometimes referred to as percussion theater.

Indoor Percussion has been in existence since the early 1990's and membership in the various competitive circuits brings together more than 170 percussion ensembles from 31 states. The PCEP winter drumline has earned state championships and has been a national finalist.

Pep Band

The PCEP Pep Band performs at home football games for the three high schools at the Park. Essentially, this means the PEP band will be performing each Friday night.

Membership in the PEP Band is divided into two groups: Pep Band “A” and Pep Band “B”. Friday night performances, then, are alternated between the two groups. Directors will assign the students to their respective groups.

A Year of Events and Activities

January	District Solo & Ensemble (could occur in February) Variety IS Winter Programs in full swing
February	State Solo & Ensemble (will be in March if District is held in February) Winter Programs continue competitions and practices
March	Marching Band new member recruitment in full swing District Band Festival
April	State Band Festival Marching band practices start up
May	Memorial Day Parade for Marching Band Auditions for concert program placements Summer Uniform Fitting for incoming freshmen Final concert for curricular programs
June	Summer mini-camp is held the first week after school year completes Liberty Fest Parade – Canton
July	Independence Day Parade July marching band mini-camp
August	August mini-camp August away band camp Fitting for competition marching band uniforms Fitting for concert program tuxedos and dresses
September	Marching Band competitions After-school practices
October	More Marching Band competitions Annual Great Lakes Invitational (“GLI”)
November	State Marching Band Championship Nationals Marching Band Championship End of year Bandquet
December	Winter programs start up – audition process to be advised each year

Throughout the year, there will be major and minor fundraising events. These events are chaired by music booster members and provide the organization an opportunity to earn much needed funds to sponsor the extra-curricular activities.

General Information

The Plymouth-Canton Music Boosters (“PCMB”)

PCMB is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose members serve to support the curricular and extra-curricular band programs at PCEP. The organization operates under a set of bylaws and is governed by a Board of Directors who are elected to their posts by the boosters. The general election is typically conducted during the November booster meeting.

What is my role as a Parent Booster?

PCMB is nationally known as a very large and tremendously active booster organization. The hard work, dedication and tireless commitment of students and staff are possible because of the support of the booster group.

Your primary responsibility as a booster is to do whatever is necessary that allows the students, the staff and the Directors to focus on developing the best musicians and artists possible. This may mean volunteering, fundraising, helping to recruit new members, attending booster meetings, chaperoning and much more. It takes many people working behind the scenes to support programs of the caliber of those at the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park.

Please help your child to be on time (or early) for all functions. They will be working very hard, so encourage them to be organized and to take care of themselves. They will need to let off steam and frustrations occasionally, so be supportive and understanding. If you have problems, bring them up at booster meetings or speak with one of the board members, instead of adding to your child’s stress.

As a booster, we ask everyone to volunteer many times during the season for a variety of things. This is your chance to help the band and it gives you the opportunity to meet the parents of your student’s friends and associates.

Most jobs involve a one-time commitment and a variety of skills is needed. Some of the jobs involve sewing for the Color Guard and uniform repair, being a chaperone on the bus, for a party, or as a hall monitor, helping with the equipment and prop crew, working at the State Show or at Variety Is.

The boosters also host a local competition known as the Great Lakes Invitational or GLI, and we need help with everything from snack bar and parking to band guides and room attendants. We guarantee you will enjoy yourself. Remember, your help and support will assist your student to be all that he/she can be.

Communication

PCMB recognizes the importance of communication, especially to a group as large as the booster organization. As members, you can access key information via the following means:

- Attendance at monthly booster meetings. These meetings are typically conducted on

the first Tuesday of each month and are located in the band room.

- Attendance at monthly board meetings. The PCMB Board of Directors meets on a monthly basis and these meetings are open to the public.
- PCMB Website – the website address is: www.pcmb.net. The User Name is PCMB and the password is mbr99. The website is updated regularly to keep on top on current events within the organization and the programs
- PCMB online Calendar – this is updated weekly, if not more. Refer to this (via the website) to see important dates for practices, competitions, booster meetings, board meetings, fundraising events, etc.
- Fanouts – you can sign up for fanouts when you visit the PCMB website. Fanouts are electronic mailings that are designed to provide real-time news and information that you need NOW.
- Newsletters – the PCMB Newsletter is produced monthly and distributed at every booster meeting. Thereafter, it is posted to the PCMB website.

Parent Volunteer Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities that parents get each year to volunteer and help where needed. From limited involvement, to positions on the Board, there is something for everyone:

- Board Membership
- Equipment Crew
- Fundraising Committee
- Alumni Development
- Finance Committee
- Sewing Committee
- Chaperone
- GLI
- Uniforms
- Audio/Video
- Recruiting Committee
- Scholarship Committee
- Band Camp
- Parades
- Webmaster
- Bandquet
- Nursing
- SCRIP Coordinator

Participation in other Activities

Although participation in any of the PCEP instrumental curricular and extra-curricular can be both challenging and time-consuming, it IS possible to participate in marching band, for example, as well as any sport or other extra-curricular activity. The students at PCEP are encouraged to enjoy a completely well-rounded high school experience.

Students are urged to speak with the band and/or program directors at PCEP prior to making commitments. Everyone wants students to be involved in all they desire. However, the last thing we want is for anyone to feel stretched and overextended.

Practices

All student members are expected to be at all practices unless special permission is arranged. Permission must be obtained from the program director at least two weeks in advance. The appropriate form can be found under the Member Resource Section of our website. The practice schedules will be entered into our online calendar by the program director(s). Go to www.pcmb.net and click the link for the calendar to stay abreast of changes in schedule. Your child will also be instructed by their directors and section leaders for schedules and changes. But, a good parent backup is always a good call.

Memorial Day Parade

Every year the marching band participates in the Plymouth Memorial Day Parade. All current members of the year's band along with new incoming eighth graders participate. (Graduating seniors can opt to wear the old yellow competition uniform). Parade-day itineraries will be made available the week before Memorial Day.

Liberty Fest Parade

This parade, in Canton, usually falls on a Saturday in mid-June. Like the other parades, a full itinerary and parade route will be published the week prior to the parade.

Fourth of July Parade

We're back in Plymouth for the Independence Day Parade. This has customarily been a very early-morning start. Watch for the itinerary.

Football Games

The Pep band performs most Fridays at Plymouth, Salem and Canton home football games. Pep band jackets are made available for the band members to wear during the games. Other dress codes will be communicated. For several games each season, the full marching band will perform. The schedule will be determined at the start of each year.

Mini-camps

Mini-camps are one-week sessions of practices that are conducted at the high school. Traditionally, there is a one-week mini-camp in June, July and August and they are an extremely important part of marching band. This is where everything begins musically. There are sectional rehearsals where much personal attention is provided. This is also, where basic marching instruction begins – known fondly by all band members as “basics”. The practices cover long hours, but this is typical for any competing marching band. Much learning is accomplished here and new friendships are formed. The July mini-camp generally has adjusted hours to accommodate students who are attending summer school classes.

Summer Band Camp

Summer Band camp (a.k.a. “away camp”) is where your child really becomes a part of the unit. Where possible, the camp will be conducted offsite somewhere in the state. For many years, PCMB has conducted away camp in northern Michigan.

Attendance at away camp is mandatory because the intense instruction that takes place at camp cannot be duplicated. Each band section has its own instructor to work on music skills. Other instructors introduce the marching drill. Full band rehearsals bring this together so that by week's end the students are ready to perform a major part of this season's show for their parents.

Key information regarding itineraries, transportation, packing requirements and general information will be distributed to parents and students well in advance of this event.

Competitions

As mentioned, the marching band, as well as the winter guard and winter percussion ensembles, participates in competitive activities.

The marching band competes in the following circuits:

- MCBA – Michigan Competing Band Association (www.themcba.org). MCBA sponsors several in-state competitions during September through early-November, culminating in the state finals.
- BOA – Bands of America (www.musicforall.org). BOA is the national circuit and the PCMB has historically competed in a regional BOA competition in route to competition at the Grand National Finals in Indianapolis. The finals are usually in mid-November

The Winter Guard and Winter Percussion ensembles compete in the following circuits:

- MCGC – Michigan Color Guard Circuit (www.mcgc.net). Like MCBA, the MCGC is the statewide competitive circuit. Competitions will begin in January and run through March/April. State finals are held late March/early April.
- WGI – Winter Guard International (www.wgi.org). WGI represents the national competitive circuit. The PCEP Winter Guard and Winter Percussion ensembles may compete in a regional competition (generally held in either Ohio or Indiana) and also compete in national finals (generally held in Dayton, OH)

Competition schedules are published as soon as they are available. For days on which a competition is scheduled, a complete itinerary will be made available that includes time for practices, meals, transportation, etc.

Usually, travel to local competitions is by school bus. Chaperones and volunteer nurses are always with the students on competition day.

Travel to regional and national competitions may be by school bus or chartered busses. Chaperones and nurses also ride along.

Information surrounding accommodations for the students will be published well in advance of the event. The students have stayed at schools, YMCA's, and other similar places. Parents who are chaperones will stay with the kids. Parents who do not chaperone are responsible for acquiring their own accommodations. In all cases, parents are responsible for the purchase of tickets for admission to the competitions.

If the students are required to miss school to attend these competitions, the absences will be deemed as "excused." Instructions for this will be provided.

Etiquette

It is imperative that all PCMB parent boosters maintain proper etiquette while attending local, regional, and national competitions. The competitive circuits through which the PCEP ensembles compete, all have strict guidelines surrounding this issue. You are urged to review these guidelines prior to attending any competition. Please be supportive of the other schools. Good sportsmanship is always the best option. Give each competing ensemble a standing ovation after their performance. Make all your comments positive.

Other Trips

To aid in providing an overall more enriching experience for our students, there may periodically be opportunities to travel on other school-sponsored trips. The program directors will make these determinations.

The PCMB will be asked to support these trips through additional fundraising to help offset the costs of the trips. Details will be provided concerning these opportunities as soon as they are determined.

Uniforms

The marching band uniforms consist of the following:

- football games – casual attire and Pep band jacket.
- competitions – grey uniforms. The Color Guard uniform will be designed during the season to match the theme of the show.
- Parades – summer uniforms

Concert program students will wear formal tuxedos or gowns for their concert performances.

Winter Guard and Winter Percussion ensembles will design their uniforms each season that will be specific to the respective themes of their shows.

Information surrounding uniform design, selection, fitting and distribution will be published as it becomes available.

What will participation cost?

A major reason for the success of our programs is our ability to raise money. These funds provide our students with the best in musical and artistic direction, staff support and equipment. Money is certainly the lifeblood of our organization. A predominantly sizable portion of the funds raised go to supporting extra-curricular programs in that the curricular programs are already substantially supported through the school district's budget allocations to the instrumental department. It takes a good mix of creativity and hard work to raise the funds sufficient to cover the costs associated with running these programs.

A schedule of fundraising events will be distributed. Updates throughout the year surrounding new fundraising events will be distributed. Each PCMB booster family is expected to support the efforts of the organization through fundraising. A brief list of major fundraisers to which PCMB has sponsored include the following:

- Winter Program Show, hosted by PCMB, at Plymouth High School
- Variety IS
- Spring Craft Show
- Great Lakes Invitational – Marching band competition, hosted by PCMB, at PCEP
- Winter Craft Show
- SCRIP fundraising – conducted throughout the year.

Program costs are calculated per program and are based, in large part, on the budget that is prepared. Based on costs anticipated to run the program, the PCMB Board of Directors, via its Finance Committee, will determine the means through which the costs of programs will be covered.

This will be through a combination of the following:

- Member fees
- Fundraising revenue and allocations
- District funds

PCMB Board establishes an annual budget for PCMB programs, in advance, for each fiscal year. The budget shall project all expenses which may be required for proper operation, management and maintenance of PCMB programs, including a reasonable allowance for contingencies and reserves. PCMB will evaluate annually the anticipated capital expenditures and establish an adequate reserve fund without the necessity of special assessments if at all possible. Should the board determine that at any time, in its sole discretion, determine that the assessments levied are or may prove insufficient to pay the costs of operation, maintenance and management of program activities, the PCMB Board shall have the authority, without consent or vote of membership, to increase the assessment or levy additional assessments as it shall deem necessary. In addition to the late charge, PCMB may levy additional fines for chronic or continuing late payments.

A schedule of payments associated with the member fee portion will be distributed to each family. It is each family's responsibility to adhere to the payment schedule. Apart from this handbook agreement, a separate Participation Agreement will be signed that covers the terms of the specific program to which your child/children is/are participating and the associated costs.

The member fees are intended to be all-encompassing and generally cover all the anticipated expenses that are incurred for your child's participation. Unanticipated expenses may occur that result in additional assessment. Some items that are NOT covered by your member fees include:

- Tickets/admission to competitions
- Show shirts and other logo-wear that you may purchase
- Costs associated with extra uniform materials – i.e. member shirts, gloves, shoes
- Summer uniforms

Scholarship Program

The PCMB Scholarship Program provides financial awards to current students of any class and who are participating in a PCMB-supported program or PCCS curricular band program. Eligibility for the financial award is to be based on merit or financial need and will be determined upon completion of an application and subsequent review against a set of criteria. Financial awards will be used to offset member fees for participation in PCMB/PCCS programs.

Policies/Signature Page for Membership in the PCEP Band Programs

The student and parent must agree to the following policies if they expect continued enrollment in our program:

- Membership in the PCEP and PCMB programs is a privilege which must be earned and maintained. It is the responsibility of the student to represent our program at all events with the expected level of professionalism. This level is expected on all bus rides, as well as any time that the student travels with the band, whether or not the student is in uniform. Failure to do so may result in removal from the program.
- It is the responsibility of the student to not allow rehearsal or performance schedules to be an excuse for incomplete school work, nor will school work be an acceptable excuse for missing rehearsals or performances.
- All students will be required to abide by the substance abuse policy of the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools. Any student using illegal substances or in any way participating in an illegal act at any time during the season, will be immediately dismissed from all PCMB and PCEP extra-curricular related activities, including Marching Band, Winter Guard, Winter Drum Line, Percussion Ensemble etc., practices and trips for the duration of the calendar school year. If the occurrence is during an extended trip (Band Camp, Trip Year, overnight competitions etc.) the parent/guardian will be contacted as soon as possible and arrangements will be made to send the student home immediately **AT THE EXPENSE OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN**. Substance abuse is defined as the use of any illegal substance including alcohol, tobacco products and/or illegal drugs.
- Written notice of withdrawal from extra-curricular program(s) must be sent to the Program Director (Plymouth High School, 8400 Beck Road, Canton, MI 48187) and PCMB, PO Box 701135, Plymouth, 48170. Participant will be responsible for all costs incurred by PCMB on participant's behalf until written notice is received.
- The schedule for the programs will be set by the Director(s): weekly competitions (some over-night), weekday practices, weekend practices (times dependent upon the scheduled competitions), Band Camp(s) and various day camps and sectionals to be scheduled as needed. It is understood these events are mandatory for the continued participation in the programs.
- All rehearsals scheduled are mandatory, regardless of the time of year, and any unexcused absences will be grounds for removal from a program. (An excused absence is defined as a prearranged absence at least two (2) weeks in advance and approved by the director OR absence due to illness or family emergency).
- Insubordination to any staff member or parent chaperone will not be tolerated, and will constitute immediate removal from the program.
- The student will participate in all performances of the ensembles in which they are a member. Repeated absences from rehearsals or an absence from a performance will lead to dismissal from the ensemble.
- The student will promote the safety and welfare of each member of the ensemble including him/herself by being responsible, cautious, and using reasonable behavior, including following all of the school rules contained in the code of conduct.
- Parent/Guardian members will agree to support their children in their participation in PCEP band programs.

- Parent/Guardian members agree to pay the membership fees as stipulated in the individual Program Payment Agreement for each program in which their child participates.
- Parent/Guardian members are encouraged to purchase throughout the course of the year, at a minimum, \$3,000 of gift certificates from the SCRIP program which is administered by PCMB. A family can easily meet this expectation by purchasing any combination of popular grocery and gasoline or other restaurant gift certificates. Family members are also expected to volunteer time at various fundraising events. Failure on the part of PCMB members to actively participate in these two important aspects of PCMB programs severely jeopardizes the ability to maintain these programs at their expected superior levels.
- Parent/Guardian members understand that they will be asked to complete, and have notarized, a Medical Release Form that extends permission to instructional staff, parent chaperones and/or nurses to administer medical treatment, should circumstances arise with your child wherein this becomes a necessity. In signing the Medical Release and Participation Agreements, you assume the responsibility for payment of any fees from such treatment and, further, agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless the PCEP band, any and all affiliated volunteers, agents, instructors and representatives from any and all claims you or your child may have, excluding claims for intentional misconduct or gross negligence, arising from or relating to my child's participation in the Marching Band/Concert Band program(s).

This agreement shall be in force throughout the tenure of each student's continuous participation in the PCEP band programs at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park.

AGREED:

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent Name

Parent Signature

Date