

## Frequently Asked Questions (for New Members and Parents)

### Where are the major sections of the band?

There are 4 sections of the band:

- Woodwinds - Flutes, Clarinets, Saxophones
- Brass - Trumpets, Mellophones (Horns), Baritones, and Tubas
- Percussion - Pit and Drumline
- Guard - Flags, Rifles, and Sabres

### What are all those instruments in the Pit?

- Xylophone – instrument consisting of wooden bars tuned to the relevant notes played with mallets
- Marimba – instrument consisting of a set of wooden bars struck with mallets with resonators (tubes) beneath the instrument to make the sound
- Vibraphone – variation of the marimba that consists of metal bars with a motor to make a fluctuation of pitch (vibrate)
- “Toy Cart” - tom toms, cowbells, cymbals, snare drums mounted on a rack
- Gong – flat, circular metal disc which is hit with a mallet
- Bass Drum – large drum that produces a note of low definite or indefinite pitch
- Shakers, Triangles, auxiliary percussion

### What’s a “sectional”?

A sectional is the term used for a rehearsal of you and others who play your instrument. The full band may have a sectional time during rehearsal where they will split up into sections and practice their parts with other members that play the same instrument.

### How do all the instruments make it to the game or competition?

Glad you asked! This requires a lot of hard work. The band members and volunteers load the Mater Dei Band truck with all the equipment to make sure it arrives at the performance.

### What happens if it rains?

In case of rain at a rehearsal, we will move inside and work on what we can in the school. At a home game, if it’s lightning, the game will be delayed or called off. If it’s just raining, Ms. Field will make a decision about the performance. We might choose only to field part of the band (e.g., exclude the pit to protect the instruments), or some other

variation of the show. Regardless, unless there is an announcement before school is out, everyone should assume the performance is on and arrive on time. Instructions will be given at that time.

### **What's a competition?**

During the Fall, our Marching Band will enter competitions where we will perform our show in competition against other schools. These are normally held somewhere in the Evansville area. There are judges who will score our sections and overall performance and at the end of the day, winners are announced. There are normally 6 judges. Some focus on just one aspect of the show while some focus on the overall performance. Dates will be announced at the beginning of the season. They are always on a Saturday. Prepare for a long day as we have travel time, a competition, and then return to school and unload equipment.

### **How do things work on competition days?**

Competition days are very exciting! We will arrive at Mater Dei to rehearse for a bit before we load the truck and depart for the competition site. After rehearsal, students and parents will load the truck. The boosters will provide the students with a snack or lunch (depending on what time of day we leave). Students will load the bus and leave at the designated time on the itinerary. When we arrive at the competition site, students will follow instructions from the directors and the hosts. Pit Crew parents will unload the truck, students will get dressed, and line up ready for warm up. After we are taken to warm up, we will be guided to the performance field. After our performance, we will go back to the truck, students will change out of uniform, and Pit Crew parents will begin loading the truck. Students wait in the stands and watch other groups perform and to listen to awards. After awards, everyone meets back at the truck. Ms. Field will talk with everyone at the truck before dismissing students back onto the bus to go back to MD.

### **I'm willing to help, what volunteer activities are available?**

The band program has many opportunities for volunteers to help. Our philosophy is that if everyone pitches in just a little, then the burden doesn't fall on just a few.

During marching season, we need volunteers for:

- Bus Parents - rides the bus(es) to football games and competitions. Takes attendance and supervises students on the bus.
- Pit Crew - volunteers who move our equipment on and off the performance field. Also in charge of loading and unloading the truck before and during competitions.

- Transportation - driving the truck and any other band vehicle to and from competitions and football games.
- Uniforms - fitting, organizing, and maintenance of our uniforms.
- Meals - volunteers needed for meals during band camp, meals or snacks on competition days, etc.

During the rest of the year, we have other opportunities for volunteers to help organize fundraisers, events, concert performances, banquets, etc. We encourage all parents to please sign up to help with at least one activity. Don't worry about not knowing what to do. All the volunteers you see running around were in the same position at one time. Just jump in. We will teach you the ropes!

### **What other performance opportunities does Mater Dei offer?**

The Marching Band is only a small portion of the total high school band experience. The Mater Dei Band program has a concert band, pep band, jazz band, winter guard, winter percussion program centered on developing creative, artistic musicians. Each of these ensembles rehearse and prepares to perform several performances each year.

### **What are Marching Fees and what do they cover?**

The Mater Dei Marching band is 100% funded by the Band Booster organization. Therefore, fundraising and marching fees become the financial support for the marching band. Marching fees cover the cost of arrangement and writing of the music, original drill writing, individual and group instruction during band camp, marching competition fees, travel to competitions, cost of prop construction and movement to locations, maintenance and repair of marching band school-owned instruments, purchase of new uniforms and color guard performance uniforms, etc. See the band handbook for more information.

### **I love the band. Where do I buy a t-shirt?**

We have band Spiritwear for sale throughout the season. We will have an order form for spirit shirts at our Parent Preview after the last day of band camp in July. We will also order new t-shirts that reflect our current year's performance theme. Family members and friends of the band are more than welcome to purchase these as well.