

DGS Bands Music Notes

*The Official Newsletter of the Downers Grove South
High School Band Program*



A note from Mr. Williams:

On behalf of Mr. Hensel and Dr. Sugg, I extend to each of you a Happy New Year! While things this fall are going to look different than a typical fall, we've got some exciting things on deck to continue igniting a passion for the arts in each of you while studying and performing music.

Over the course of the summer, several renowned composers have contributed to the Creative Repertoire Initiative. These composers are creating flexible arrangements of great works composed for wind bands. We are excited to experiment with these arrangements and hear their application here at South. We are also excited to continue our jazz curriculum, learning not only repertoire and transcription skills, but continuing to learn from great jazz artists from all around the world. We are committed to creating the best possible musical learning environment in our current situation.

We look forward to seeing each of you and connecting through music. Thanks for your commitment to the DGS Bands family!

Mr. Hensel, Dr. Sugg, Mr. Williams



Welcome "Back" To School!

We are so excited to start welcoming back students for a new year of DGS Bands next week. Although we may not be returning for in-person learning, we believe that the music will go on!

You probably have a variety of questions related to the logistics of class. This is completely normal as we are all trying to envision what the new "norm" will be for DGS Bands. Hopefully this August edition of Music Notes will help you in understanding our vision for what we can accomplish as a band program this year.

We cannot wait to see you next week to reconnect with the upperclassmen and forge new relationships with the incoming freshman!



Jazz Band Auditions

Jazz Auditions begin next week! Have you started practicing? Never looked at the music? Have you ever been in jazz before?

Anyone currently enrolled in a music performance class (choir, band, or orchestra) is invited and encouraged to audition for one of our award-winning jazz bands. Your experience level does not matter. We want you in our jazz program! Below are some helpful links to make sure that you are prepared for the week.

[Links:](#)

[Audition Info Flyer - Read This First](#)

[Jazz Audition Materials](#)

[Billie's Bounce - Charlie Parker](#)

First Week of Classes

Do I need an instrument?

Yes, but not the first week. Make sure your instrument is in working order to begin playing in week two.

What if I need a school instrument?

We are working through the process for instrument and equipment pick-up with the school and will be sending that information separate from this newsletter.

What are we doing in class?

Going over the year (best we can) and getting to know you!

For detailed school opening information, please check the [District 99 Website](#).



With so many unknowns about the academic year, should I stay enrolled in band?

Answer: Absolutely! We sure hope you will, because we have big plans to engage our students in meaningful music making this year, no matter what form or schedule emerges as the District 99 plan. Will the band experience feel typical this year? Of course not; few things in our lives feel typical these days. But that does not mean we stop moving forward. There is a large banner hanging in our band room with the phrase ***“Imagine the Possibilities.”*** Rest assured that your faculty and staff will be working hard to provide the members of the DGS Bands with a high-quality experience this year!

It is also worth noting that the school is not accepting requests to change schedules and/or add additional courses to a student schedule. All of the planning that is being done to open school in either hybrid, or remote formats, requires administrators to work with pre-defined class lists. If a student were to contact their counselor and request a schedule change at this time, the student’s only option would be to add a “study hall.”

"1 Minute" Video Lessons

Last Fall, several videos were created in an effort to help teach the DGS Bands community a variety of lessons. The two videos created are linked below. We encourage all students and families to watch these videos as they may be helpful to you, especially those new to the program.

The volume level of the videos are inconsistent. Apologies as you may need to adjust while listening

[Episode 1: Navigating the Band Website](#)

[Episode 2: Practice Makes Perfect](#)

Private Lessons

Amidst the changes in learning spaces this year, most private lesson teachers have migrated in-person lessons to virtual, typically over video conference.

It is highly encouraged that every student participate in private lessons if possible. The lessons offer additional 1 on 1 time for the student to work on more instrument specific fundamentals.

Visit the [Private Lessons](#) page on our website for private teacher contact information and you can reach out to them directly!



Evaluate Your Practice Space!



Wouldn't it be nice if we could just skip to perfection? Your practice space is an important tool, just like you would find the right spot to study for a test. Consider these factors when locating the best practice space at home:

- comfortable chair (with good posture!)
 - music stand
 - pencil
- metronome and tuner
- ear plugs (as needed)

Read more about it on this [Musician's Way Blog Post](#)

Marching Mustangs 2020 Updates



A message from Dr. Sugg:

Hi Everyone!

Despite the many hurdles and restrictions placed on us, congratulations on a successful band camp this month! I thank you so much for your willingness to be welcoming, patient and flexible as I learn the ways of the Marching Mustangs. While I know that this camp looked and felt very different from the ones before, you all should be commended for your persistence, adaptability, and attitudes throughout. I was blown away! Excellence is a habit, and you all proved that it's a habit you have embedded in your cores through the example you set in this crazy scenario we're in right now.

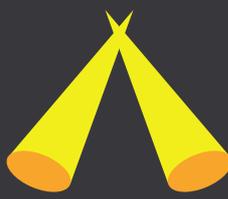
Moving forward, I know it's easy to focus on how much "less" of a season this may feel like in comparison to others, but instead try to focus on the fact that, at least for now, we still have an avenue to see and interact with each other! Any opportunity to make music (or do anything, really) right now with each other is a gift, and we owe it to ourselves to enjoy it, in whatever form it comes! I know I was excited to begin to see all the cool nuances and traditions you have, like the senior wills, Big Blue (?)...and especially the birthday song...and I can't wait to see the rows of tailgating tents next year!

On a positive note, we are very excited to continue exploring our music video idea in collaboration with Bitter Jester Creative! They are eager to work with us in this new type of project! Be prepared for more information to come regarding recording days and expectations...we are still working out specifics on how to go about in this project, but as long as you all continue to work hard musically, the rest should fall into place pretty easily.

Finally, use this [LINK](#) for the most up-to-date schedule for the Marching Mustangs. It includes all scheduled weekly rehearsals, as well as the remaining mini camps and potential recording session dates. Please plan ahead to ensure your availability, especially for the recording sessions! Have a great first week!

Staff Spotlight:

Jake Burrows



Role: Marching Mustangs Drum Major and Leadership Instructor.

Jake Burrows (DGS '18) is currently a Junior at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign majoring in Music Education and minoring in leadership studies. At Illinois, he has been extremely grateful to be involved with a wide variety of musical experiences, including serving the Marching Illini as drum major, playing trumpet Fighting Illini Volleyball and Basketball bands, as the President for the National Band Association (U of I) and Vice President of Membership for Kappa Kappa Psi. Outside of school, Jake is also a Golden Apple Scholar and enjoys running and camping with his family. In the words of the University of Illinois, I-L-L!



Start of the Year Information

[District 99 Guide to 2020-2021](#)

[9th Grade Schedule](#)

[10th, 11th, 12th Grade Schedule](#)

[Fully Remote \(Starting August 24th\)](#)

