



Ballard High School Performing Arts

P.O. Box 17774, Seattle, WA 98127
www.ballardperformingarts.org

June 3, 2024

Dear BHS Band Members and Parents,

Welcome to what promises to be a fantastic year in the band program here at Ballard High School. For those of you who are new, welcome to the family here at Ballard Performing Arts. We are a wonderful community that pride ourselves on cooperation and inclusivity throughout all fields of the performing arts. I look forward to working with each and every one of you this coming school year!

A long-standing tradition at Ballard is to head to band camp at Camp Seymour near Gig Harbor during the first weekend of the new school year. I cannot stress the importance of this event, both for camaraderie and learning the skills necessary to be successful in the Ballard band program. A detailed schedule for this event is provided in an accompanying document. This is a required activity for all band and percussion students. Band camp is the only time during the year where, in addition to learning the large quantity of pep band music, students receive intensive field and parade marching training. New students will learn how to march in the Ballard style and continuing students will be able to improve their marching skills. Band camp is a great way for us to start off the school year as we prepare for the home football and basketball games, marching in local parades, and the homecoming halftime show.

Band camp is also a time where freshmen and new students to Ballard will get to know the people in their sections, as well as the rest of the members in the band. The camaraderie among band members is part of what makes Ballard's award-winning band program so special, and many students will leave this weekend having developed close friendships that will last throughout their high school career, and often their whole lives! Band members are a close-knit community and the tighter those friendships are, the more success we will have musically as a whole.

Please read the attached information document thoroughly and if there are any questions about band camp or anything else, please don't hesitate to ask. There is a ton of information in there so don't feel overwhelmed! The fees for band camp this year are significantly more than last year as it seems all costs have skyrocketed and will include transportation, overnight lodging, and all student meals for the weekend. If this fee is of concern to your family, please do not be discouraged and feel free to reach out to me directly. Scholarships and other assistance is available so please do not let the cost be a concern for you! I never want band fees to be an undue burden on any family so please don't hesitate to voice any concerns.

This year was an incredibly busy year, but was so rewarding! I have every expectation that next year will be even better! Our students are amazingly talented and resilient and I am incredibly proud to get to work with them. The Ballard band has a reputation as one of the best bands in the state and it is a reputation we are proud to uphold. I am excited to begin the 2024-25 school year and I look forward to working with you as we continue the strong tradition of musical excellence in the Ballard High School Band!

Jay Gillespie

Director of Bands, Ballard High School
jrgillespie@seattleschools.org