

For: Freshman Band Parents

Tips from a few past music parents, that were confused freshman band parents at one time:

How to know what's happening in Ferris Band:

First, don't freak out that the Music Department yearly calendar has so many dates listed! Many of those days will not include your student, and there are a lot of things listed that will happen during zero hour or during the school day. You don't have to put ALL the dates on your family calendar!

Provide an accurate email and read your emails, visit the band website, download the Remind App (both from *FMPA and the director), read newsletters sent by the FMPA Secretary through Mail Chimp (automatically signed up when your student is part of the program), follow the Ferris Music Parent Association Facebook Page, and read the handbook and Annual Manual.

**FMPA (Ferris Music Parent Association) is a parent group that helps directors in whatever they need, and the group participates in helping students raise funds for their music department expenses (trips, retreats, camp, etc.). FMPA meetings are open to all parents and are held every couple of months during the school year. The Board consists of the three Ferris Music Department Directors (band, choir, orchestra), and four music department parents hold the offices of President, Secretary, Treasurer, Fundraising. FMPA is also the group that manages the money for the directors and students. FMPA collects payments, keeps track of fundraising, and handles payments for activities. All music students are served by FMPA.*

Groups under the band umbrella / How do I know what group I'm in? Here are the band options:

- Drum Line: No audition necessary
- Advanced Percussion: Audition only
- Concert Band: No audition necessary
- Wind Ensemble: Audition only
- Jazz Band: Auditions happen only if necessary, meets before school Tues/Thurs at 7am
- Jazz Orchestra (AKA: JEFJO – pronounced "Jeff-Joe"): Audition only, meets before school M/W/F at 7am, with sectionals before school on Tuesdays.

Choir and Orchestra all have many options for students, and many of the students are in multiple groups. This info sheet is to help give you an overview of the Band program.

How to letter in Band? The more music activities you do, the more points you receive. If you meet the minimum number of points per year, you will letter. Play at all pep-band games, attend non-school concerts, private lessons, play in extra groups outside of school, play in pit for the school musical, compete in Solo & Ensemble, Spokane Youth Symphony, etc. A form will be given to your student at the end of the year to record what they have done, keeping track of non-school performances your student has played in or attended throughout the year makes completing the form easier.

Band Camp – Students go up to Camp Spalding and learn all their pep-band music in late August. Any band kid can go, and there is a fee. This is a fun time when Freshmen get to meet everyone. Two nights without great cell service! The kids meet at Ferris and take a bus up to camp. If your student has a conflict with scheduling, parents can drive them up to camp late or pick them up early. Camp Spalding is run by fabulous people! Your kiddo will be well looked after and cared for, they have great food (and will help out with special dietary needs). There will be lots of staff and parent supervision, and a lifeguard at the beach. Students can do all the outdoor activities like boating, zipline,

Tips for Freshman Band Parents continued:

swimming, volleyball, capture the flag, etc. They will make lots of friends and become part of the band community before school even starts!

Pep Band - Plays at football and basketball games. Band camp is when students learn the music.

Music Open House – In September there will be a special Music Department Open House. Parents learn about the music program, volunteer opportunities, fund raising to help you/your student pay for their music activities. You can get an updated year-long calendar, sign-up for the Remind app with your director to get last-minute updates, and make sure your contact information is accurate.

Fall Concert – All band groups perform (Drum Line, Advanced Percussion, Jazz band, JEFJO, Concert Band, Wind Ensemble). Concert is late in October.

Winter Concert- Some groups from Choir, Band, and Orchestra perform. This concert is so popular with both the Ferris community and the Spokane community that tickets are sold (with proceeds used in place of music department fees), and there are two identical concerts, two nights in a row. Tickets go on sale just after Thanksgiving, these concerts will sell out quickly! Please be aware and watch for details from the directors and FMPA. Concerts are late in December, typically the week before winter break.

Retreats – some of the music groups go on 2-3 day retreats outside of Spokane (Typically at Ross Point or Camp Spalding). Students may get to work with guest artists and/or guest conductors, and spend a lot of time working hard on performance music. Advanced Percussion, Wind Ensemble, and Jazz are groups that typically go on the weekend retreats. Retreats occur in January. Cost range is between \$100-\$150

Solo and Ensemble Contest – Regional event occurs in February at a high school in Spokane. Any student that wants to prepare solo music may participate. Students sometimes also organize small ensembles (such as duets, or quartets), or play in larger ensembles. There is a need to register, which the director will send in – this happens late in the fall. Registration fees are paid for by the students. (Students are not allowed to have copies of their music, make sure you know the rules early so you can order their music! Details can be found at WMEA.org) If a student or a group wins their category, they are invited to participate in the State Solo and Ensemble contest held in Ellensburg in April. The ensembles play in Ellensburg on a Friday, with a bus provided both directions, and paid for by the school. If your student wins their individual category, they play on Saturday. A parent/guardian will need to meet up with them on Friday, or drive them over on Saturday -know the dates and get your hotel reservations immediately, the day of the regional event!

All-State and All-Northwest – Students may audition (via recording) in the fall to earn a spot in either of these groups. Band, Choir, and Orchestra students may participate. The spring events take place in different cities depending on the year. Recordings can be made by the director at school.

Feeder school concerts - In the spring, the middle school and elementary schools that feed into the Ferris will have a concert. Middle and high school groups perform, and the elementary students will get to play as well. Everyone gets to hear what the middle school sounds like, and the middle school students to hear what the high school sounds like. This is a motivational day to show what elementary students have to look forward to if they keep playing.

Lilac parade practices – The week before the Armed Forces Torchlight Parade, students have parade practice that is held in the evenings from 6:30-8:00pm. Any band member can participate in the parade. Each night will have a dress-up theme, with the seniors deciding on the themes. Practice is typically Monday through Thursday.

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Awards Concert – Held in May. The choir, band, and orchestra groups meet separately prior to the evening concert and hand out their varsity letters and some of their awards (all students will attend, parents are also invited to the if they would like to attend). Afterwards everyone heads to the auditorium for the main concert (7pm) and a few additional awards.

Fundraising: FMPA gives students many opportunities to fund raise for their individual accounts. Parents best chance to know when these activities are happening is to pay close attention to the FMPA Newsletters and updates, and to the FMPA Facebook page. Directors know about the fundraising, and will mention them in class, they might even have order forms available for students to take. But remember this, fundraising is organized and run by the FMPA and it is not the responsibility of the director to communicate home. Examples of fundraising are: Butter Braids, Coffee, Save A-Round coupon books, ordering gift cards through SCRIPT, and working concessions. Information on all these activities will be provided at the Music Open House in the fall. If you would like to start SCRIPT this summer, please talk to any FMPA board member or a veteran music parent and they can help you get started.

There are also a couple events that raise money for the general FMPA fund. The events are a bake sale at the winter concerts, and a Mod pizza night. Money raised pays for FMPA operating fees and will help out the directors with some of their expenses.

Ask question! Attend meetings! Read emails! Connect on Facebook! We have all been new parents, with lots of questions and would love to help you navigate your freshman year of music successfully 😊

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