

**RAMSEY HIGH SCHOOL
BAND AND COLOR GUARD
PARENT/STUDENT MANUAL
2023-2024**



Ramsey Big Blue Band and Guard

June 15th, 2023

Dear Parents and Students,

I want to first welcome you all to the “Big Blue” family! The band program at Ramsey High School aims to offer the best experiences for you and your child. We travel, compete, and most of all, create lifelong friendships and memories that will last a lifetime! I hope that you are as excited as I am to begin yet another amazing year in Big Blue history!

We have some amazing things planned for the 2023-2024 school year! The marching band has a full season planned with a scheduled performance at Metlife Stadium! The concert band and wind ensemble have a full concert season scheduled and we look forward to providing you with fun, musical performances. We are working on scheduling a larger trip for next year and can't wait to create the wonderful memories that have been a part of the band program for decades.

I invite everyone to take an active role in the high school band program. Parents, you will soon find that not only do your students have fun, but you can too! Our parent organization is very strong and are always looking for volunteers. Above all else, I want you all to feel welcome and be a part of something great! If you need anything at all, please feel free to contact me through my district email.

I am looking forward to yet another amazing year!

GO BIG BLUE!

Mr. Jenkins

*Ramsey Band & Color Guard
Parents Association
Ramsey, NJ*

June 15th, 2023

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the Ramsey High School Band and Color Guard Parents Association, I would like to welcome you into the “Big Blue” family. These next four years are an exciting and significant time in your students’ lives. They will become increasingly independent, build lasting friendships, experience camaraderie and, of course, push themselves academically. Participating in the High School music program is a wonderful and fulfilling experience and is a place where your student can achieve all this and more.

It may start with the marching band season, but it certainly doesn’t end there! As we will review together, this is a dynamic and diverse program with many opportunities for both student and parental involvement.

Only through the generosity and participation of our parents, can the program be as successful as it has been in the past. There are many, many opportunities for all families to contribute to the success of the program. Being an active participant will afford you the opportunity to foster new friendships, be a part of your teenager’s life and have a lot of fun too!

Welcome to the Ramsey Band & Guard Parents Association. We are looking forward to working with all of you throughout the coming year.

Warm regards,

Nancy Kropas, President
Ramsey Band & Guard Parents Association

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Communication

The music department staff and the Band & Color Guard Association make every effort to keep students and parents informed of schedules and activities throughout the year. The primary communication tools used are:

- **Mr. Jenkins' website and Live Schedule** www.ramseyhighschoolbands.com contains everything from music, lesson and ensemble schedules to technology links. It provides access to the calendar as well as weekly updates and directions to shows and performance times. This site is updated directly by Mr. Jenkins and will always contain the most up to date information available to both students and parents. This website can also be accessed through the Ramsey High School Website as well
- **Remind text messaging system** – All students and parents are **strongly** encouraged to sign up. Students and parents will receive important reminders and updates to schedules by Mr. Jenkins.

Set-up instructions for students are as follows:

Use this link to sign up for the student Remind: <https://www.remind.com/join/gg9hd3>

Set-up instructions for parents are as follows:

Use this link to sign up for the parent Remind: <https://www.remind.com/join/a9f472>

- **RB&G Parent Association email communication** via email. During the marching band season, weekly email updates are sent to parents and students to highlight accomplishments, review the weekly schedule and upcoming events, provide reminders for deadlines and keep everyone as well informed as possible. After the marching band season the emails are sent on an as needed basis.

Typical Weekly Marching Band Schedule

Unless it is pouring or there is thunder and lightning, Big Blue practices outside during marching band season. It is important for students to wear appropriate shoes (sandals, flip flops and heels are inappropriate footwear for marching!) and to bring coats and gloves in colder weather. The band practices outside during band period as well as:

Monday:

Percussion, pit and color guard rehearse 6:00-9:00 with staff on Monday nights.

Thursday:

Full band and color guard rehearse on Thursday evenings from 6:00 – 9:00 PM. Students should be on the field and **ready to begin no later than 6:00PM.**

Purchase tickets for the competition on Saturday:

Depending on the show, the band is provided with advance tickets for the upcoming Saturday competition. The tickets will be available in the parking lot of the high school during drop off time on Thursday evenings. If these advance tickets sell out, please note that tickets are always available at the competition as well.

Friday:

Big Blue fully participates at **home** football games, which typically begin at 7:00PM. The band will play the National Anthem prior to kickoff and perform as a pep band during the 1st, 2nd and 4th quarters. Big Blue performs their show for the crowd at half time (approximately 7:45PM). After the performance they have the 3rd quarter “off” to purchase snacks and drinks at the game.

Occasionally they are asked to participate at away games and the schedule will be communicated, when available.

Saturday – Performance Day!

Rehearsal:

Full band and color guard rehearsal is usually scheduled in the early afternoon. Students should have lunch before arriving for rehearsal. They should have everything they need for the remainder of the day including:

- Band T-shirt / appropriate clothing for the anticipated weather conditions
- Garment bag with hat, gloves, band shoes and **BLACK SOCKS**
- Comfortable attire for the bus ride, snacks, **WATER**, etc...
- Spending money for dinner or a packed meal

At the competition:

As a large sized band, Ramsey is usually scheduled to perform near the end of the competition schedule. Parents are encouraged to dress in blue & gold and come to the competitions to cheer them on! We meet in the stands as close to the 50 yard line as possible. The students really enjoy a loud and enthusiastic crowd!

- The Band & Guard stays through the awards ceremony and then returns to the buses for the ride home.
- Upon arrival, the equipment is unloaded and uniforms are placed in bins for dry cleaning. Mr. Jenkins meets with the students to briefly discuss their performance before dismissal.
- Drum majors announce the location of the after-competition party, which is for band & guard members only.

After-competition parties:

Drum majors work with parents to host the after-competition parties. Parents must chaperone these parties, as they do not fall under the responsibility of the music department staff. Often the host asks other Band & Guard parents to help chaperone and serve food. Food is usually penne ala vodka, hoagies by the foot, salad, chips, cookies and soda/water. Host parents may be reimbursed up to \$250 by the Band & Guard Parents Association towards the cost of the party.

Typically, the students will gather at the home, eat, review a recording of their performance, unwind/socialize for a bit and, after an exhausting day, they leave as quickly as they came in. Generally the “party” lasts approximately an hour.

Personal Expenses

There are no fees to “join” the band and color guard program. As in any school activity; however, there are expenses incurred by the student and their families. *Any family that has difficulty meeting these expenses should contact the band director directly. All discussions will be held in confidence.*

Band Camp

A week of band camp is run at Ramsey High School by the music department in conjunction with the Band & Color Guard Parents Association. **This year band camp will run from Monday, August 14th – Friday, August 18th.** The fee is \$266 for color guard students which includes \$20 for the UDB drill learning app and \$350 for band students (this includes \$84 uniform dry cleaning fee and \$20 for drill learning app) and provides for extra staffing, equipment and supplies, all snacks, a number of meals during the week and the cost of entertainment.

Uniforms

There is no charge for uniforms worn by the marching band. They are purchased by the school and transferred from student to student as they graduate or change size. This includes a jacket, pants, hat, hat box, gloves and raincoat. Students are given an “official” t-shirt at band camp. Additional black gloves may be purchased for \$5 a pair. Students purchase black socks of their own choice.

Marching Band Shoes

The marching shoe style is specified by the band director. The cost of the shoes for the 2023-24 season will be \$42 (including shipping and handling). Shoes will be ordered by the band director and shipped directly to Ramsey High School. Shoe ordering and payment will take place during the band’s online registration in late June.

Dry Cleaning

The Band & Color Guard Parents Association has arranged for the band uniform jackets and pants to be picked up from the school every Monday, cleaned and returned by Thursday in time for the weekend’s activities at an approximate cost of \$84 for the season. *If your student is in the color guard and wears a washable uniform, they are exempt from the dry cleaning charge and are responsible for its care.*

Garment Bags

The marching band uniform must be transported in a garment bag during competitions. Any garment bag is sufficient. Big Blue has made arrangements to purchase extremely durable garment bags designed for marching band uniforms that will last many years to come! The cost will be approximately \$68, including shipping and monogramming.

Travels

Spending money for meals and snacks is needed for football games and competitions. Students often go into town on Saturdays to purchase lunch or snacks. They are given a chance during the football game to buy snacks at the hosting location and the buses often stop at a fast food restaurant on the way to competitions.

Annually the instrumental music program travels to compete or perform in an established festival or event. The trips alternate between large and small venues. Although a sizeable percentage of students take part, these trips are at the expense of the students and their families and as such are not mandatory.

Funding the Music and Color Guard Programs

To support the variety of programs offered by the music department, the Band & Color Guard Parents Association conducts fundraisers throughout the school year. Of course, corporate gift matching and general donations are greatly appreciated. **The Ramsey Band and Color Guard Parents' Association is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization: therefore, contributions to the Association are tax deductible.** The funds directly benefit the students through college scholarships, seasonal staffing, supplementary meals and much, much more.

Hoagie Sales

Hoagie route captains are selected in July and all students sign up for a route during band camp. Twice a year, band and color guard students sell hoagies door to door throughout the town. It has become a tradition in Ramsey and many of the residents equate the sandwiches with the marching band. In recent years, the ingredients of the hoagies have been donated which has increased profitability.

Within a few weeks, bright and early on a Saturday morning, the entire band, color guard and parents meet in the school cafeteria and create an assembly line to make the hoagies. Approximately 4,000 hoagies are assembled, packaged, sorted into routes and are ready for delivery by 10:00AM!



Parent Volunteer Information and Descriptions

Fall & Spring Hoagie Sales:

Chairperson:

Coordinate sales, construction and delivery of hoagies. Oversee parent volunteers and student route captains.

Route Coordinator:

Work directly with chairperson(s) in taking charge of approximately 10 routes. Contact student route captains to reiterate instructions and collect money & orders from these captains for return to the chairperson.

Workers:

All parents and students participate in this event over a two to three hour period on a Saturday morning in the fall and in the spring. It is actually a great deal of fun, and a wonderful way to meet other parents.

Roadies:

Load and unload the equipment truck for games and competitions. Move the equipment on and off the field and help set up for the performance.

Uniforms:

Inventory and distribute uniforms for marching band season, including minor repairs. If major sewing is required it is sent out!

Spirit Wear:

Coordinate the sale of Band Clothing (Flannel pants, hats, sweatshirts, etc.).

Ramsey Day:

Chairperson:

Attend Ramsey Day meeting at Borough Hall, assign time slots for volunteer assistance via Volunteer Spot and set up a table at Ramsey Day for food, clothing sales and video viewing of past "Big Blue" performances.

Workers:

Volunteer to work at Ramsey Day in two hour shifts selling novelty items. Help with set up and take down of table.

End of the Year Awards Dinner/Dessert:

Chairperson:

Coordinate the menu and agenda with Board and band director. Organize volunteers.

Workers: Participate in the committee, set up the cafeteria and cleanup.

Band Camp:

Chairperson:

Organize, set up and run the food and activities during the five days of band camp.

Workers:

Participate in the committee, set up the cafeteria and cleanup. Assist with Pool Party, Ice Cream Social, Senior Party.

Donation Requests for Band & Guard Events

Hot Food: Donate hot food items such as baked ziti, meatballs, sausage and peppers.

Cold Food: Donate cold food items such as salad, breakfast, and fruit.

Dessert: Donate baked goods, cupcakes, ice cream, toppings.

Drinks: Donate bottled water, soda, iced tea, etc.

Guidelines for Students

Alternates:

In order to ensure that there are no disruptions or holes in the marching performances, the band utilizes alternates. Alternates are typically made up of freshman and two students will share the same spot at the beginning of the season. These students may or may not be moved to different spots within their section in order to maintain a cohesive section throughout the fall. This allows us to move a student around to fill in a spot if in the event someone is absent, sick, or injured and allows us to assess the new members in order to ensure their success as the season progresses. Sharing a spot will allow them to collaborate with another student and build upon their skills. All alternates are expected to attend all rehearsals, games, and performances as they are all members of the same ensemble.

Know that being an alternate is not a bad thing! There have been many alternates who have become section leaders, officers, and drum majors!

Rehearsals:

The following rules and regulations should be followed at all rehearsals for the marching band in the fall:

- All members are required to have the necessary materials to be successful at marching band rehearsals. (Water, Music, Instrument, Proper Clothing/footwear)
- All members should be on time to rehearsal. 6pm start time means we have begun our rehearsal. Please plan on arriving at least 15 minutes before the start of rehearsal.
- All members need to be respectful of the marching band staff and listen intently to instructions. While on the field, students should be engaged and attentive to what is going on.
- If you have are to be late/need to miss rehearsal, you must notify Mr. Jenkins at 48 hours prior. Of course, there will be emergencies, please communicate them as soon as you can.

Guidelines for Students, Continued

Competitions:

The following rules and regulations are to be followed at ALL competitions we attend. They are put in place to make sure every band member is informed and properly representing the instrumental music department and Ramsey High School.

- All band members are to wear the band tee shirt and black socks. This is to ensure a uniformed look at all times.
- Upon arriving at a contest site all members are asked to get off the bus, get all equipment needed, and meet with me for instructions. I do not expect to have to give directions until we meet as a group.
- All members are required to have all supplies needed for personal use. This includes such things as reeds, valve oil, etc. PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOUR INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES!
- AFTER THE PERFORMANCE ALL MEMBERS ARE EXPECTED TO STAY IN FULL UNIFORM UNTIL THE CONCLUSION OF A CONTEST OR UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED!
- PLEASE REMEMBER...you are still in uniform and representing Ramsey. Do not look like a slob, watch your language, and represent our band well! All members are to stay together during awards and support our drum majors!

Football Games

The following rules and regulations are to be followed at ALL football games we attend. They are put in place to make sure every band member is informed and properly representing the instrumental music department and Ramsey High School.

- All band members are to wear the band tee shirt underneath the uniform. This is to ensure a standardized look if and when we take the jackets off. Any member not wearing the proper shirt will not be allowed to take off the jacket.
- All band members MUST have a flip folder with stands music (music played in the bleachers). Once again; every time we play any type of music, we represent our school, and department. (This means stands music must be performed well.) The only way this can happen is if individuals take care of their own responsibilities. INCLUDING MUSIC!
- Members are to sit with their section.
- After our half-time performance, members will have the 3rd quarter "off" to purchase food etc. PLEASE REMEMBER...you are still in uniform and representing Ramsey. Do not look like a slob! If given permission, you may take your jacket off (assuming you are wearing your blue shirt as required). However, do not just throw it over your shoulder. Fold it neatly and put it back in the stands.

All members are to be back in stands for THE START OF THE 4th QUARTER. DO NOT BE LATE!!!

Other Components of the Instrumental Music Program

Concert Band & Wind Ensemble

At the conclusion of marching band season the musicians join Concert Band or audition for Wind Ensemble. Both bands rehearse during band period and each student receives an instrumental lesson one day per week. Both ensembles perform about three regular concerts during the year and perform at the RHS graduation. All concerts are mandatory and the dates will be shared at the start of the year. If there are any conflicts, you must notify the director in advance. The Wind Ensemble may also perform in festivals and competitions depending on the school schedule.

Jazz Ensemble

Jazz band is an extracurricular activity, by audition, that meets during the week beginning in the fall. It is a two-fold experience combining the instructional aspects of a “lab” jazz with the excitement of a performance ensemble. They are an internationally award winning group and have had the honor of being invited to participate in the All High School Cultural Festival in Fukui, Japan (2002), the New Year’s Day festivities in London, England (2007 & 2014), performed at One Whitehall Place in London, England (2010) and most recently played in Rome, Italy (2015/2016, 2019/2020) at the Piazza Mignanelli on New Year’s Eve and on New Year’s Day at the Flaminio Obelisk in the People’s Square (Piazza del Popolo). On a national scale, the ensemble has performed at Disney World, the Cleveland, Ohio Music Festival, Boston, MA Music Festival, the National Memorial Day Concert Series in Washington, D.C., and many more!



Pit Orchestra

Depending on the instrumentation of the musical, students may be invited into the orchestra to perform for the spring musical. Those who accept and volunteer to perform in the pit orchestra accompany the high school musical each spring. They practice with the band director before or after school in the weeks prior to the musical and then each night during the play’s dress rehearsals and performances.

Winter Guard

Winter Guard is an extra-curricular competitive group selected by audition. Building on the skills they have learned in marching band, specialized staff help the students continue to hone their abilities for the indoor performances. Interpreting music through dance and body movements with flags, sabers and rifles, the unit competes against other winter guards up and down the east coast. Traveling on weekends from January to April, Winter Guard has a long record of superior results in many local and regional competitions.



Percussion Ensemble

Once a week, percussionists who are serious about improving their skills have the opportunity to perform with the Ramsey High School Percussion Ensemble. This group appears at festivals and concerts.

