

Questions & Answers

Cedar Rapids Jefferson Bands



Q What band do ninth graders play in?

A All freshmen play in the Ninth Grade Concert Band first term. Students have the opportunity to audition for the Wind Symphony for second and third term. These auditions are in October. A few ninth grade students are selected for this band. Freshmen do not march at Jefferson during the fall season and will have an opportunity to perform with the *Band of Blue* Marching Band during their sophomore, junior, and senior year and on large trips. The *Band of Blue* has performed at the Orange Bowl Parade in Miami, Florida; Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California; Fiesta Bowl Parade in Tempe, Arizona; Pan-Pacific Parade in Oahu, Hawaii (twice); and most recently in the Holiday Bowl Parade in San Diego, California.

Q Do I get graduation credit for band?

A Yes! You will receive 5 academic credits for band. Your grade is like all other academic grades and is computed into your grade point average.

Q What are the differences between the Wind Symphony, Symphony Band and the Ninth Grade Concert Bands?

A The foundation of the Jefferson Bands is a continuation of the concepts and skills developed in the programs of Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson Middle School. Great music performed with a great sound and technical fluidity is core to the Jefferson tradition. Mr. Driskell conducts the Wind Symphony and the Ninth Grade Concert Band, and directs *The Band of Blue* Marching Band. The Wind Symphony is open to band members in grades 9-12 by audition. Mr. Hoffmann directs the Symphonic Band and Jazz Band. The Symphonic Band is open to all 10th, 11th & 12th graders. Mrs. Anderson is the assistant director and assists all bands.

Q When do freshmen learn to march?

A Marching rehearsals for incoming freshmen will begin in the spring in preparation for their sophomore year or in preparation for a large trip.

Q Can I be in other activities like football, show choir, volleyball, swimming, etc. and still be in band?

A Yes!! You can be a member of the *Band of Blue* and still participate in any school activity that you want. We have a very good relationship with other coaches and directors and will work out any conflicts in schedules that might come up. We encourage you to participate in other activities. We have band members in all sports and activities - football, swimming, basketball, wrestling, volleyball, cross country, baseball, choirs, orchestra...you name it! Don't worry about being in band and wanting to participate in other activities. Our most successful students are always in many activities (in the past years 3 of the 4 valedictorians were *Band of Blue* members).

Q Do freshmen get to go on Band Trips?

A Yes! 9th graders in good standing are eligible to attend band trips. These trips are every other year. More information will be provided next year. 9th Graders do not travel with the 10-12th grade marching band on “normal” marching band competition trips in the fall.

Q What do I do if I play a school instrument like tuba, oboe or percussion?

A Jefferson has a limited number of school owned instruments (tubas, euphoniums, tenor saxophones, baritone saxes, oboes, bassoons, bass clarinets, percussion) available for rental. Mr. Driskell and Mr. Hoffmann will contact the middle schools at the end of this school year to make arrangements for incoming 9th graders to check out school rental instruments for the summer through their ninth grade year. The rental fees and contract are very similar to the middle schools.

Q I play a school instrument. Do I need to rent both a marching and concert instrument?

A You need only to pay rent on one instrument a year (\$50 fee). This covers rent and repairs on both instruments.

Q What does the Ninth Grade Concert Band wear at concerts?

A Ninth Grade Concert Band members will be issued a concert uniform during band in the fall. This uniform consists of the following parts
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Boys

1. Black Tux Coat
2. Black Tux Pants
3. Black Tux Tie
4. Black shoes (students purchase these)
5. Black socks (students purchase these)
6. White tux shirt (students purchase these)

Girls

1. Black Concert Dress
2. Black low heel dress shoes (students purchase these)

Boys will be measured for shoes and tux shirt in the fall. The school will order these and distribute them during class. We use a uniform shoe and shirt so that all members of the group look the same. Boy’s shoes and shirts are purchased by the students. They are kept for the duration of their high school years. These same shoes will also be used for marching band in 10-12th grade. Shoe cost is \$36 and tux cost is \$20. These charges will be added to student’s band account in November and can be paid anytime after then. Girls provide their own black shoes. Girls will get their marching shoes in the fall of their sophomore year. The uniform rental fee for band students is \$50 for the school year. This fee includes cleanings.

Q What about uniform fees?

A The \$50 uniform fee covers all uniform rentals and cleaning fees for the entire year. This fee also takes care of tux and concert dress. The fee is based on the number of ensembles (band, choir, orchestra, show choir, etc) that the individual is in. Please refer to the “Jefferson High School Uniform Fee Chart” that is distributed the first week of school for uniform fees for students also in choir or orchestra.

Q How can I raise money for band supplies, fees and trips?

A Throughout the entire school year we will have a number of fundraising activities. In the past these have included candy sales, sucker sales, pizza sales, pie sales, sausage sales, ornament sales, candle sales and big fruit sales. It is pretty easy to sell if you try. You can pay for uniform fees, shoes, accessories, trips, etc. with profits from fund-raisers.

Q How do I clean my uniform?

A You will be informed of when the dry cleaning company will come pick up uniforms from Jefferson. Do not dry clean uniforms without the approval of a band director first.

Q What is the policy concerning wearing uniforms in public?

A When you are in uniform you represent the Band of Blue, Jefferson High School, the city of Cedar Rapids and the state of Iowa. You need to be either completely in or completely out of uniform while in public. You need to act maturely and with your best behavior while you are in uniform.

Q What happens if I forget part of my uniform at a performance?

A *Don't!*

Q How do I pay if I owe for a band fee?

A *Please pay by check, money order or credit card. We do not accept cash for both your safety and ours.* Please make checks out to Jefferson Bands. Please write your child's name and what the check is for in the memo portion of the check. Please pay the bookkeeper across from the main office.

Q What if I can't afford to pay band fees when they are due?

A Simply let Mr. Driskell or Mr. Hoffmann know and we can work out arrangements with a principal. Please contact a director if you have questions.

Q How do fund-raisers work?

A There are basically 3 types of fun fund-raisers:

1. Small items such as candy bars and lollipops. Students can check out 1 or more boxes of merchandise to sell (parents often take to work to sell). When a box or more is sold, students keep the cash received from the sale and return a check for the total amount of merchandise sold to the school. Make the check out to Jefferson. We keep an account for each student in band with profit's each student's account. Students usually receive 40-50% profit from each item on these small merchandise sales. Profit from all sales can be used for uniform fees, shoe fees, accessories & trips. By law we cannot refund extra profit in cash. If you check out merchandise you need to sell it all. We do not accept "left over" merchandise.
2. Special order merchandise. This includes pizzas and pies. These items are a big potential for profit. Students & parents take orders for merchandise and record customer names on order forms. *The customer does not pay until the merchandise is delivered.* Students must turn in order forms on the announced date so that the group order can be placed. Merchandise is usually delivered to Jefferson within a week of the turn in date. All merchandise must be picked up on the delivery date by the student or parent and delivered immediately (frozen merchandise will thaw in a few hours). Customers then pay you when you deliver the merchandise. *They make their check out to you, not Jefferson!* After you have delivered all the merchandise you pay Jefferson in 1 check made out to Jefferson. You pay your total bill and we will keep track of the profit in each student's account. We usually do 2 or 3 of these fund-raisers a year.
3. Fruit, Sausage & Cheese Sale. This can be your biggest profit maker of the year for students. We do one before Christmas and another in the spring. Some students pay for all their band fees in one sale alone! This sale works like the pizza & pie sale except you collect the money from the customer at the time that they order the fruit. You then turn in one check made out to Jefferson for your total order. Remember that your customer needs to pay you and then you write a check or money order out to Jefferson for the total amount. The fruit is then ordered directly from either Florida or California, depending which is best. Within a week, 2-3 semi trucks of fruit, sausage and cheese are delivered to Jefferson. Band Parents sort the fruit for spoilage and you pick up your order from Jefferson to deliver to customers.

Q What are the most common problems with fund-raisers?

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1. Students pay in cash. *Please pay by check or money order.*
 2. Students forget to give the check to the bookkeeper.
 3. Students eat the profits! Please take only what you can sell and sell it.
 4. Students try to give a director their check just as rehearsal begins. Band directors can't stop a rehearsal with over 200 members to take care of an individual's fund-raiser order. Students need to come in a little earlier or see a director later in the day to take care of fund-raising questions.

Q As a parent, I would like to help or travel with the Band of Blue. What do I do?

A The band could not function without the great parental support that Jefferson parents are known for. Every year hundreds and hundreds of parent hours are volunteered and much satisfaction is gained. If you would like to help the Band of Blue at games or competitions simply sign up at Band Parent meetings or call a Band Parent Officer. You'll get to meet new friends while you support your child and the band. If you would like to chaperone the band on a trip, contact a band director. Chaperones usually pay the same rate that students do.

Q I want to play in jazz band. When does that start?

A After marching season (in October).

Q How do I get in jazz band?

A All saxophone, trombone, trumpet, drum set, piano, and electric or string bass players in band are encouraged to audition.

Q What happens at the potluck during the 10-12 marching band summer practices in August?

A Each year the Jefferson Band Parents Association sponsor a potluck during 10-12th grade marching band practices in August. Incoming 9th grade parents are invited to attend this potluck. Every parent and family is invited and encouraged to attend. Parents are asked to bring their own table service and a dish. The first Band Parents Association meeting of the year is held at this potluck. This meeting is totally optional but is a good way to meet and greet the Band of Blue family!

Q How do I get the best up to date information about band?

A Communication between the directors, students and parents is very important. We provide students with information daily in rehearsal. Ask your son or daughter to pay attention to announcements in class. If you show interest in their activities they will tend to remember better! We send newsletters out to all band parents. These take time to prepare and are sometimes less timely than the daily announcements from the directors. Attending the monthly Band Parents meetings (first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Jefferson Band Room) will give you the most recent information "from the horse's mouth". Feel free to call during school hours at 558-2435. You can also find information at www.jeffbandofblue.com. Email is the best choice for communication with the directors.

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