

Dear Marching Band Families:

I hope the New Year comes with great excitement of our upcoming marching band season and the reality of our participation in the 2011 Tournament of Roses Parade. As you know, only twelve bands from outside California are selected to participate in this, the most prestigious venue for any band to march. I'm sure you realize much planning has already begun as our parents have organized committees related to the different aspects of the trip. It is now time to discuss the logistics of this incredible event.

It will soon be time for your student to enroll in classes for the 2010-2011 school year. Since marching band is a class, students planning to participate must sign up for both marching band and symphonic band. Marching band rehearses daily during the football season from 6:40am-8:25am.

When making the decision to be a member of the band, one must realize that it requires a big commitment. This is true every year. With the added performances associated with the Tournament of Roses Parade, additional rehearsals will be required to learn our parade music as well as build our stamina to complete the nearly six mile parade route in Pasadena. Although our schedule is still being finalized, it can be assumed that rehearsals for the parade will extend past the traditional football season.

Here are some items to consider when deciding whether participation in the marching band is for you.

Students should not sign up for marching band just to go to Pasadena. Students who were not initially attracted to marching band prior to the announcement of the trip should not make the mistake of thinking that marching band will now be easier or more tolerable to them. In a typical year, our schedule is very busy. Our participation in the Tournament of Roses Parade may add more events to our calendar. As we do every year, we will have a regular competitive field show season as well as performances at Friday night football games.

Summer band camp beginning July 26 through the start of school is required. Rehearsals scheduled prior to that date to learn parade music and show music will be voluntary.

Each year our parent organization, the Bandstanders outlines the fees associated with being in the marching band. They meticulously explain the need for these fees and how they are spent. This is consistent with most competitive programs in our area and around the state. This year the fee was approximately \$400. Although the fee has not been determined as of yet, it will be closely aligned to this year's. This fee is exclusive of the cost of the trip to Pasadena.

The cost of the trip to the Tournament of Roses: In 2005, when the band last attended the Tournament of Roses Parade, the trip cost was \$1850 per student. This included air transportation, hotel, ground transportation, all meals, logo gear, and admission fees. We raised enough money to lower that cost to \$800 per band member. Because of this tremendous effort, EVERY student in the marching band was able to participate! It is unlikely that this trip will cost less than the project of 2005. We estimate, with NO fundraising at all, our trip will be \$2000 per student. Of course, WE PLAN TO FUNDRAISE A LOT! Some is already underway. Our fundraising committee will soon distribute a calendar of fundraising events.

What's next? Once students enroll in marching band, things will be moving at a fast and furious pace. As an example, we may need to order additional uniforms. This is long process that must be started early to ensure their timely arrival in the fall. As a point of information, each uniform costs \$500!! If we order additional uniforms, we must be certain that each student is COMMITTED to participating. Other plans regarding airline and hotel reservations, busses and other travel issues must begin in earnest. By March 5 we will be asking all families to make their first nonrefundable payment of \$200 indicating their commitment to their participation in the marching band and the Tournament of Roses Parade. This gives each family more than a month to discuss the decision to participate.

There will be a deluge of information coming soon. Please be patient, but feel free to contact me in the meantime by email with your concerns or questions. If you are eager to help---please go to the band's new website: www.spiritSTLband.org to contact a committee chairperson. Also, if you have any civic or corporate contacts, have a grant proposal background or other knowledge of organizations that would like to help us represent Lindbergh and St. Louis to the world in the greatest parade of them all. Please let us know!!!

I realize it is a huge undertaking, a big commitment, and long, but exciting road ahead. As a past participant in the parade, I have witnessed the positive impact it has had on our students and their families. I also have seen how it has improved our program and brought tremendous pride and unity to the Lindbergh community. With these goals in mind, I am confident you will find it worth the effort!