



Millbrook High School Bands

2023-2024 Wind Ensemble Summer Letter

Dear 2023-2024 Wind Ensemble Students and Families,

First to our students, congratulations on successfully earning placement into next year's Wind Ensemble. The Millbrook Wind Ensemble has a long history of success and is coming off a banner 2022-2023 school year where it performed at the NCMEA In Service Conference and won the President's Cup in Washington DC. It is truly an honor to be able to perform with such an elite group of student musicians and I hope you do not take that for granted!

This school year we have an even bigger plan! I am happy to share with you today our Wind Ensemble has applied for and been selected to perform at the University of South Carolina Band Clinic next February as well as the Music for All National Concert Band Festival at Butler University in Indianapolis, IN next March! Both of these events are huge milestones for our program and will give our students amazing performance opportunities that they can cherish for a lifetime.

The purpose of this letter is to share preliminary details of our two trips for this upcoming school year. Please read the information below carefully and feel free to reach out with questions or concerns. I am really looking forward to having another wonderful year with everyone full of fantastic performance opportunities and travel!

Trip Information

University of South Carolina Band Clinic (Columbia, SC)

- **First, please know this is a big deal!**
 - To be selected to play at the USC Band Clinic, we submit multiple recordings of our ensemble from the past school year and a stated letter of interest. Our recordings are then reviewed by a blind panel of college wind band conductors and compared to other bands from across the southeast. The panel then selects one band from South Carolina and one band from outside of South Carolina!
- **Cost:** The boosters are working to figure out a way to completely cover the cost of the bus and hotel for all of our students. This means each student should only have to bring money for two meals on this trip.
- **Event Website:**
https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/music/community/community_events/band_clinic.php
- **Performance Venue: Koger Center for the Arts (Think DPAC)**
https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/crm/columbia/Koger_Auditorium_1_0-782053c45056a36_78205513-5056-a36a-06a7b99bdca355d2.jpg
- **Preliminary Trip Schedule**
 - Friday February 16th
 - 12:30pm: Depart MHS for Columbia, SC via AT&T Charter Bus
 - 4:30pm: Arrive, Eat Dinner at Local Food Court (Bring \$ for Dinner)
 - 6:30pm: Drive to Koger Center for the Arts (Dress Nicely)
 - 7:30pm: Attend USC Wind Ensemble Concert
 - 9:00pm-10:00pm: MHS Wind Ensemble Dress Rehearsal on Koger Stage
 - 10:30pm: Check into Hotel
 - 11:00pm: Lights Out



Millbrook High School Bands

2023-2024 Wind Ensemble Summer Letter

- Saturday February 17th
 - 8:00am-9:00am: Breakfast at Hotel/Change into Concert Attire
 - 10:30am: Check out and Depart for Lunch
 - 11:00am: Lunch at Russell House (USC Student Union)
 - 12:00pm: Depart for Koger Center
 - 12:30pm: Watch portion of other Honor Band Performance
 - 1:00 pm: Warm Up
 - 1:45pm: Performance (In Front of ~800 Honor Band Participants, USC students, staff, etc)
 - 2:30pm: Performance Ends, Reload personal belongings on bus, change into casual clothing
 - 3:00pm: Buses Depart Koger Center
 - 6:30pm: Buses arrive at Millbrook High School and students are dismissed.

Music for All National Concert Band Festival (Indianapolis, IN)

- **This is a huge deal!**
 - This is one of the highest honors a school concert band can receive in the United States. In the past twenty years of the festival, only 4 other ensembles from North Carolina have been selected to perform. To apply we had to submit recordings from last school year, have guest conductors submit letters of recommendation, and even have Dr. Saunders fill out a letter of support. We were selected from amongst hundreds of other ensembles from around the county that applied.
 - We will be performing alongside 21 other ensembles from all over the US at Butler University. For a complete list of the ensembles selected to perform, see this link: <https://festival.musicforall.org/festival-ensembles/>
- **Festival FAQ:**
 - <https://festival.musicforall.org/faq/>
 - *More information to come including a trip schedule later this month. Feel free to check out the FAQ above to see how things have worked at the festival in previous years (including 2023).*

Trip Cost/Payment Schedule:

- **USC Band Clinic (2/16-2/17):** Bus and Hotel are free thanks to our booster program! Students will need to bring \$\$ for two meals.
- **National Concert Band Festival (3/20-3/24):** We are still waiting on final details from the event organizers as it pertains to cost for the 2024 festival. Our best guest based on last year's festival costs is ~\$1,000 per student (before fundraising). This will cover the cost of the bus, all meals in Indianapolis and all festival fees (including lodging).

There will be a couple opportunities to fundraise against the cost of the Indianapolis trip, but there is really none better than working concerts this summer at Walnut Creek. You can pay off a substantial portion of the trip costs above by working a few of these concerts. For more information on that, contact Kim Stine (mhsWalnutCreek@gmail.com). You can see the full concert schedule here: <http://walnutcreekamphitheatre.com/tickets/>

Trip Disclaimers



Millbrook High School Bands

2023-2024 Wind Ensemble Summer Letter

Any student in need of financial assistance to attend the Washington DC trip can request it by emailing either Mr. Payne (apayne@wcpss.net) or band booster treasurer Kim Stine (mhsbandboosterstreas@gmail.com) before the due date of the first deposit. We will work with any student who cannot afford the cost of the trip to Indianapolis.

Attendance Disclaimer

All students in Wind Ensemble are required to attend both trips. We will be representing Millbrook High School in both cases on a national level and cannot do so successfully without every single person in the ensemble in attendance.

Attire for New Members

If you have not previously been in the Wind Ensemble at Millbrook, during the first week of school you will be fitted for Concert Tuxedos and Dresses. The cost of these dresses and Tuxes is generally a little less than \$110 per student. You may use money in your fair share account to cover this expense or write a check/use paypal. With the added trip expenses next year, I wanted to give new families a heads up on this now.

Wrap-Up

I know this is a lot of information, which is why I wanted to share it with everyone well before next school year began. I also want to make sure you know that these two trips will happen in addition to all of the other wonderful opportunities our band program normally offers. Our extracurricular ensembles will still be going strong, our classroom ensembles will still put on their normal concerts, and students can still participate and audition for various honor bands such as All-District, All-State, and UNCG (among others).

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with questions or concerns, but most of all I hope you all have a wonderful summer! I can't wait to see you either at the open house!

All the best,

Avery Payne
Director of Bands
Millbrook High School
Millbrookbands.org