

July 19, 2021

Dear YPAS Band Students and Parents,

My name is Dr. Kevin Callihan and I am the new Director of Bands at the Youth Performing Arts School. I am so excited to meet you and look forward to the opportunity to facilitate your growth as musicians! My wife (Kaitlin), daughter (Katherine), and I are in the process of moving from Virginia to Kentucky and couldn't be more excited! We have a little under one month until the start of the 2021-2022 school year! Since summer break is nearing completion, I believe it is important to share some information with everyone regarding the beginning of school as well as other vital information.

I would like to begin by stating that it is an honor and a privilege to follow Mr. Curtis Essig as the leader of this historic program. While there will be challenges this year due to the transition back to in-person learning and changes in leadership, I know that Mr. Gregory, the sectional staff, and I will be able to provide a fantastic musical and educational experience for you. We are greatly anticipating the start of the school year and have high expectations for all of our ensemble members!

The majority of the information needed by students and parents can be accessed via our website www.ypasbands.weebly.com Please know that the website is currently undergoing changes and will be fully updated before the beginning of the school year. The website contains several great pages, including the calendar (Google calendar which you can sync to your devices), forms, paperwork, important links, and much more. I hope you will find this to be a useful tool for staying informed about the program and your individual student's progress. We will not hand out hard copies of the YPAS Band Handbook, YPAS Band Calendar, or the forms to be filled out and returned at the beginning of the year. All these documents have been uploaded to the website at www.ypasbands.weebly.com Please print the forms, fill them out, and return them no later than the indicated due dates on the forms.

As I begin my 9th year of teaching (1st year at YPAS) and Mr. Gregory begins his 21st year of teaching (14th at YPAS), we want you to know we are both excited about your participation in the YPAS Band Program. The repertoire list for the ensembles this year, as always, contains some of the most influential works in the history of band literature, some contemporary and very challenging compositions, and some great orchestral transcriptions. We will also be performing brand new compositions as well as some works for ensembles of reduced size for one-on-a-part opportunities. Many of you will be assuming new leadership roles in your sections and I look forward to this being a truly rewarding experience for all of us as we learn and perform great music together!

Depending upon the JCPS travel regulations and the economy, I would like to continue the tradition of traveling and performing at a national festival annually. Unfortunately, this may not be possible this year with the current JCPS restrictions on travel. The national music festival experience allows us to perform for and receive valuable comments from educators and adjudicators who are recognized globally as experts in the field. Through the national festival experience, we are able to receive suggestions for improvement from master educators who specialize in adjudicating groups of high performance levels and therefore the feedback is more helpful than what we might receive at our local KMEA band festival. I will be working with tour companies to get some tentative itineraries. These itineraries could include great sight-seeing venues, a great orchestra concert, a top-notch national festival, and other fun features for a cost between \$800 and \$1000 per student. I'll let you know more as soon as possible.

The accolades and accomplishments of the YPAS Band Program are recognized throughout the country. The expectations continue to rise here at YPAS as well as when we perform at state and national venues. The recognition of the school name and association with high quality students and performances pays dividends for the students as well when they go to audition for admission and scholarships to universities and conservatories. Therefore 100% participation in these events is critical to their success. We can only perform at our highest levels if we have all our students working together with a complete instrumentation and everyone performing the parts they have prepared in class.

One year-round fund raiser all families should take advantage of is the Kroger Rebate Program. If you shop at Kroger anyway, this program is a “no brainer.” You simply go to the Kroger Gift Card website and sign up to support the YPAS Band Program, then when you pay for your groceries, prescriptions, and even gas, the band will receive a monthly rebate which will go into an account to reduce the overall cost of the trip. You will see even greater benefits by getting immediate family members as well as other relatives and friends who are willing to participate to help raise money by buying something they buy anyway. No additional costs, nothing to sell, no products to hand out, no money to collect!

It is important that all band families become members of our school support group known as The Producers. The Producers support group is the main funding source for everything the band has and does. The Producers have helped purchase the instrument storage lockers, chairs, music stands, most of the school owned instruments, all the computers, much of our band library, and many other necessary items. They also fund the stipends for our instrumental specialists and accompanists who work with the students throughout the year. This is a vital aspect of the program and it could not happen without the financial support of The Producers. Joining does not mean that you have to attend meetings every month and “devote your life” to the group (although many do and that is why they are so successful). It does however allow you to be considered for a Producer’s Scholarship award your senior year (if you have been a member for 4 years) and support the artistic endeavors of all the events at YPAS. If you have any questions regarding The Producers, please check out their website at www.producers-ypas.org

Senior band members need to be preparing for the Band Feature auditions which will take place in mid-September. We will be selecting only the top four auditions to perform on band concerts this year. Go to the website to get the audition form. Also, keep in mind the YPAS Concerto Competition, the LYO Concerto Competition, the LO Young Artists Competition, and “From the Top.” In addition, don’t forget about career day (October 21st & 22nd). You will need to have a high quality resume highlighting your educational and artistic backgrounds, your honors, and your achievements to me two weeks prior to Career Day. Sample resumes will be handed out at school.

Manual / YPAS Registration Schedule:

August 3rd FRESHMEN 7:30am - 2:30 pm

August 5th FRESHMEN 2:00pm - 3:00 pm

There will be an opportunity to pay YPAS Band fees online or at your orientations.

The fees for the school year:

Music Fee: \$125

Instrument Rental Fee: \$40 (\$20 for those who own an instrument but are playing on a school instrument).

CD Fee: \$44 (Optional) provides the student with a professional recording of the four school concerts.

Band Dress Fee: \$78 (Only girls who need a new or replacement dress).

Mr. Gregory and I are requesting **ALL FRESHMEN AND FIRST YEAR YPAS STUDENTS AND PARENTS** to attend a meeting to discuss our band program, meet the directors, and to give you a chance to ask questions. The meeting date and time is Thursday, August 5, 2021 from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. We will meet in the main theater at YPAS. At least one parent and the band student should be at the meeting. The program at YPAS is very unique, challenging, and rewarding but it requires some explanation to make everyone more comfortable. You can each access the band website at this time by visiting **www.ypasbands.weebly.com**. Check out the Calendar, Handbook, and the Handouts as these will be very important to helping us all stay organized.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. While I am waiting for my JCPS email, you can email me at callihankevinm@gmail.com or call/text (606) 923-6309. During the school year, I can be reached at YPAS at 485-8355 (Main Office at YPAS) 313-4160 (Band Office) or (606) 923-6309 (Cell) . If I am unavailable at the time of your call, please leave a message and I will get back with you ASAP. You may find it easier to contact me through email callihankevinm@gmail.com (eventually kevin.callihan@jefferson.kyschools.us)

This is going to be an exciting year and I can't wait to meet everyone and get started. Enjoy your last few weeks of vacation and make sure you are practicing and keeping your chops in shape because we will hit the ground running the first day of school (bring your instruments). As a reminder to all incoming and returning students; the motivation, work ethic, and dedication that you bring to class each day will be the most important factors to our success as a program and your success as a student musician! See you soon!

Sincerely,

Dr. Kevin M. Callihan
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Youth Performing Arts School
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