

## Minutes for Band/Choir program at MCMS: Parent Meeting 8/19/15

Meeting called to order at 7:16PM after parent sign in. 54 Choir parents, and 143 Band parents were present.

OPIMA President Shary Trux began by presenting a big picture for the District music program, and the foundation music creates in children's lives. Oak Park Unified is unique in that it begins in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, and continues all the way through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at the High School. Music is a superb discipline that creates a focus, goals and hard work that benefits kids for the rest of their lives.

Music Director Elana Levine discussed the great start to the 2015-16 school year. She teaches Beginning Band in periods 1 and 2, She co-teaches Intermediate Band with Zach Borquez for periods 3 and 4, Choir is 6<sup>th</sup> Period, and Advanced Band is 7<sup>th</sup> Period. She recommended that all music and choir students have a ½ to 1-inch binder to keep all of their music for the year safe. They should also be sure to have pencils and erasers at all times. Band students should rent instruments at Nick Rail, as Elana has a good relationship with them. There are now lockers to store instruments in the band room. Students can drop off their instruments before school, and then pick them up again after school. Practice is something that the students really need to learn, and parents should teach them how to schedule and practice as part of a routine. This goes for both Choir and Band. Practice logs should be filled out and are due every Friday signed by a parent to receive participation points for their class grade. Students can come in after school to practice as their time permits. Smart music is a great website where they can play or sing along with arrangements. It can be found at [www.smartmusic.com](http://www.smartmusic.com) and is a wonderful resource. Class participation is extremely important; class is 50 minutes a day and that is a lot of playing time. If they are ill and can't play or sing, please feel free to send a signed parent note, and they should still bring their instrument regardless. Please email Elana should you have any questions about anything.

Music Director Zach Borquez next discussed that this was his third year teaching. He discussed the benefits of the Oak Park school District, and the amazing rankings for our schools in the state and in the country. Even though it is a smaller, public District, it is ranked competitively alongside private schools, which is amazing, and something to be proud of. At OPHS, there are 2 concert bands, a marching band with over 50 members, two jazz bands, a Drum line, and for the second year a concert band to accompany the high school musical. From start to finish, the music program is unique and benefits 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders academically. They will be able to train and work towards future opportunities by participating in workshops, festivals and sight-reading clinics. All students at the High School have entered with the capability of playing all 12 major scales, which any Band Director will tell you are an amazing accomplishment. Other Districts just do not have the close relationship between the middle school and high school as Oak Park does. This is something unique to Oak Park. This opens up many cultural and leadership opportunities such as the IMC on the OPHS campus. The District music website is [www.oakparkmusic.org](http://www.oakparkmusic.org) and OPIMA is the district music booster group. The website has a calendar with dates of events, spring/summer festival dates, Music in the Park

dates, and other useful information. One point to note is that MCMS concerts will now take place at OPHS as the music program has simply outgrown the middle school campus.

OPIMA President Shary Trux shared PowerPoint slides that helped to explain how OPIMA helps with music expenses along with the Oak Park School district and other contributing groups. \$200,000 has been invested in the music program. At MCMS there are approximately 225 students in Band, and 79 students in choir.

Administrative duties and communication will be handled by OPIMA. There is a VP Band, Jennifer Tolentino, and VP Choir is Lisa Shaevez. This will enable Elana and Zach to focus on classroom instruction. OPIMA will also assist with the volunteers and administration for trips and fundraisers. Funds for Instrument repair, music stands, cabinets, etc. will be accomplished by OPIMA, helping to round out the opportunities for the music program. OPIMA is a 501c3 non-profit group, with budget goals and By-Laws that will assist with improving the quality of the music program. Other funding groups include the District, which helps with coaches and instruments, the C6 bond, which has contributed about \$170,000, and the PFA that has contributed in the past, but OPIMA will have to cover that contribution in the future. Wish list items such as festival fees, Multimedia Tech @ MCMS concert performances, and coaching fees are all on the wish list for MCMS. The parent "fair share" contribution is \$50.00 per student plus shirt and concert attire fees. There is an apparel website to order everything from this year. Check the website for more info.

Lisa Shaevez was introduced as VP Choir, and mentioned that Charms will be used for emailing communication to choir parents and students. Sign-up Genius lists will be emailed for choir volunteering opportunities. Choir T-shirt orders should be placed by next Friday. Keep checking email for communication regarding Choir events.

Jennifer Tolentino was introduced as VP Band. Please email her with any questions or concerns. Jamba Juice fundraiser will happen every Wednesday twice a month with all proceeds going to band. Volunteers are needed to help supervise. Administrative duties, photocopying, and bookkeeping are all volunteer duties needed. Information can be found on the website. 225 students are in the band program this year.

Shary Trux mentioned that the Jamba Juice fundraiser was given to the music program by the PFA. Deadlines for Music in the Parks trip checks will happen or the trips will be cancelled, as the District will not be paying for them this year. Band Polos are the same as in previous years, they have not changed. Volunteers are needed for a hand-me-down program for used shirts and concert attire. Questions were asked regarding learning new instruments. Elana answered stating opportunities for changing instruments would be available in Intermediate band. A reminder regarding corporate matching was announced. Meeting was adjourned at 8P.