

Recruiting Timeline

July

4th of July Parade

Mailer to all incoming 7th graders inviting them to be a part of the upcoming year.

August

August: Start of School

7th Grade

Parent letter to the incoming 7th graders welcoming them to the band program. The 7th grade letter will need to focus on supporting the student and program. Offering dates of future booster/parent meetings.

HS director should write the a letter to the 8th graders. This way they are continuing communication with those to retain to HS. The 8th grade letter might be geared more towards participation with HS like playing stand tunes at Homecoming.

Recommended Action: Be sure to stop by your feeder schools and welcome them to band. Remind them that this is just another step in their musical journey and that they are welcome to come to any football game and check out the band. If there is to be a recruiting event in the fall, mention the dates and talk up how much fun it is. (See "Feeder Teacher Memo" document.)

September

Recruitment

Look into getting customized water bottles to distribute along the parade route that says De Soto Band program or something similar. Aim for younger children when dispersing.

HS Retention

September: Possible Recruiting Event (Homecoming is in October)

October

Homecoming Parade, Halloween Concert

Homecoming Parade

6-7-8th Grade Optional Activity: Host feeder school event at football game. Be sure to communicate the event details with the feeder teachers, your administration, and your parent helpers. Make sure all paperwork is complete (release requests, field requests, facilities request, comp tickets, etc.).

Invite alumni to take part in the Homecoming parade every year. This is a past tradition that we can bring back to help with recruitment. Bring former students back to fill in holes and beef up the band to create a large musical force out on the street. Pick two pieces to perform that are relevant to either De Soto, or the band. Maybe even something that is popular at the time like a piece from the radio. Provide alumni with the music via email and offer to have two voluntary rehearsal dates with the entire band. Provide those that perform in the parade with complimentary tickets to the football game that night so that they may cheer on the De Soto Dragons.

Invite the 8th Grade band to take part in the pep band that night. Take time a few days before to remind HS students to not only engage but encourage the 8th graders to join them next year. Peer influence is one of the most effective. Teach simple pep tunes before hand to 8th graders so that they may be successful.

October: Course Booklets/Descriptions are Assembled and Prepared for Publication

Recommended Action: Sit down with your registrar/head guidance counselor and proof your materials. It is important to limit the offerings to classes that you genuinely believe will “make” for the following year. Too many choices can lead to spreading your student pool too thin. For instance, instead of having 25 students register for one class and the class “makes,” you have five students register for five different classes, none of which will “make.”

During this meeting, it is important to keep the course descriptions succinct and clear. Tell people what the course will teach and who should be registering for it.

Begin planning for the addition of JH Jazz band. Adding this course into the day should seem like the next logical step in developing the band program.

At this point you should meet with elementary teacher and make sure that they are mentioning music and band in the most positive light that they can. It is important that they provide students with a positive musical experience so that students want to continue on with music education.

November

Twin City Christmas Parade

All district concert/auditions should be something that are broadcast throughout the district. All students that make a spot in the all district ensembles should be celebrated and have their name in the papers.

December

De Soto Christmas Parade, JH Band Concert, HS Band Concert

Christmas parade

December: Course Booklets are Proofed and Printed

Materials should be created that showcase students that are currently in the program and that are relatable to future students. The Final copy of the materials should be proofed before they go to print to ensure that they are accurate and current.

Recommended Action #2: Schedule a time to visit each of your feeder schools and meet with the music classes. At this point, the HS director may look into dropping in on holiday assemblies or parties to disperse some band apparel.

I think a better use of time would be to attend all of the elementary concerts and let yourself be seen and not heard.

January

Early January: Counselors Begin Assembling Materials to Disseminate to Junior High Students

Recommended Action: Send memo to counseling staff outlining the different courses available for incoming students. A sample memo is included in these materials. **(JH Jazz Band should be included at this point in the development for next year.)**

Recommended Action #2: Send letter to parents of incoming students **(sample letter included)**. In addition to the sample materials, be sure to highlight any recent accolades (first place finishes, state championships, etc.) and any upcoming special events (commissions, major trips, guest artists).

Optional Activity #1: Host a joint concert event. ***Get in contact with the music director at Sunrise about having a band/choir concert at DJHS.***

Optional Activity #2: Host a parent meeting. Booster meeting this month should focus on the sustained growth of the program. With that being the focus, you should encourage boosters to reach out to any prospective parents that they know whom have students that can participate in the band program.

Mid January: Materials are Disseminated to Incoming Students

Recommended Action: *8th Grade*

Visit your feeder schools to talk with the students about the band experience (see “Presentation Outline” document). If possible, ask to hear each student play for 5 minutes regardless of whether they are going to take band or not. This is your chance to make a personal connection with each child and answer any questions or concerns they have.

Recommended Action #2: Make personal contact with the parents of the students who have indicated that they are not planning on signing up for band.

Recommended Action #3: Speak to your current students about the registration process. Be sure to highlight anything you are excited about for next year and remind the students about the importance of turning in registration materials. Be sure to include instructions about what ensemble they should register for and what the selection process will be. Be brief and positive and make sure to have upbeat and positive rehearsals for the next couple of days. You may want to involve student leaders in verifying who has/has not registered for band.

Recommended Action #4: Use social media/web page/emails/texts to spread the word. Share stats, positive thoughts, and ideas about the band program for the next four weeks. It is recommended that you do so via professional means (not your personal accounts) and only to students that have signed up for this service or your FB Fan page. (See “Social Media Postings” document.)

Recommended Action #5: Select parents to make phone calls to incoming parents. Assemble the necessary materials and distribute them to the participating parents. Be sure to give them a time line for completion. (See “Parent Phone Call Talking Points” document.)

Recommended Action #6: Place recruitment posters in all band hallways. (See “Poster” document.)

February

February: Incoming and Current Students Turn in Registration Materials

Recommended Action: Be sure that contact has been initiated with every student who has indicated that they may not be taking band. Contact parents and ask if they are aware of this and what their thoughts are. Do not pressure, just inquire.

March (Music in our Schools Month)

Combined concert with DJHS and Sunrise. Trying to involve this group will help improve our retention numbers from this school.

March: Course Building and Staffing Allotments

Recommended Action: Ask counselors when student counts and class requests will be available for viewing (sample included). Depending on the school, this can be a sensitive area, so be professional and respectful regardless of the answer. You can ask if there are any classes “on the bubble” that you should be aware of. If possible, cross reference class rosters with excel sheets.

April (Jazz Appreciation Month)

JH/HS Concert Band Concert, HS Jazz/Symphonic Band Concert

Set up a concert with a guest artist and have the Jazz bands play. Market the concert to the community and get information to the nursing homes and newspapers.

Meet with the 6th Grade classes and get in front of them as many times as possible. Hand out/mail a FAQs to families.

7th Grade

April: Master Schedule Building

Recommended Action: Send memo to Assistant Principal in charge of scheduling and Guidance Department Chair (see “Master Schedule Memo” document). Be sure to let them know if you would like any changes to your program’s master schedule.

May

6th Grade

Concert in the Elementaries by the HS bands

7th Grade

May: Final Touches and Check In

Recommended Action: Involve your feeder program in the scheduling process for the next year. This help to avoid conflicts and give you an opportunity to schedule any joint activities together.

Recommended Action #2: Have your leadership team contact all future members to ensure that they are still on board and that all contact information is correct. Tell your leaders to use this opportunity as a chance for them to bond and feel like they are already a part of something.

Recommended Action #3: Use any senior free days (exams/ditch day/etc...) to talk about next year and get kids excited. This way, you can “hype” the returning kids without offending the graduating seniors.

Recommended Action #4: Use the end of year check-out activity as a chance to ensure that every current student is on board and ready to go for next year.

June

June: Closure to Current Year, Prepare for Next

Recommended Action: Double check one last time with the counseling staff to make sure that your registration numbers match theirs. Cross reference your final class list with your projected enrollment roster and contact any students that are not registered but should be.

Recommended Action #2: Prepare and send your summer mailer with all information for the coming year.

Recommended Action #3: Give your student leaders the contact information for their new incoming students and ask them to touch base with them periodically throughout the summer.