

# DHS Band Boosters



## Newsletter

**April 2013  
Special Edition**

**Supporting the Davis High School Concert, Symphonic, Jazz, & Pep Bands**  
**<http://dhsbandboosters.com>**

## Background on High School Reconfiguration

AS MANY MAY KNOW, THE DAVIS JOINT UNIFIED School District (DJUSD) is considering a reconfiguration of grades 9 through 12 as part of strategic planning for academic program, fiscal health and facilities priorities. Specifically, DJUSD staff were directed “to investigate the possible benefits of 9-12 reconfiguration as a means to create a financial buffer in the district as well as meet students’ academic and developmental needs”. The DJUSD offers a Q&A page at the District website (<http://www.djUSD.net/schools/912config/>).

From our perspective as an organization in support of the Davis High School band music programs, we seek an understanding of the impacts of any reorganization scenario on these music programs. We have gathered information from Concert, Symphony, and Jazz Bands Director Tom Slabaugh about current capacities of facilities used by the bands, daily and for concerts and presentations and about staffing for the current class offerings. In addition, we obtained current data for class sizes and utilization of facilities from Hiram Jackson, parent member of the Davis Schools Orchestral Music Association.

In summary, as of the early 2012-2013 school year, numbers were 422 for DHS performance classes and 41 for Music Theory & Essentials of Music. There are 213 9<sup>th</sup> graders in performance music classes this year. Adding those to DHS means about a 50% increase. IPAB Rooms 3 & 8 would be filled for 7 periods, and there would still be a need for about another 4 to 5 classes.

There are more students enrolled in elementary music than ever before, and junior high music enrollments have been trending upwards. The suggestion from this is that there is already going to be growth in the high school music program in coming years even without factoring in the reconfiguration. All the instrument lockers are currently used. Storage space is at a premium in the IPAB right now.

With this information, the concern of the Boosters, as expressed at the March 28 meeting, was that without considerable enhancement of staff and facilities, the quality and accessibility of the music experience for students of a 9-12 high school would be significantly reduced compared to the current situation. The letter presented on the next page was composed and sent in response to this concern.

If you also have questions and concerns, we encourage you to individually contact the Board of Trustees and District Administration.

The next Board meeting is **April 18, at 7:00pm** in the City of Davis Community Chambers, located at 23 Russell Boulevard, Davis, California. On the agenda for this meeting (<http://davis.csbaagendaonline.net/cgi-bin/WebObjects/davis-eAgenda.woa/wa/showMeeting>) is a ‘Reconfiguration Workshop and Discussion’. We encourage interested persons to attend.

**John and Sue Ebeler**, Co-Presidents  
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# DHS Band Boosters Letter to the School Board

The following letter was sent to the Board of Trustees, Superintendent Roberson, Associate Superintendents Bryant and Colby and Assistant Superintendent Best on behalf of the DHS Band Boosters organization as recommended by a vote to do so at the March 28 Band Boosters meeting.

April 7, 2013

Dear Members of the DJUSD Board of Trustees and Administration,

The DHS Band Boosters has significant concerns about plans to reconfigure the High School to a 9-12 site. Based on information provided by band director, Tom Slabaugh, our concerns are primarily related to limitations in facilities, staff, and access to music programs. We feel that these areas must be addressed prior to any reconfiguration.

(1) We believe the reconfiguration will pose significant facilities limitations at the High School site. Facilities limitations impact the classroom (PA-3), instrument storage, and the Brunelle Theater.

a. The current classroom for band classes can hold a maximum of ~80 students with instruments. This year enrollments in Concert and Symphonic bands have been ~70 and ~63 students, respectively. Based on these existing enrollments, there is not enough capacity to add additional students from 9<sup>th</sup> grade into these classes (currently estimated to be nearly 100 students in the 2014-15 academic year). Addition of the 9<sup>th</sup> graders to the high school would also allow no additional growth to the band programs at any of the grade levels. As an alternative to adding more students to existing classes, additional class periods could be offered, e.g., a 9<sup>th</sup> grade band class could be offered at the high school. However, there are not enough classrooms and/or periods in the day to simply add an additional band period to encompass the added student enrollments. Currently the band/orchestra classroom is filled six periods of the day—viable plans to accommodate an additional class for both orchestra and band with existing facilities have not been presented.

b. Instrument storage in the band room is already over capacity; some current students are unable to secure their instruments in lockers because there are not enough spaces available. This leaves the students and district vulnerable to potential theft or vandalism losses

of thousands of dollars per instrument. There is no additional storage for school and student instruments at the High School if 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are at the High School site.

c. The Brunelle Theater is already filled to capacity at many of the Band Concerts through the year (the most recent Band and Orchestra Concerts were filled to capacity and students' family members were forced to wait outside). To comply with fire codes, Kathy Peter, Facility Coordinator, has asked the music directors for help with instituting a ticketing system to ration concert admissions. Adding 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and families to concerts will only exacerbate an already unsatisfactory situation.

(2) We are concerned that there is insufficient staffing to support additional students and/or classes at the high school. Teacher/student ratios are already at a maximum to provide meaningful instruction (~1:60-70 as noted above); adding more students to existing classes further limits opportunities to teach concepts and evaluate student performance. The addition of extra class periods will require additional music FTE at the high school since the current music instructors already have 1.0 FTE appointments.

(3) Largely due to the facility and staff limitations, and because reconfiguration plans at the junior high schools have not been presented, we are concerned that access to music programs for all students will be limited as a result of reconfiguration. We also request that any plan for reconfiguration should take into account access to music programs for Da Vinci students. Currently, many Da Vinci high school students travel between the Da Vinci campus and the high school to participate in music and other classes. Da Vinci Jr. High School students share a campus with Emerson Jr. High School and participate in music programs with Emerson students. Such opportunities (or viable alternatives) should still be available and encouraged for both Da

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## Boosters Letter (continued)

Vinci Jr. and Sr. High School students if DHS is reconfigured to a 9-12 site.

The DHS Band Boosters understands the need to address ongoing deficits in the district budget. However, full disclosures of the costs of reconfiguration have not yet been presented by the District Administration. We are concerned that additional students at the high school will require significant investments in facilities and staff FTE; without these investments, reconfigura-

tion will result in significant reductions in the quality and accessibility of the music programs. We request that any plans for possible 9-12 reconfiguration at the high school address these concerns prior to approval and implementation.

Respectfully submitted

DHS Band Boosters

**John and Sue Ebeler**, Co-Presidents

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# Leadership — 2012-2013

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Concert Refreshment Coordinator	Julie Hochman	dhsbbvicepres@gmail.com
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Direct Donation Assistant Coordinator	Available position	
Donation Acquisition Coordinator	Available position	
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Pizza & Yogurt Fundraisers	Available position	
Play-a-Thon Coordinator	Available position	
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Road Crew Leaders	Scott Yamamoto	
	Frenchy Hovagimian	
	Avi Steele	
<b>Director of Bands</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email address</b>
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