



## Cheshire High School Band Parents' Association, Inc.

For Immediate Release  
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### **Award-Winning Marching Ram Band Begins Intensive Pre-Season Training**

#### ***Summer Rehearsal Schedule Starts Two Weeks Before High School's Doors Open***

**Cheshire, CT** – The Cheshire High School Marching Band kicked off its 2009 season with a two-week pre-season training camp on August 17<sup>th</sup> at the fields of the high school. The band placed first in the Connecticut Division at the 2008 US Scholastic Band Association's New England Championships also took top honors in Division IV at last year's Musical Arts Conference Championship. The Ram Band's ten-day pre-season training program provided the students and staff the time necessary to prepare for the band's ambitious competition schedule which will begin September 12<sup>th</sup>, just two weeks after school starts, at a Musical Arts Conference competition in Bethel, CT.

"This year's summer pre-season training camp was incredibly productive for us," said Director John Kuhner of the Marching Rams. "The students remained focused, even in the 90 degree days we had. We've already gotten through more than half the show and we're ahead of schedule in many areas of our training regiment. The sooner we get through basics, the sooner we can start fine-tuning and perfecting the many details of the show to deliver a performance that will be entertaining for both the audience and the judges."

The main purpose of the annual two-week band camp is to quickly ramp up first-year students while refreshing returning band members. Many of the bands that Cheshire compete against go away for overnight pre-season training in August. However, Kuhner feels that the Ram Band accomplishes just as much right on the school's fields and the day-camp style of Cheshire's training lets the band's students also fit in end-of-summer time with their friends and families.

The ten-day program gives the band staff a comfortable environment to work with the students before school opens and they become distracted by homework and other extracurricular activities. The specific goals of the sixty-five hour training camp are for each band member to establish solid music and marching techniques, memorize his/her part of the show's music, and also build an internal tempo to be able to stay in time even when not facing the drum major.

A typical day in pre-season training runs six hours and begins with music rehearsal. The brass, woodwind, and percussion groups all start out separately and work on breathing, lip slurs, and other warm-ups appropriate for their type of instruments. Later in the afternoon, the groups come together to rehearse as a whole. The band switches to marching rehearsal with the color guard after a short dinner break. Students practice individual form as well as block marching as a unit and then, each student has a unique drill that needs to be mastered for the field performance.

Every field show is broken down into dozens of sets. Within a set, each band member has his/her own unique starting point with a certain number of beats to reach his/her ending point for the set. The students might move in a straight line, forward, backward, or sideways and no one student follows another student throughout the show. The band members often move extremely fast, crisscrossing and doing other intricate movements on the field, so it's imperative that everyone is in the right place at the right time. Hours and hours of practice is the best way to ensure the field moves are performed accurately.

Details on the theme of the Ram Band's 2009 field show are still under wraps but Kuhner said to expect an entertaining show unlike anything the Ram Band has performed in recent years. The first opportunity for the Cheshire community to see the show will be at the home football game on October 9<sup>th</sup>. To see the band's 2009 field show before that date, visit [ramband.com](http://ramband.com) for details on out-of-town performances at competitions in September.

### **About the CHS Marching Ram Band**

The 2009 Marching Ram Band, under the direction of John Kuhner, is considered one of the top high school marching bands in the Northeast. The band is a member of the US Scholastic Band Association, finishing first in the Connecticut Division in last year's USSBA New England Championship and second in Division V at the USSBA's Northern States Competition. The Marching Ram Band is also a member of the Musical Arts Conference and placed first at the 2008 MAC Championship in the Division IV group. In recent years, the CHS Marching Band has participated in Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, the Tournament of Roses Parade, and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Presidential Inaugural Parade. The Ram Band has been the Champion of its USSBA Division in five of the last ten years and won the 2007 Outback Bowl Grand Championship. Visit [www.ramband.com](http://www.ramband.com) for more information.

### **Photo Information**

Caption for submitted images:

photo PR1 - Sophomore Band Member John DeGennaro on trombone  
photo PR2 - Junior percussionist Alex Torok

Additional photos from the CHS Ram Band's 2009 Pre-Season Training Camp are available upon request.

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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