

You're a Band Director – Now What?

Band Parent Associations - Booster Clubs - Patron Associations

Presented by Neil Jenkins, J. P. Taravella High School, Coral Springs
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boost·er *n.*

1. One that boosts, as:
 - a. A device for increasing power or effectiveness.
 - b. An enthusiastic promoter, as of a sports team or school.
 - c. *Electronics.* A radio-frequency amplifier.
 - d. The primary stage of a multistage rocket that provides the main thrust for launch, liftoff, and initial flight.
2. A booster shot.
3. *Slang.* One who steals goods on display in a store.

Source: *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*
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According to Donald Bollinger from his Band Director's Complete Handbook "it is very important to understand that Booster Clubs can be a valuable asset, or it can have a negative effect on your program. The ultimate results of its creation will depend upon how it is organized and whether it is effectively controlled."

Steps to follow in creating a Band Parent Association

1. First establish if there is a need and desire to form such an organization.
2. If you are starting from scratch, ask others who have well-established programs for guidance and suggestions.
3. Establish your organizational plan with goals and objectives and get Administrative approval for the organization.
4. Advertise a meeting date and establish your core of interested supporters.
5. Establish a set of By Laws with goals, objectives, process for the election of officers, committees and responsibilities, eligibility, membership fees (if any), frequency of meetings, a treasury and procedures.

The main thing to remember is that you must call the shots; you must be the controlling person in all activities that the Booster Club undertakes; you decide when & how.

Areas Booster Clubs can assist the Director and band program:

Uniforms – distribution, maintenance and cleaning
Chaperones – recruiting and training for football games, field trips and special events
Hospitality – for special meetings or events with guest and Banquet needs including site, awards, entertainment, gifts
Fund Raising – help create, supervise and assist with various fund raising projects
Communications - Phone Tree – communication with each member family
Field Crew & Transportation – Marching events and Concert events involving equipment
Movement to other locations
Color Guard/Drill Team – a representative of the auxiliary unit

Secretary – Recording of Board & General meeting minutes
Treasurer – Student accounts and general funds (Financial Secretary or Assistant Treasurer for handling Student Accounts).
Past President – advisor – assumed position
President – the person you will communicate with the most

Suggestion: Most School Districts do not want your name on Booster checks. Avoid having your name on legal documentation concerning the Booster Organization.

General Functions of the Boosters (again drawing from the Band Director's Complete Handbook)

1. All decisions concerning the activities of the Booster Club should be aimed at the welfare of the student, educationally and musically.
2. Support the philosophy of the Director; provide all the students with an enriching experience and develop their talents to the highest degree of proficiency.
3. Support the program in all areas of music assessment and those activities that provide valuable musical and educational experiences.
4. Assist in providing equipment for the program (after other avenues are exhausted)
5. Assist with welcoming new parents to the program through “new student orientations”.

Other ideas to consider

1. Establish workable budgets that are well within the capabilities of fund raising activities of the Booster Club. Be accountable!
2. Research other ways to secure funds; Grants, Corporate donations, etc.
3. If using “Fair Share” to supplement fund raising, keep it to a minimum. Don't price your students out of your band program. Also be sure to show how these “Fair Share” funds are being used or will be used.
4. Establish scholarship funds to be used for special needs on Field Trips or special recognitions for musical achievement and potential music education majors.
5. Become Education Advocates and work to find ways to improve education as an organized group.
6. Volunteer hours – record all hours for chaperone duties, fund raising, booster meetings, committee work, etc. Several School Districts have recognition programs for booster groups accumulating volunteer hours
7. File Form 1099-MISC for each person (staff member) you may employ through the Booster Club that earns at least \$600 yearly. Penalties for not filing could become severe.
8. Refer to the FBA Position Paper “Etiquette Guidelines” found in the FBA Handbook and make your parents aware of its contents for all FBA activities.
9. File for Incorporation status through the State of Florida. Go to www.sunbiz.org and follow the prompts for non-profit organizations. Easy to follow and easy to do.
10. Use your Band Web site for Booster Club news and communication.
11. Be sure to thank these hard working parents for all they do for your program.

Avoid some negative aspects of Booster Clubs

1. Don't become a pressure group between the Music Department, Administration and the School Board.
2. Don't allow cliques to form within the Booster organization causing isolation among its members.
3. Don't allow the Booster organization to dictate its own goals or dictate its own music education philosophy.
4. Be sure the budget is established to equally cover all aspects of your program, not just one aspect.