# Steinbrenner marching band director has ambitious plans

September 14, 2016 By [Kevin Weiss](http://lakerlutznews.com/lln/?author=21) [Leave a Comment](http://lakerlutznews.com/lln/?p=39154#respond)

Steinbrenner High School’s new marching band director has ambitious plans for the program.

Jason Allgair, who spent the past nine years teaching at Wharton High School, is striving to increase band participation.

He’s also looking to collaborate with the school’s other fine arts programs — orchestra and theater.



The Steinbrenner marching band is looking to raise upwards of $55,000 for a trip to New York City in January. Approximately 120 students are in the band.
(Photos courtesy of Ingrid Babajanof)

“I believe that all the arts should be together in regards to doing concerts and performances, and supporting each other,” Allgair said. “I love doing full orchestra, I love the collaboration with theatre, and doing the musicals.

“I’m all about the community environment and the community feel.”

Steinbrenner’s musical faculty, including Allgair, is entirely new. Other first-year Steinbrenner teachers are Grace Jeon, orchestra director, and Corey Poole, choir director.

“All of us are just bonding together, and we want the students to feel like everyone is important, and everyone is involved with each other’s performances,” Allgair said.

At least one band member, James Wall, relishes the idea of more alliances and partnerships with other fine arts departments.

“I think it’s cool that we’re kind of expanding our horizons,” the high school senior said. “Doing more things, using other departments, working together — we didn’t do it that much in the past.”

That philosophy spreads to Friday nights throughout the fall, where the band and Steinbrenner’s cheer squad will no longer be separate entities during home football games. Instead, they’ll be performing jointly — in the name of school spirit.



The band practices Tuesdays and Thursdays during the fall, in advance of Friday night football games. The band’s first major competition is the 20th annual Lion’s Pride Marching Band Festival on Oct. 15 at King High School. The district MPA (Music Performance Assessment) is set for Nov. 5.

“I believe in the hometown feel,” said Allgair, “where the cheerleaders and the band and that whole atmosphere…is there for the spirit of the school.

“It’s all about the support of the football team and the whole feel of what’s happening on Friday nights at Steinbrenner,” he said.

Doubling the size of the marching band — which has approximately 120 members— is another objective, albeit more long-term, for the new director.

“My goal in the next four or five years is to build this program into a band of 220 to 250,” said Allgair, who’s also the district chair for the Florida Bandmasters Association, overseeing 70 high school and middle school directors. “When I was at Wharton, I started the program with about 49 or 50 kids, and I doubled the program to 110 by the time I left.”

He added: “I’m just excited to take what’s already been laid here as a foundation and build upon that. I have a really good relationship with the feeder middle school and all the surrounding feeder middle schools, and we’re going to try to get the numbers up.”

Allgair, too, has bold plans in store for the band’s ensembles — concert and jazz —over the next few years.

“I’d love for the kids to arrange their own jazz standards, and I can bring in guest artists to work with the ensemble,” explained Allgair. “With the concert ensembles, I’d like to commission new works, I’d like to have composers come in and join us, and actually be a part of the audience as we’re working on their pieces. I have a commission that I’m getting ready…for a composer to actually write a piece — dedicated for the Steinbrenner program — but, I don’t know if that’s going to happen this year or next year,” he added.

Also in the works for Steinbrenner’s band: a field trip to New York City.

Planned for the end of January, band members can expect to visit several of the city’s cultural institutions, including the Metropolitan Opera House, the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, New York Philharmonic, and the National September 11 Memorial & Museum.

They’ll also check out Broadway shows, and may get a tour of Yankee Stadium.

“We’re all really excited about that,” Wall said about the looming trip to NYC. “It should be cool.”

The trip north will ultimately tie in with Allgair’s curriculum, and the band’s marching show.

“I’m going to be bringing things that we learned culturally from New York City and connecting it as we go through the rest of the school year,” the band director said. The band’s marching show is Frank Sinatra and its last song is “New York, New York,” he said.

As opposed to just taking a select few band members to New York, Allgair’s goal is to send the program’s 120-plus kids to the Big Apple.

Approximately $55,000 will need to be raised for the excursion, the band director said.

The cost is around $1,000 per student. Students will be paying for part of it, but the rest will come from fundraising efforts that are already underway, he said.

The band is currently having a mulch sale through the end of September.

Other fundraising opportunities will follow that.

“We’ve got a lot going on,” Allgair said.

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For more information on fundraising and the marching band program, visit [SteinbrennerBand.com](http://SteinbrennerBand.com).

Published September 14, 2016