



ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL BAND

1120 Nehoa Street

Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

GREGG K. ABE, DIRECTOR OF BANDS

July 31, 2020

Dear Parents & Students,

I hope all of you are doing well during these uncertain times. I wanted to give an update on the status of the marching band season. As of today, we have not been given the green light to start rehearsals. As stated by Superintendent Kishimoto, the decision to begin rehearsals will be determined on August 19th but that could be pushed back to September depending on the status of the COVID situation.

I met with the section leaders and seniors to see how they feel about continuing marching band this semester. They all want the activity to continue however, they all know the possibility of it being cancelled at any time. I believe that the DOE is going to leave it up to the principals of each school to determine the after-hours programs. Mr. Wong has already given his support on whatever I decide, but he and I both agree that the situation may get worse and might create more chances of infection. It has been an exhausting summer being in contact with our deputy superintendent on a weekly basis just to see if our activities can continue in a safe environment. Also, the decision to push back the start of school to August 17th further complicates the start of rehearsal as well as the triple digit spike the past couple of days.

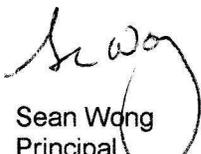
With that said, it is with a heavy heart that we will be cancelling marching band for this year. I believe that it is not okay to risk our student's health let alone my own beyond what we are doing during the normal school day. I am actually hoping that the DOE does not allow us to start only because I don't need any added pressure from the public about why I'm not going to do marching band. I am fortunate that our administration is not pushing me to decide either way or to make the decision for me. I think that it would be in the best interest to inform the students now because of the uncertainty and other unknown factors in the coming months. It would be too emotionally devastating for the students if all the performances are cancelled after all the work they put in and also taking into consideration that they all went through this scenario last semester. As of today, three of the five performances have been cancelled.

We had an excellent set of guidelines and protocols to have marching band during this pandemic, but it would have also involved having a good number of parent volunteers at each rehearsal to help make it work.

I cannot express how difficult of a decision this was for me to make, only because I really wanted to have a season, but not at the risk of the student's health and well-being. The most important thing right now is to try to keep the students engaged and still feel that band and orchestra is a viable option this semester.

I want to again express my overwhelming gratitude for your understanding and cooperation and hope we will all get back to a normal routine soon. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions. Thank you again!!!

Sincerely,


Sean Wong
Principal
Roosevelt High School


Gregg Abe
Music Director
Roosevelt High School