



LEON HIGH SCHOOL

TALLAHASSEE, FL 32308 (850) 617-5700

LION STEEL BAND PROGRAM
DR. KAYLEEN JUSTUS, [DIRECTOR](#)
JUSTUSK@LEONSCHOOLS.NET

August 10th, 2021

Dear Lion Steel Parents and Students,

Welcome to the new school year! My name is Kayleen Justus and I am the new Director of Steel Bands at Leon High School. If you are reading this letter, you are about to become – or already are – involved in the world of **pan** (steel band). We are a very special music program: Leon HS is the only secondary school in Tallahassee with this unique curricular music offering and our steel band program is one of the most distinguished of its kind in the country. We are lucky to have such a supportive community and we are proud to be a part of the vibrant performing arts culture in Tallahassee since 1990.

The steel band program is a lot like other fine arts programs at Leon HS. We primarily focus on developing performance skills, but we also train students to read and analyze notated music and we explore the cultural, historical, and commercial applications of pan performance in a global context. The Lion Steel program features 29 instruments and our daily classes include 3 advanced ensembles and 2-3 beginning bands – over 150 students! There are also three community steel bands open to anyone over 18yo, each of which meet once a week in our “panyard” rehearsal space on campus. Parents are warmly welcome to join!

During the 2021-22 school year, our steel bands will be presenting on- and off-campus concerts and the advanced groups will again compete at the Virginia International Pan Fest in May 2022. Details about our performance calendar and other activities can be found at leonperformingarts.org and the [Lion Steel website](#). I will be using the Lion Steel site and FOCUS to communicate important information with you throughout the year.

Please feel free to reach out to me anytime with questions. If you’d like to know a little bit more about me before we meet, you can check out my profile [HERE](#).

I am so excited for the coming school year, and I look forward to making music with everyone!

Cheers,

Dr. Kayleen Justus
Director of Steel Bands
justusk@leonschools.net

Lion Steel 2021–22

Syllabus

Learning Goals

- Students will **perform varied repertoire** with the full steel band and in small ensembles.
- Students will become **proficient at music reading** and performing on the pan (steel drum).
- Students will become familiar with the **cultural history of the steel band movement** in Trinidad and Tobago and how this history has shaped the international development of the art form.

Our Bands

- ***Canboulay*** – Our most advanced group. This ensemble is designed for experienced music readers who have mastered idiomatic playing techniques across varied musical styles. Repertoire is maximally challenging.
- ***Bacchanal*** – A group of exceptional players. This ensemble is designed for proficient music readers who confidently demonstrate idiomatic playing techniques across varied musical styles. Repertoire is quite challenging.
- ***Jouvert*** – Our intermediate group. This class is intended for music readers with at least one year of playing experience and is designed to develop music reading proficiency and idiomatic technical ability across varied musical styles. Repertoire is moderately challenging.
- ***Our Beginning Band(s)*** – A group of novice musicians. This class is intended for students who have not yet learned to read musical notation and/or who have never played pan. It is designed as an introduction to: 1) basic music reading skills and 2) playing techniques specific to steel band. Repertoire ranges from easy to moderately challenging.

Classroom Rules

1. Respect the instruments and each other.
2. Be present and prompt.
3. Bring an open mind, open eyes, and open ears to our “panyard.”
4. Mind your mouth and your hands: no talking or playing unless instructed.

→Lion Steel sometimes performs off-campus in Tallahassee and elsewhere. During these events, students should conduct themselves as if **in school**. There is zero tolerance for any behavior that tarnishes the reputation of Leon High School or Lion Steel. This is your community, and you are expected to respect it.

Curriculum

- **Performances**

All ensembles in the Lion Steel Program are performing groups that present concerts at Leon HS and throughout the community. All students are required to attend these performances. The major performances are scheduled in advance (many times more than a year ahead of the date), are announced at the beginning of each year, and are viewable at leonperformingarts.org. Students and parents will receive regular, detailed communication about all major performances.

- **Class Activities**

Each steel band meets for one full period each school day. The specific class activities vary depending on the ensemble, but all bands will rehearse repertoire, practice playing techniques, and learn to read and analyze musical scores. We will also explore together the cultural history of the steel band movement in Trinidad and Tobago and the contemporary applications of pan performance in a global context. This will take place in several ways, including in the form of discussions, listening activities, and homework projects.

- **Homework**

Other projects and activities will be periodically assigned to supplement in-class learning. Examples of possible homework activities include: listening assignments, music reading worksheets, artist profiles, video/documentary viewing activities, etc. The weight of these homework assignments varies according to their merit and academic rigor.

Grading

Grading procedures for steel band will vary according to the ensemble, but students in all bands will be expected to play excerpts of the assigned repertoire for periodic **graded performance evaluations** and **preparedness quizzes**. The performance evaluations target students' progress in the development of technical skill and will be announced in advance. The preparedness quizzes are not announced in advance and are designed to reward students who consistently arrive to the classroom promptly and with the required materials and appropriate attitude.

Attendance is crucial and mandatory. Participating students and parents should understand that ALL members must be present at a major performance for their band to successfully perform. The absence of even one member at a performance disrupts (and often completely destroys) the balanced sound we work so hard to achieve every day in class. **Failure to attend any one of the major performances will result in an F grade for the corresponding nine-week term.**

Students in the beginner bands will also be issued a workbook that will include graded worksheets and playing exercises/assignments. Lastly, a participation grade will be used to reward students who consistently conduct themselves in a way that demonstrates a participatory, engaged attitude toward rehearsing.

50% Successful performances (showing up at the concert/performing well)

25% In-class Playing Assessments and Content Quizzes

25% Behavior and Effort

(this is crucial in a musical group and can enable student success or prevent it!)

Class Fee

Like most performing ensembles, a steel band is expensive to maintain. Not only do the instruments cost a lot to purchase, but the Lion Steel Program also pays for \$3000 in tuning expenses each year. Though the band earns money from extra-curricular performances to cover a large portion of this cost, there is a **\$60 annual participation fee**. This fee provides each student with a textbook/learning materials, sheet music, a binder, and their uniform shirt. When compared to the fees for sports and other band classes (which are \$300+), our participation fee is deliberately cost-conscious and simply pays for the materials each student receives and uses:

Lion Steel T-Shirt = \$10
Textbook + Learning Materials = \$15
Instrument Maintenance/tuning = \$35
<hr/>
Total = \$60

Earplugs

Participation in a steel band exposes you to high decibel levels. Though we coach proper technique to avoid excessively loud sound in our panyard, all students are encouraged (not required) to use high fidelity earplugs. There will be limited quantities of available for purchase in the panyard, but students may also bring and use their own.

Citizenship/Discipline

A citizenship grade of 4 is awarded to select students who demonstrate an extra effort towards rehearsal discipline and a positive contribution to our ensemble community. A citizenship grade can be lowered for a demonstrated lack of rehearsal discipline, for disrespectful behavior, and for consistent tardiness. The rubric for **disciplinary action in steel band** is as follows: 1.) Verbal warning from instructor; 2.) One-to-one meeting with teacher after class and parent notification/contact. 3.) Lunch detention and/or 3-day rehearsal suspension 4.) Referral to Mr. Ardley/Mr. Warfel and Student Affairs for further disciplinary action.

Audition Requirements

Lion Steel hold auditions at the end of the school year in late May. After the audition, the director will post a list of the prospective “Canboulay”, “Bacchanal”, and “Jouvert” Bands to the [Lion Steel website](#). If the student encounters a scheduling conflict with the band that they auditioned into, Lion Steel policy is that students might move down a band (i.e., advanced to intermediate) but not the other way around. Prospective 9th graders (who might have played pan elsewhere) may audition and, though it is possible to skip the first year (beginning) band, it entirely depends on who has already earned a spot in the ensemble, the number of instruments, as well as other factors. *Please note:* while the director works closely with the Guidance Administrator in placing auditioned students in the band they’ve passed into, they cannot guarantee placement; only the school administration has the final authority regarding the master schedule.

- Please Complete *All* Sections of this Form *RETURN THIS TO SCHOOL!!*
- Detach and →

Participation

Please choose from the following three options:

- Attached is my child's participation money \$60 (see syllabus).
This fee applies directly toward your student's band t-shirt uniform, textbooks, sheet music, binders, mallets, & instrument maintenance.
- I am unable to pay at this time, but will arrange with the instructors to pay by this date: _____
- I am unable to pay my child's participation fee.

Please make checks payable to "Leon High School."

Student and Parent Agreement

We have read and understand the syllabus, learning goals, classroom rules, and grading policies for Lion Steel.

→Parent Signature

→Student Signature

Contact Info

Please PRINT

	Name	Email	Phone
*Parent			
*Student			
Add'l Contacts (optional)			