

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS???

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### **What is Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps?**

Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps is part of the Esperanza Performing Arts Association, Inc. The Esperanza Organization is a non-profit youth corporation committed to "the support and promotion of performing arts and pageantry in San Diego County". Although involved in numerous other youth/arts related activities, the drum and bugle corps is the largest program offering of the Esperanza Performing Arts Association, Inc.

When you join Esperanza, you become part of a tradition and a family like no other. We pride ourselves on providing every member a combination of practical skill development and personal growth. Our shows are designed to maximize audience entertainment with individual challenges.

We strive to further our mission to keep performing arts alive and thriving through our particular ensemble. Only through this form can you experience this type of excitement and fulfillment. In Esperanza you are part of something that transcends your individual contribution by giving the gift of performing arts to the future of youth ensembles in San Diego.

### **Your Decision to march in Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps. What does it mean?**

At Esperanza, we pride ourselves in setting a high standard both on the field and off. Self-sacrifice, personal responsibility and teamwork are paramount to the experience at Esperanza. We create an atmosphere that can best be described as a second family. Your corps can become your home away from home and the friends you meet and friendships you create will last a lifetime. When you earn your member jacket you will wear it with pride because you know it represents an elite group of extraordinary people who respect themselves and those around them.

Our shows are designed to be appealing and accessible to the average drum corps fan. We strive to balance the requirements of the activity with maximum entertainment and enjoyment. The show program will push you to a new level of achievement. The educational program in each of our captions allows members to expand their performance horizons and realize the potential that lies within them.

When you join Esperanza you have chosen to be part of a special experience. In our short existence we have already set a standard of excellence and an expectation of great things to come. You are part of setting history that will be remembered in years to come when you can reminisce with alumni and friends who marched with you. When you carry the tradition by setting the highest standards you have repaid the gift given to you by passing this gift onto the future Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps.

Our national tour features deluxe motor coaches, a balanced and nutritious food program, and a schedule that balances the needs of the members with the demands of a highly competitive performance environment. Most of all, the staff is dedicated to ensuring the quality of the members' educational experience. When you're ready to give your all, when you want to be the best you can be, you can be confident you're ready to join Esperanza.

### **What will I have to do to audition?**

The entire weekend is your audition. You will be evaluated based on your musical/performance ability, your marching ability, and your general attitude over the course of the weekend and the first few rehearsals.

### **Is there anything I can do to prepare for Audition Camp?**

Visit our website and read through the information provided for each caption (Brass, Percussion & Colorguard). You will find notes and information to help you prepare for the Audition Camp. Download any forms or music you need to bring to Audition Camp.

**What if I can't make it to the Audition Camp?**

The performance part of the audition is just a very small piece of the whole weekend. It's really important we see each potential member in a rehearsal setting interacting with other members, staff and volunteers. We strongly encourage everyone make it to Audition Camp. Although we are prepared to accept your video taped audition there is no substitute for a live audition. Please contact us for more information about video taped auditions.

**Do I need to bring my own equipment to the audition?**

We do ask that you bring your own instrument/equipment if you can because of the number of people that will be auditioning. Brass and percussion players should bring an appropriate instrument. Potential colorguard members should bring a '6 flag pole with a silk and a weapon if you spin. We will supply you with any instrument/equipment you'll need once you are a member (with the exception of gloves and shoes).

**Can I audition on my band instrument?**

Yes. Because we will have more potential members at the audition than we have horns, we encourage you to bring your own instrument. Brass instruments only of course.

**I am a woodwind player. Can I make the corps?**

Each year there are a few members who join the brass section that have never played a brass instrument. Woodwind players often become some of our best brass players because the effort and attitude they bring to the corps. If you are already a strong musician, you work hard and dedicate yourself to the brass instrument then you can become proficient in short order.

**What can I do to improve my chances of making the corps?**

Most importantly, show up. Each year many potential members who could have made the corps cut themselves by giving up after just one camp or even before the first camp. Work hard, practice, have a positive attitude and have fun.

**Is there anything I can do to raise my ability to the level you need?**

Practice, practice, practice! Visit the Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps website at [www.EsperanzaCorps.org](http://www.EsperanzaCorps.org) and go to the 2006 Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps Auditions. You will find information about auditions and files to download that include exercises and tips to improve your chances of making the corps.

**What is the minimum age you accept?**

Typically that is 15 but we have had occasion to accept more mature 14 year olds. It depends on the individual and their parents.

**What is the maximum age you accept?**

According to DCI rules, in order to march the 2006 season, you must be born on or after 6/2/84.

**Does it cost anything to audition?****REGISTRATION FEE - \$40**

A nonrefundable Registration Fee is required before you will be considered for membership. Those prospective members who have not paid the fee will not be asked back or have access to membership information and calendar. The fee is non-refundable and does not go towards payment of the yearly member fee. This is a one-time fee per person, per year. For this fee you get fed, evaluated for membership, receive 2 days of instruction and help offset the cost of the facility.

**Forms? Where do I get these?**

Go to [www.EsperanzaCorps.org](http://www.EsperanzaCorps.org) and click the link to the *2006 Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps Audition* section of our web page located at. Please complete and bring to the *Liability Waiver* and *2006 Membership Application*.

### **What do I need to bring to auditions?**

- **Completed Forms downloaded from the *2006 Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps Audition Website***
- Registration Fee
- Brass/Percussion exercises from website
- Instrument (*if you have one to bring*)
- Colorguard Equipment
- Mouthpiece
- Sticks/Mallets for percussion
- Comfortable Clothes for Marching
- Sneakers
- Sweatshirt or Jacket
- Water / Water Jug
- Sunscreen

### **If I missed the Audition Camp can I still attend a camp and audition?**

YES! If you were unable to attend the Audition Camp in you can come to any rehearsal and audition. We will select members first and foremost from those that attend auditions. So if you have an unavoidable conflict please email the director at [Director@EsperanzaCorps.org](mailto:Director@EsperanzaCorps.org) to make special arrangements.

### **What if I decide Esperanza is not for me?**

So long as you have not made the commitment to join the corps or signed the Membership Agreement then we will wish you well and the best luck in the future. Hopefully you learned a little while you were here and have had a good experience to take home with you.

Drum Corps is not for everyone and takes an extraordinary amount of time, commitment and money. Unless you really want it then it probably is not for you. We would rather you discover this in December than in May.

### **I do not know if I have what it takes to be a member of Esperanza;**

#### **I am nervous about auditioning for the corps.**

Over 500 people request audition information each year... only 150 show up... Why? We are not entirely sure, but believe they are apprehensive about the new experience... of the immense commitment... of working outside of their "comfort zone"... of trying something new!

Just go for it! There is nothing to fear! You will have a great time at the camp. You will meet so many people just like you – from around the country and possibly the world! This is an incredible opportunity to be surrounded by people assisting you in being the best you can be!

### **How many spots are open in the corps?**

There are 135 spots open in the corps every year. Every member must audition for the corps each year, including returning members.

### **How many spots in each section?**

Although this is not set in stone, this is a rough estimate of the maximum numbers for 2006.

#### **Brass – 64**

22 Trumpets  
10 Mellophones  
22 Baritones  
10 Tubas

#### **Percussion – 30**

9 Snares  
5 Tenors  
5 Bass  
11 Pit

#### **Colorguard – 40**

### **Why do I have to have an email address?**

We have been working over the past several years to improve the way we get information to you. We have found that email is a fantastic medium for distributing camp mailings, schedules, music, last minute info, etc. There is also a major cost savings in not having to mail out 200 pieces before and after every camp! Numerous websites offer free email and Internet access.

### **How can I find out the most up to date information about the corps?**

Visit our web site at [www.EsperanzaCorps.org](http://www.EsperanzaCorps.org) and sign up at the Members Only Section. Ask the Director for the current password.

### **Do I have to quit my high school band?**

Absolutely Not!! In fact, we strongly recommend that you continue to participate with your high school group. Esperanza is an enhancement to your high school or college education. We will cooperate with your high school teacher to give you the best experience possible.

### **Will marching with a drum corps negatively affect my "concert sound"?**

We take great care to use the correct embouchure and performance techniques. You will find from both brass and percussion standpoints, we teach no different than a symphonic approach to the instruments. The only exception would be the actual marching percussion as there are some differences to the sticking on a marching instrument vs. concert percussion.

### **My high school band director does not want me to do drum corps?**

We want to help you and your high school program at the same time. The best way for us to do that is if your band director helps us too. If your band director would like to visit rehearsal then they can let us know what they would like to see from Esperanza to promote a higher level of music education.

### **How to I get to rehearsals?**

Each member of the corps is responsible for their own transportation to rehearsal and camps. For auditions we do not provide ground transportation assistance to Southern California prospective members.

If you live in Southern California we suggest you carpool to rehearsal. After you have been offered a position in the corps the best idea is to talk your section leader or the drum major and see they can help you with transportation. We have members traveling from all over Southern California to march with Esperanza so we can help you find someone to carpool with to Esperanza commitments.

If you are an out of town member and you need to fly to San Diego then we can assist you with transportation from the airport to auditions and monthly camps. Please email us at [Director@EsperanzaCorps.org](mailto:Director@EsperanzaCorps.org) for ground transportation information. We can only assist members that fly into San Diego International Airport so please plan to travel there.

### **What is the difference between a Full and Mini-Camp?**

Full and mini-camps are each month beginning January 2006. Full camps will be overnight from Friday through Sunday (Monday during President's and Memorial weekend camp). The corps provides food and housing during full camps. A mini-camp does not include an overnight stay and includes a rehearsal on Saturday and Sunday only. Except for meals at Audition Camp, Esperanza only provides housing or food during full camps. No meals are provided at mini-camps.

Where do I stay and **eat for** full weekend camps, mini-camps and summer in-town rehearsals? Esperanza uses several area schools for our Full Camps. During Full Camp housing is provided and dedicated volunteers prepare food for the members. We rehearse and eat there; the members sleep in the gym, and shower in the locker rooms.

During in-town summer rehearsals and Mini-Camps housing and food is the responsibility of each member. See the Drum Major to help assist you with housing while you are in-town.

### **What if I have a conflict for attending a rehearsal camp?**

It depends on the conflict. Until you have been accepted into the corps we hope you make all arrangements to attend rehearsal. You are excused from any Esperanza rehearsal for the following reasons: 1) Sickness, 2) Major Family Emergency, 3) School Band or Performing Arts conflict or 4) Special Request made to and approved by the Director.

**What if I cannot make a camp or rehearsal because of a school conflict?**

Conflicts can often be worked out when you are responsible and honest with the Director and Caption Head (teaching staff). While you are encouraged to attend every camp, and the competition for spots usually demands your attendance, exceptions are made. Pre-arranged school commitments take precedent over drum corps activities. Please communicate possible conflicts on your application and to your Caption Head at the first camp. This should be worked out ahead of time with the Director or your Caption Head. Communication with is the key to resolving schedule conflicts.

**Will I have to miss any/much school to join?**

School commitments come first as long as we know about them in advance. This does not include missing rehearsal for poor time management to complete school assignments but for conflicts due to time inflexible classes and testing. If you manage your time correctly you should finish school assignments before rehearsal so Esperanza will not impact your education.

**How strict are you about attendance during the off-season?**

Since we only see you once a month, it is critical that you be at all camps for their entire duration. An unexcused absence can cause you to be removed from the roster. Regular rehearsals are an important part of our off-season program. We have performances and other commitments during the off-season so you need the practice.

**What is the rehearsal schedule like?**

During the off-season, members are required to attend camp once a month (twice during January). Starting in May rehearsal schedules varies from section to section so please check the calendar for specific dates and times.

Starting in May, a weeknight sectional for brass is added for In-Town members and percussion members are required to attend weekly Sunday rehearsals plus a few Saturday sectionals. All members are expected to attend full rehearsal starting in June.

**Do your camps conflict with winter percussion competitions?**

It's possible a conflict may arise. We stress the importance of keeping your commitment to your high school or college music program. Please keep in mind that the competition portion of your weekend will be very short and you should make every effort to attend as much of the camp as possible. Conflicts with independent units must be discussed with staff on a case-by-case basis.

**Will this interfere with winterguard?**

No. Guard members are required only to attend the Audition Camp. If our Audition Camp interferes with your guard program, contact us to arrange alternate audition methods.

**When does the Esperanza colorguard rehearse?**

Esperanza colorguard will not be expected to attend camps until late April. Check the 2006 Camp Schedule. Starting in May, a weeknight sectional for colorguard is added for local members and all colorguard members are required to attend weekly Sunday rehearsals plus a few Saturday sectionals.

**What is the summer commitment?**

Drum corps is an intense, highly rewarding experience. The level of dedication and commitment to excellence is probably far beyond anything you have asked from yourself before. Due to this, 100% attendance is essential. The sacrifice of your summer vacation pays high dividends so drum corps members forfeit in the summer what many others take for granted. For Esperanza Drum & Bugle Corps members, the sacrifices you make to attend every daily summer rehearsal is commitment that is easy to make to yourself and the other members of the corps. It is a small price to pay for the once in a lifetime irreplaceable feeling of satisfaction and reward.

Typically, we begin full corps daily rehearsal in the third week of June. Every member is expected to begin attending full corps daily rehearsals as soon as possible. ***Starting in June, the only excused absence from rehearsals is school and graduation commitments.*** As soon as you are dismissed from school we will expect you to begin attending daily rehearsals. Release from Esperanza rehearsals for school performances/rehearsal only applies during the school year.

### **What's a typical day like in the summer?**

The summer can be broken into two parts: In-Town Rehearsal and National Tour.

The in-town portion of the summer is just what it sounds like. In-Town Rehearsals normally run from 9am to 9pm. Some of the competitions are in Southern California and we normally have one weekend in Northern California. There are a few weekday rehearsals that start at other times so check the calendar.

The National Tour is completely different. We are on the road for a few weeks traveling from city to city in charter coach busses. A normal day on nation tour is constantly changing. If it is a show day than we usually rehearse in the morning and relax a little before the performance. Typically we arrive to the show around 5pm and perform around 8pm. After a snack at the show we will "roll" between 11pm and midnight for our next destination. We arrive between 2-6am, bed-down for a few hours and get up for breakfast. We rehearse, eat lunch, rehearse, eat dinner, shower and load for the next show. The next day it starts all over again!

### **Can I take summer school?**

Most members are able to take the first session of their summer school program. Please check your school schedule and policy to see if you can do both. There is some room for flexibility in our schedule but when we go on the road it is impossible to take summer school at the same time.

### **I need to attend my college orientation during the summer. What can I do?**

With many of our members being college aged, we deal with issues like this all the time. Most colleges have more than one set of dates for orientation. With DCI finals being held in early August, it is usually early enough that you would be able to catch an orientation prior to school. If there's no other way, we will find a way to work around it. We deal with it on a case-by-case basis. Come to the Audition Camp in December, go through the processes, and when you decide on your school, or maybe you have already, let us know the dates in question, and we will look at the tour schedule, and see what can be worked out. Again, you will be among many, many college freshmen; so don't feel like you will be the only person in this situation. The key to making everything work smoothly is to address situations like this as soon as possible.

### **How much does it cost to join? When are membership fees due?**

Fees are due in monthly installments starting in January (check the membership agreement for detailed amounts). Payment schedule and amounts due will be handed out at the 2006 Audition Camp.

### **If I am unable to complete the season will there be a refund?**

There are refunds available but it really depends on when and why this happens. See the membership agreement for detailed dates and amounts.

### **What other money will I need?**

In addition to your membership and camp fees, you will need to pay for travel expenses to and from camps during the off-season as well as for shoes, socks, t-shirts and extra gloves. In addition, you might be required to purchase performance/rehearsal supplies like mouthpiece, sticks, mallets and notebook. During the summer the corps will provide about 95% of your meals when on the road. The only money you NEED is for meals during your days off, occasional meals en route, replacing toiletry items and laundry. We generally do laundry every 10 to 14 days and you should expect to pay \$5 to \$10 per laundry day. Also, optional items like your member jacket and souvenirs are not included.

**Are there ways to reduce the fees?**

There are a variety of ways to reduce your membership fee. We also hold several fundraisers for the organization throughout the year. Actively participating in these or your individual sponsor drive will help offset costs as well.

**What is the Concession Fundraising Program?**

Esperanza Performing Arts Association operates a concession booth at Qualcomm Stadium and Petco Park. During Charger Games, Special Events and Padre Games the organization makes revenue that can go directly towards your membership fee. The corps depends on this source to keep your fees down. When you work enough events you begin earning money that can directly reduce your fees. For more information visit the Esperanza Website and click the link to Qualcomm Stadium/Petco Park.

**What if I still owe money to the last corps I marched with?**

Unfortunately, you will not be permitted to participate in Esperanza until you have fulfilled all financial commitments to previous drums corps or winter color guards/percussion ensembles.

**Are my parents invited to attend or volunteer?**

Absolutely! Parents are encouraged to attend every camp. Esperanza administrators and other volunteers will be in attendance at all auditions to answer questions. Every other month Esperanza Boosters hold a General Meeting that is open to your parents.

**Who do parents talk to about Esperanza?**

Parents who have questions are encouraged to contact the Director at 858 391-1311. Feel free to email questions to [Director@EsperanzaCorps.org](mailto:Director@EsperanzaCorps.org).

**Do I have to have my parent's permission?**

If you are under 18 then your parents must consent to your membership. To march in Esperanza you must agree to a Membership Contract that will be distributed to prospective members in January.

**What's the music going to be this year?**

As soon as we've decided, we'll let you know. But, you can count on it being even more exciting than last year.

**When can I get a member jacket?**

Member jackets are ordered mid-May. When the time comes the Drum Major will make an announcement about jackets and get your size. If you are a member in good standing and are up to date with your membership fee, you will receive your member jacket after you make your last payment. The jacket usually costs about \$75. We only make one order per year.

