

Peabody Band of Gold sets lofty goal

Finishing in the top three at the Division I State Band Championship in Murfreesboro and continuing to increase moral in the program will be this year's goals for the 75-member Peabody Band of Gold.

"Last year at the Division I State Band Championship in Murfreesboro, we finished in ninth place. We had a good run up to that point, but we felt like we may have fallen short in placement. I think we had a successful season and a successful run, but the kids just did not feel as good about it. So, I think that is leading a lot of kids, in this year, to want to push harder and get better sooner," explained Peabody Band Director Steven Westbrook.

"This year, our number one goal is to be in the top three at the Division I State Championship. We wanted to set an attainable goal, one that is not too lofty, but one that would make us feel proud at the end of the year," revealed Westbrook.

He elaborated, "We plan to achieve that goal by having Toe School for new and younger marchers. Also, we will run silent rehearsals on Thursdays to where there are not a lot of distractions. Occasionally, students get chatty, especially as it cools down. We feel that, by running silent rehearsals, we can get a lot more done with more instruction from staff members. Just being quiet helps, because they can hear directions and follow what we need to do."

He added, "We are also looking forward to the implementation of Chromebooks this year. We are going to use those to record assignments. When the students do their pass offs for music memorization, I will be able to watch that



PEABODY BAND DIRECTOR Steven Westbrook would like to see his students place in the top three at this year's state competition.

video and see if they really know their music or not."

"Our second goal, as we continue with the good attitude, will be to increase moral in the program. During camp, we had a lot of conversations about promoting healthy relationships, which is one of the objectives of the band program here at Peabody. And, we have got some ideas, from identifying Students of the Week and maybe even a few silly things from me along the way, including Flashback Fridays from when I was in band or maybe a Bitmoji of me doing something silly every couple of days or so," he explained.

Upperclassman leadership will determine the measure of success the band attains. The strengths of this year's band will be leadership, playing ability and work ethic. In addition to the upperclassman leadership, the band also possesses very strong officers. Officers include: Eshan Patel and Claire Rollins, captains; Reni Erven and Anna Tubbs, lieutenants; Kendall Powell and Kerrigan Wade, field commanders; Chloe Cates, front ensemble cap-

tain and Angela Abbitt, color guard captain.

Senior members are: Abbitt, Cates, Nadja Donnell, Erven, Jordan Haynes, Heather Heatherly, Keely Malone, Patel, Katie Pickard, Rollins, Katelyn Starr, Tubbs, Troy Vanalstine, Isaiah Wade and K. Wade.

These officers and seniors will be charged with setting examples for the band's younger members. "We are 65 percent sophomores and freshmen, which is a very large amount. I have two great classes of freshmen and sophomores, which is a good problem to have, because that means we are going to get older in a few years and that will be fantastic," explained Westbrook.

He continued, "We had a great camp, where we pushed our freshmen pretty hard. I knew that the sophomores, juniors and seniors wanted to get straight to work and just get better every day and get as much accomplished and memorized in that



PHS BAND OFFICERS – Peabody band officers for the 2017-18 school year are (front row, from left) Eshan Patel, Karrigan Wade, Kendall Powell, Claire Rollins, (back row) Angela Abbitt, Anna Tubbs, Reni Erven and Chloe Cates.

week-and-a-half band camp we had. My concerns are the fact that we are really young still and the heat. It seems like it has been hotter this year than it was last year, which was pretty bad. My real concern again, like every year, is if it is going to be too hot to get outside and get some work accomplished or are we going to be more worried about getting overheated."

The band director listed, "This year, the keys to success are going to be a lot of practice and continual great attitudes out of everybody from leadership down to new freshmen. To make this group activity work, if we all have a poor attitude out their every day, be it heat or other things going on in our lives, it really gets in the way of progress."

Director Westbrook explains the rationale for selecting this year's field show and contest theme. "Beyond the Blue" Horizon is the title of the show. Band directors have to wade through a lot of music and ideas to put together a show. I like to start by finding music I like first and then I think of a concept from that. It was about two

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