

# Dublin Taiko Group

## Parent Information Sheet



### **What is Taiko?**

In Japanese, the term refers to any kind of drum (taiko), but outside Japan, it is usually used to refer to ensemble taiko drumming. Ensemble-style Taiko (as opposed to festival performances, rituals, or theatrical use of the drums) was developed by Daihachi Oguchi in 1951. He transformed taiko performance from its generally monorhythmic roots in traditional settings in festivals and shrines to the polyrhythmic ensemble playing that has become synonymous with Taiko. Oguchi was trained as a jazz musician, and at one point, a relative gave him an old piece of written taiko music. Unable to read the traditional notation, he found help to transcribe the piece. He found it too straight forward for his tastes and, on his own, created the interwoven structure of rhythms voiced by different drums or groups of drums. He transformed the work to accommodate multiple taiko players on different-sized drums playing different rhythmic lines and just happened to establish the the present-day conventions of Taiko.

### **How did Dublin get a Taiko group and where does Eitetsu Hayashi fit into all this?**

The roots of Dublin Taiko Group can be traced back to Den Tagayasu, who in 1970, gathered a group of 40 young men who were willing to devote their entire lifestyle to taiko playing and took them to Sado Island for training. He became inspired by a drumming tradition unique to Sado called ondeko or "demon drumming". This style required considerable strength and stamina to play well. Den named his group Ondekoza and implemented a rigorous set of exercises for its members including running essentially a marathon every morning at 4:00am. In 1975, Ondekoza was the first taiko group to tour in the United States. Their first American performance occurred just after the group finished running the Boston Marathon while wearing their traditional uniforms. In 1981, some members of Ondekoza split from Den and formed another group called Kodo under the leadership of Eitetsu Hayashi. Kodo went on to popularize taiko through frequent touring and collaborations with other musicians.

In 1982 Eitetsu left Kodo and embarked upon a solo career in which he has performed with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in 1984, as the first-ever solo taiko performer, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and, the Berlin Philharmonic. He is recognized as the world's preeminent solo Taiko performer.

In 2003 Ms Susann Blair, band director at Davis Middle School became aware of a Dublin Arts Council grant that would provide for a year long residency program enabling a group of 20 middle school students and their music teacher to learn Taiko from Eitetsu Hayashi. She committed herself and her students to this one year residency.



## **The Dublin Taiko Group**

After Eitetsu's residency ended, Ms Blair continued teaching Taiko and the Dublin Taiko Group (DTG) was created. From an initial group of 20 middle school students, DTG has grown to over 120 students in grades 6-12 and is now the largest k-12 based taiko organization in North America. DTG alumni return to play with the group and have gone on to play with Taiko groups at Miami University of Ohio, Bowling Green State University, Columbia, Berkeley and Cornell. Dublin Taiko Group is now in its 13th year of operation.

DTG currently consists of 4 levels of students: Beginners (first year Taiko learners), Veterans (2nd year and up), DTG JV (students have shown a desire and commitment to become members of DTG) and finally DTG, the main performance group. All groups will have multiple opportunities to perform during the course of a year.

The mission of Dublin Taiko Group is to develop student performers who demonstrate a passion for the artistry of Taiko and promote diversity and expansion of cultural knowledge in our community.

## **The Director**

The group remains under the continuous direction of Ms. Susann Blair who has been DTG's director since its inception. Ms. Blair is in her 22nd year as the director of bands at Ann Simpson Davis Middle School, and Woodwind Specialist for the Dublin Scioto High School attendance area. In addition to her work in Dublin, Ms Blair is also the National President of the American School Band Directors Association which has over 1000 members representing all 50 states.

As Director, Ms. Blair is in charge of all decisions regarding the acceptance and scheduling of practices and performances as well as all decisions regarding a student's eligibility to participate in any DTG activities.

## **Performances**

Over the course of a school year there are usually 6-8 performances including the Asian Festival, the Davis Middle School spaghetti dinner and the Taiko Gala. In addition, the Taiko Boosters work to create additional concert options as both performance opportunities for the Taiko Students and fundraising opportunities for the Taiko program.

In the past DTG members have performed at: the Asian Festival, Marshall University, Dublin City Council, Cedar Point, Disney World, the DTG 10th Anniversary Gala (with Eitetsu Hayashi), the Mashiko Civic Auditorium (Mashiko Japan), the Fashion Meets Music Festival, the Ohio Army Reserve Command and just last summer Dublin Taiko was one of the nightly headliners at the 12th UK Taiko Festival in Exeter, England.



## Dublin Taiko Group Boosters

The DTG Boosters is the organization that makes it possible for DTG to continue to exist. **Operating expenses for Dublin Taiko Group are not funded by Dublin City Schools.** DTG relies on the Dublin Taiko Booster organization and its parent volunteers for funding and operational support. Dublin Taiko does not exist without the Booster organization and its volunteers.

The DTG Boosters provide:

- Uniforms (primarily handmade)
- Tabi (traditional Japanese divided shoes)
- Bachi (drumsticks) for use during practice and performances
- Transportation for students and drums (including truck rental) to all performances
- Logistics for performances
- Support for guest Sensei (Teachers) to host workshops with Dublin Taiko participants
- Maintenance for all drums and accessories including drum stands
- Maintenance for the DTG website
- Organization of practice schedules and other required meetings
- Communications with the students, parents and other members of booster organization
- Coordination and some funding of group trips
- As much fundraising as possible including our annual Gala concert and silent auction

The booster organization handles the majority of the operations of Dublin Taiko to enable Ms Blair to concentrate on teaching.

Your support of, and assistance with, the Taiko Program is essential for the program to thrive. Parent involvement in the DTG Boosters is what enables the Dublin Taiko program to offer such an enriching experience at such a low cost for our students.

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***The Booster organization meets the second Monday of each month at 7pm at Davis Middle School (enter through the east student dropoff/pickup entrance near the football field)***

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The Booster organization is run by an Executive Board which consists of

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Recording Secretary
- Corresponding Secretary

The Boosters also have key leadership positions that support the operations of DTG including:

- Transportation & Logistics Coordinator
- Uniform/Costume Coordinator
- Spirit Wear & Merchandise Coordinator
- Webmasters Committee
- Gala Chairperson
- Performance Coordinator
- Publicity Coordinator
- Social Media Coordinator
- Equipment Maintenance Coordinator
- Photographer/Historian



In addition to these key roles there are many different opportunities and ways to volunteer and support Dublin Taiko.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising is a key part of what the Dublin Taiko Boosters focus on. We are supported by Dublin City Schools but draw no funding from the school district. All expenses associated with the program are covered through the booster organization. Your Pay to Play fees are just one of the sources of funding for the group. Some other sources include performance fees, Kroger Rewards, Amazon Smile points, United Way donations, grants, restaurant night fundraisers, our annual Gala and more.

The majority of our fundraisers feed our general fund. When we are working towards a trip, we will have additional fundraisers targeted at the trip fund to help offset student and family costs. These vary from year to year, as do the trips.

### **The Taiko Gala**

The Gala is our annual concert held in the Spring (April/May) where all our students have an opportunity to showcase what they've been working on throughout the year. We also take the time to honor our Senior students and volunteers during this event. It is a special evening and it is crucial to the Dublin Taiko organization.

The Gala and the Silent Auction held during the Gala, are our biggest fundraisers of the year and as such they provide the majority of the funding supporting the Dublin Taiko program. All of the funds raised at the Gala go into the Taiko general fund. These funds are needed to keep the program operating as they go a long way towards covering the cost of uniforms, drum maintenance, bachi (drumsticks) and the other operating costs we incur throughout the year. While we collect Pay to Play fees, they cover less than half of the Dublin Taiko Group's expenses.

## Taiko Terms You May Hear

<b>Bachi</b>	Japanese drum sticks
<b>Happi</b>	Short hip length robe worn by taiko drummers. The beginners, veterans, JV, and DTG each have distinctive happi.
<b>Hachimaki</b>	Headband; strip of cloth tied around the head
<b>Obi</b>	A belt or sash used to hold happi closed
<b>Odaiko</b>	The big drums (usually 2'-3' in diameter); the largest drum in any ensemble is called the o odaiko (usually about 4' in diameter or larger)
<b>Okedo</b>	“Barrel drum”; made of staves with straight sides; heads are constructed similar to the shime, but larger. The heads are also roped like a shime; heads are usually in the 15” to 24” range. They body is 2' to 2.5' high.
<b>Shime</b>	“Tightened” drum; smaller, flat drums whose heads are pulled together by rope or metal bolts; highest toned drum, often used to maintain the basic rhythm on songs; also used on solos. The body is under 1' high.
<b>Tabi</b>	Soft shoes with a separate area for the big toe.



## Counting in Japanese

1	ichi	6	roku
2	ni	7	shichi
3	san	8	hachi
4	shi	9	ku
5	go	10	ju

## Dublin Taiko Group Student Costs

\$40 Pay to Play (for the year)

\$12 Personal Bachi (drumsticks) optional

\$10-20 Sleeveless shirt for under uniform - students purchase on their own.



## Key Performance Dates for 2017 - 2018

December 1st 2017-- Davis Spaghetti Dinner - *Beginners and Veterans*

April - May 2018 -- Taiko Gala - *All Groups*

May 26 & 27 2018 (tentative) -- Columbus Asian Festival - *Beginners*

## Staying in Contact

<b>Website</b>	Our website is our central point of information including our calendar of practices and performances  <a href="http://www.dublintaiko.com">www.dublintaiko.com</a>
<b>Email</b>	Emails are sent on a regular basis from the Booster email account: <a href="mailto:dtaikog@gmail.com">dtaikog@gmail.com</a> . These are sent to the email addresses provided on the student registration sheet.  <b>If you are not receiving these messages please send us an email with your name and your students name and we'll get you added to the list.</b>
<b>Remind101</b>	We utilize this text system to send short reminders and other important and sometimes urgent information to the students and parents. This system requires parents and students to register.  <b>To register for Remind101 text the message @dtg17 to 81010</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	You can follow us on Facebook at <a href="https://www.facebook.com/dublintaikogroup">https://www.facebook.com/dublintaikogroup</a>
<b>Instagram</b>	Follow us at <a href="https://www.instagram.com/dublin_taiko">@dublin_taiko</a>
<b>Twitter</b>	Follow us at <a href="https://twitter.com/dublin_taiko">@dublin_taiko</a>
<b>You Tube</b>	Visit our You Tube Channel to learn more about Dublin Taiko Group: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE51pjODiCP-05w0EvQ6Jow/videos">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE51pjODiCP-05w0EvQ6Jow/videos</a>  About Dublin Taiko: <a href="https://youtu.be/pgpfK-O6Val">https://youtu.be/pgpfK-O6Val</a> The Drums of Dublin Taiko: <a href="https://youtu.be/7D-5sFyB_R8">https://youtu.be/7D-5sFyB_R8</a> The Dublin Taiko Uniform: <a href="https://youtu.be/uGodUYoIW3k">https://youtu.be/uGodUYoIW3k</a>

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## 2017-2018 Dublin Taiko Booster Board

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**Susann Blair - Director**

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### Executive Committee

<b>President</b>	Susan Roper
<b>Vice President</b>	Bill Fullerton
<b>Treasurer</b>	Terry St. Germain
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	John & Gail Mullett
<b>Corresponding Secretary</b>	Amanda Haggerty

### Coordinators & Committees

<b>Transportation Czar</b>	Toby Strohl
<b>Gala</b>	Stephanie Dunlap/Susan Roper
<b>Uniforms</b>	Veronica Lewis
<b>Merchandise/Spirit Wear</b>	Bobbie Termeer
<b>Performances</b>	Melissa Zimmerman
<b>Social Media</b>	Melissa Zimmerman
<b>Publicity</b>	<b>(Vacant)</b>
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>(Vacant)</b>
<b>Photographer/Historian</b>	Isao Yamakawa Gordon Berkebile
<b>Webmasters</b>	Kevin Gilbert Toby Strohl Eric Riddle