



BOOSTER CLUB

Marching Band for Parents 101

Helpful tips from veteran band parents

Football - home games:

- Kids stay after school, practice, are fed dinner, then go to game together. They are given bottled water after the half-time show. Also, they usually have 3rd quarter "off", so many like to visit the concession stand. If desired, they may want to take money for snacks.
- Many of the band parents sit next to the band which does not have assigned seating. These ticket prices per ticket are lower than purchasing season tickets. However . . .
- Season tickets give you an assigned seat, which in the new stadium will be a nice one with a back. If you join the All-Sports Booster Club which begins with Football season, each level gives you opportunities with tickets, parking passes, admittance to other sporting events, etc. If you have other children - in the past - there have been special events and seating for middle school students. Double check policies annually to see if anything changes for your family.
- With a few minutes left in the second quarter, the band makes their way down to the field area to warm up and prepare. Pit crew - follow the band until you reach the pit instruments and stay there until half-time begins.
 - What is a Pit Crew? Parents who help band students push wheeled items (instruments and props) on and off the field during games and competitions. If you have a percussion student who plays a front ensemble instrument, your help is needed and much appreciated. And the sidebar result is getting to know the other parents of percussion students. The more parents that volunteer to help with this, the more we can be on a rotating basis so everyone watches the show a few times and helps in pit a few times.

Football - away games:

- Away games - not required. A "Pep Band" stays after school and is bussed to away game. Kids sign up - upperclassmen first, then others as slots for available sections are open. Kids are responsible for their own food - either pack it or bring money for concessions provided by the other team.

Competitions:

- Schedule - Do not plan anything else for your student this day. There have been times in the past the band doesn't know the time they perform until one week prior. And even if their slot is in the evening, they practice prior to departure.

Competitions continued:

- On a typical day, they will report to the band room, practice, eat (they're fed), change clothes, and then are bussed to the competition. Other times, they may not eat until after they perform - it all depends on their assigned time slot.
- Food, etc. at the competition - There is normally not much time for concessions or anything else for the kids, but it happens occasionally that they have time for a snack or buy an event t-shirt if they brought money. For family and friends, all sites offer decently substantial food, because these are all day events for the host.
- Parking - Plan on getting there early. Even if there is plenty of parking, be prepared to walk.
- Cost - There is an entrance fee for competitions - normally \$10-15/person. Families, be prepared with cash.
 - Pit Crew - WE NEED YOU! There are normally a few arm bands/passes for you to get in free, however, they are not always available. Please be prepared to pay the entry fee just in case.
- Pit Crew - At a pre-determined time, find the Viking Marching Band semi-truck where all trucks, busses, etc., are parked. You will help push instruments and props to the field from there.
- Dress - Comfortable! The Viking Band Family wears their band shirts and tries to sit together. Cheering from the stands has a great effect on the kids, and when we're together, it's that much more dramatic. Plus, you get to sit with all of your new best friends. Packing suggestions are sunscreen, hats, and stadium seats.
- Go Time - Competitions are timed events. The students have a specific amount of time allotted to get on the field, perform, and get off the field. If they go over time, their score reflects such. Several judges score the band - some are in the viewing "box" and some are on the field up close and personal to the band kids as they perform. Many are talking into a recorder making notes of every single little thing. Their scores are put together, some computing takes place, and the results yield first, second, third, etc., placements, as well as special awards. These are given at the end of the session - which most often for us - is late at night.

This is a working document. We welcome your additions.

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