

A guide for new band parents (and veterans, too)

This booklet is the product of former “new band parents” who spent a good bit of time in our “freshman” year in various stages of confusion. In the many hours we spent watching practices, picking up our kids, and going to competitions we have all felt confused, lost and totally bewildered at one time or another. We hope this document will help ease you through the transition from “freshman” band parent to “veteran” band parent.

For most of us (parents and students alike), the transition from middle school band programs to high school band programs is huge, especially in marching band. The increased expectations come with greater rewards, in terms of your student’s accomplishments and the pride you will have in watching their accomplishments. This document is our attempt to share with you some of the finer points of making the most of your “freshman” year as a band parent.

The Marching Band program is supported by a parent run organization – the Centennial Knights Parent Boosters. The CKPB exists solely through volunteer parents in order to help provide your students with an enjoyable and rewarding band experience. Please join us in meeting this challenge by volunteering your time and talents. The students will reap the benefits. We welcome all new parents and look forward to getting to know you and your students!

Marching band is an optional ensemble. We ask that each student participating in Marching Band pay an ensemble fee. If there is an issue with paying the fee, please contact Mr. Warner – we don’t want to exclude any student. The fee is used to offset the expenses of running the Marching Band, including band camp, uniforms, transportation, staff, etc. Read on to find out more...

Marching Band Camp

Band camp is conducted in late July early August during the two weeks prior to the start of school. The staff and students work **very** hard for about eight hours a day, five days a week. The scheduled start and stop times may vary from week to week, and Mr. Warner will send schedules home with the students. During camp, they learn the music and marching routine for their fall show.

The kids get quite a workout. Be prepared for running laps and plenty of sweating. It’s an experience most of the kids “love to hate.”

Dress appropriately – t-shirts, shorts, comfortable sneakers, hat, and sunscreen. Bring a water container – unlimited refills are available throughout the day – water is your best friend.

Band camp culminates with a “show-n-tell” for the band families. It’s great fun to come out and see how far the kids have come in just two weeks. You can meet other band parents, the staff, and the booster organization.

Another major benefit of band camp – when your freshman marching band student arrives for the first day of high school, he or she will already be a part of a well respected group and will have a whole new group of friends (across all grades) to help with the transition into high school.

Marching Band Season

The Marching Band season starts as band camp ends. Practice continues after school during the week. Each week, Mr. Warner prepares a schedule.

Football games

The band performs their show at half-time of all home football games (Friday evenings), as well as playing in the stands during the game. The band has a roped off section in the stands and many of the band parents sit together near the band – a great opportunity to get to know other parents.

Competitions

The marching band competes against other high school bands on most Saturdays in the fall. Most of the competitions are local and one or two are out of town. Your student is responsible for getting a permission slip signed for each competition (they can’t get on the bus without it). It is great to watch the competitions and cheer the kids on.

Uniforms

Your student will be issued a marching uniform consisting of jacket, pants, shako (head covering -- please don’t call it a hat), shoes and gloves. You will need to provide black socks. The shoes and gloves will belong to the student. If lost, there will be a replacement charge...

Help Needed!

During marching season, the students need many hands behind the scenes to make their shows successful. As your student enters high school, this is one of the few opportunities you may have to stay involved with their activities. They realize very quickly that Marching Band doesn’t happen without a lot of parental support. The boosters will be looking for parents to:

- Provide meals during away games
- Help distribute water to band members during football games and competitions
- Help getting equipment on and off the field during half-time shows and competitions (better known as Pit Crew)

- Help with uniform fittings and alterations
- Chaperone trips to competitions
- Truck driver – We take a rental truck to competitions to carry the larger equipment.
- Any other special talents or skills you have to offer the program!

Fundraising

We conduct several fundraisers throughout the year to support the Marching Band program, as well as our other music ensembles. For each, we will need a chairperson. Fundraising activities are strictly voluntary and not a condition of your student's participation in any of the music programs.

Your ensemble fees only scratch the surface of the expenses incurred in running CHS's outstanding programs. Please try to participate as you can in any of these or provide us with your ideas for others:

- Sprit wear- we have in the Fall the ordering of Knight's Band sprit wear.
- Car Washes – We hold several car washes throughout the summer and early fall. This is a great time for your freshman student to get to know the other members of the band in an informal, fun setting. Look for the sign up sheets!
- FFA Fundraiser – We conduct a nut sale in the Fall by taking orders that are delivered in early November – just in time for the holidays.
- Raffles
- Your ideas !!!

Helpful hints to save you time, gas & grief

Mr. Warner, the staff, and the booster organization want this to be a positive experience for all the students and their families. Here are some helpful hints (learned from our own experiences):

- Hold your child responsible for being prepared. The first time they forget something, will likely be the last. They really do learn to be resourceful when they have to be.

- “If you are early, you are on time. If you are on time, you are late. If you are late, get ready for push-ups” This means that students are expected to arrive for scheduled practice about 15 minutes early so they are in position and ready to rehearse at the scheduled start time. If start time is 6:00 p.m., plan to arrive by 5:45 p.m.
- When you pick up your child from practice, try to be there a little early:
 - First, you’ll get to see the band run through their program
 - Second, you can listen to the dismissal. There are usually announcements about what is new and what has changed. Also a great opportunity to meet other parents
- Mr. Warner and the staff try very hard to end practice at the scheduled time. Occasionally practice may run over. Please be patient ... it’s usually for a very good reason.
- Ask your student for the schedule each week, but be prepared for changes.
- Check the web site often – www.kinghtsband.org
- Network – Take the opportunity to meet other parents (after practice, at games & competitions, fundraising activities, etc.). This is how we all met each other. It is also the best way to get helpful hints on band parenting from others.
- Be prepared to cheer! The band loves it when they have their own cheering section at games and competitions.
- Keep all small uniform items (socks, shoes, gloves, etc.) in a bag. That way, you won’t spend time hunting for them when needed.
- Don’t hesitate to ask any of the “veteran” band parents or MMKBB Board Members. We’ve all been there and are anxious to help.

You know you're a marching band parent when

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- You make three more trips than expected to drop off your child with everything he or she needs.
- You can't pick your child out of the crowd because they all look alike
- You no longer speak of your child as a fourteen-year-old son/daughter, but as a "freshman trumpet."
- You prominently display a band calendar in your kitchen and have band dates marked on your work calendar
- Your newest best friends are fellow band parents!

We hope this has been helpful. Anytime you feel lost, tap a "veteran" parent on the shoulder and ask for help. Our main goal is for each of the kids to have a great experience being part of the Mighty Marching Knights.