



Parent Handbook & Survival Guide

created by the

LHS Instrumental Music Boosters

My student wants to join the LHS Lion's Pride Marching Band! ***Now what?***

Welcome to the family!

You are joining a group of parents who are dedicated, fun and enthusiastic! All the things your student has heard about marching band at LHS are probably true: it is hard, fun, intense and rewarding. Students in marching band form close friendships, forged in the heat and sweat of band camp and strengthened on long bus rides and hours of practice!

Marching band is a sport, and it needs cheerleaders and supporters, just like any other sport. This is where parents come in. It takes a village to have a successful marching band season and we will need plenty of help and support. Marching band is also full of lots of traditions that are passed down from year to year. The parents who have gone before you have put this handbook together to help you navigate this new world and to help your family to quickly feel at home in the Lion's Pride Marching Band family.

Season Overview

The marching band season runs from early August through the first weekend of November.

- **Band Camp Schedule**
 - Band camp runs for three full weeks in August. Camp typically begins the first week of August, but the exact schedule depends on the school calendar
 - During band camp, students will rehearse for six hours per day, either 9-4 (with an hour for lunch) or 9-12 and 6-9.

- **Rehearsal schedule** (after band camp through championships)
 - Full band rehearsals Tuesday and Thursday evenings 6-9 pm
 - Horn Line (winds) sectionals Wednesdays 2:30-5 pm
 - Percussion sectionals Wednesdays 6-9 pm
 - Color Guard sectionals Mondays 6-9 pm

- **Competition schedule**
 - Band competitions will be held almost every Saturday from mid-September until the beginning of November
 - Plan for your student to be gone all day until after midnight!

History of Lion's Pride Marching Band and TOB info

Liberty has a longstanding tradition of excellence and is regarded as one of the finest competitive units in Maryland, modeling marching style, technique and the latest music trends after leading drum corps units nationwide. Liberty has been an active member of Tournament of Bands (TOB) for over 30 years, winning dozens of Chapter Championship flags with specialty awards for best music, marching, percussion, color guard and drum major and two first place Atlantic Coast Championship wins. The band is currently the highest scoring Maryland band in the history of the organization with a score of 98.00. Moreover, Liberty is the only Maryland band to ever repeat the honor of Atlantic Coast Champion.

TOB competitive marching shows are massive productions that contain powerful music selections of a diverse and varied repertoire with highly stylized visual components complete with theatrical-like costuming, props and sets. TOB is known for the high level of rigor, demand and pursuit of excellence placed on students. Liberty chooses to participate in this circuit because the educational philosophies and adjudicated aspects closely mirror that of Ms. Jason, the staff, and overall mindset of the instrumental music program. This circuit also most closely mirrors the performance rigor associated with DCI and DCA (professional drum corps organizations).

For more info about TOB or to view the season competition schedule, visit their website at njatob.org.

Band Camp

Summer Band Camp is a necessary and mandatory part of Marching Band. Three uninterrupted weeks are needed to “field” the show prior to the start of school. This time is valuable as students will learn the entire 7+ minute show with all music, routine, and drill memorized, with the ability to perform their work for the parent’s preview on the final Friday of camp.

Competitive marching band is a team sport that does not “bench” students or have understudies. All students have an active role in the show at all times; therefore, attendance at band camp is critical. Families should make every effort to work vacation plans around band camp. Students who are unable to avoid absences due to vacation plans or prior commitments (within reason) will be allowed to participate at the discretion of the Director on an individual basis.

Band Camp operates on a broken schedule to allow students relief from the heat with time for rest and relaxation between rehearsals. Rehearsals are six hours per day and are either 9-4 (plus lunch break) or 9-12 & 6-9. The exact schedule depends on which section your student is in: Color Guard, Battery, Horn line (winds & brass) or Front Ensemble (pit).

What to bring to band camp:

1. Instrument, music, 3-ring binder with page protectors, and other necessary materials or equipment for your instrument.
2. Dot book & writing utensil (a dot book is a small flip, spiral bound notebook to make drill notes. Many students also bring a lanyard to wear the dot book around their neck).
3. Plenty of water, healthy snacks and a bagged lunch (MWF).
4. Sunblock, hat, sunglasses and light, reflective clothing.
5. Lace-up tennis shoes (only); no flip-flops.

Competitions

Competitions are on Saturdays (or Sunday for Atlantic Coast Championships). Students find competitions to be the highlight of the marching band experience as they are extremely fun, a creative outlet, and build team spirit and morale. Bus rides are always fun and students find competition hosts to be very accommodating with food and souvenirs. Family and friends are encouraged to follow the buses or carpool. Parent support is needed for “pit crew”, uniforms, chaperones and other volunteer positions.

Not all families attend all competitions, but it’s encouraged to attend at least a few. It’s always fun to see how the band progresses and refines their show throughout the season! Parents often carpool to the shows and sit together to cheer Liberty on. Parents also have an opportunity to purchase candy grams (a candy bar with a personal message) to send their student to open on the bus ride.

When you plan to attend a competition, you may purchase your tickets ahead of time from the Boosters. A portion of the proceeds from ticket sales goes to whichever school sells them. Buying tickets ahead of time makes sure that money goes to Liberty!

A typical competition day schedule is as follows:

- **Sectional breakfast** – it’s a tradition for most sections to meet for breakfast before practice. This is optional and not a school-sponsored part of competition day, but is a great way for students to bond with their section group.
- **Rehearsal** – 9am -mid afternoon with a break for lunch (varies depending on location of competition)
- **Prep for departure** – students get dressed/hair/makeup, buses and trucks are loaded with equipment
- **Travel to competition** – most of our competitions are in central PA or West VA, so travel usually takes 1.5-2 hours. Students ride in buses with their sections. Most of the time, there is a stop for food/restrooms. Students bring their own money to buy food.

- **Competition** – exact time varies, but most performances are in the evening. The schedule will be provided ahead of time so parents know the exact time LHS will take the field. After the performance, LHS waits until the end of the show for the awards presentation.
- **Return** – buses usually return to the school between 11 pm and 1 am.

Special Events

In addition to band camp and competitions, several special events take place throughout the marching band calendar.

Tailgate & Preview Show – takes place on the final Friday of band camp. This is an opportunity for friends and family to preview what the students have been working on. The evening begins with a tailgate party in the parking lot (families bring their own dinner and a dessert to share) and ends with a demonstration from the students.

Extravaganza – takes place in mid-September. This is our “home show” and is the first competition of the year as well as a fundraiser event.

Home Games – various Fridays throughout the football season. During home games, the marching band forms a pep band to play throughout the game, with the exception of the third quarter. They also perform a half-time show on the field. Families are always encouraged to come support the band!

Homecoming – in addition to the usual home game performance, the marching band also participates in the pep rally and parade.

Chapter Championships – the second-to-last competition of the season. Chapter Championships are fun because the season is winding down and typically the Lion’s Pride band is performing at its peak. (And we usually win!) Families are strongly encouraged to attend Chapters and cheer for Liberty. Traditionally, if Liberty wins, parents gather at the high school to welcome the buses home and to attend the “banner ceremony,” where the winning banner is pinned in the display case by senior students.

Trunk or Treat - the week of Halloween, during one of the Tuesday or Thursday evening rehearsals, parents decorate car trunks and hand out candy to costumed band students and siblings. Afterwards, the band performs the complete show for parents.

ACCs (Atlantic Coast Championships) – final competition of the year! ACCs are the only competition that typically takes place on a Sunday, usually in central PA. During ACCs, seniors are recognized as well as any ACC scholarship winners.

ORMS Fine Arts Day – usually in November, after ACCs. Select marching band members head to Oklahoma Road Middle School to give ORMS students a taste of what marching band is all about.

Uniforms

Liberty Marching Band students typically have two uniforms: a competition uniform and a standard uniform. In addition to the uniform, students also wear gloves, shoes, a “show shirt” (white logoed t-shirt that goes under the uniform shirt) and white compression pants (to allow students to modestly change on the bus).

The competition uniform changes every year and is based on the show theme. The band uniform typically consists of white overall pants (bibbers) and a close-fitting top. Color Guard has a different uniform than the rest of the band. The cost for the competition uniform is included in the annual marching band fees. Fittings for this uniform take place the first week of band camp.

Throughout the marching band season, parent volunteers form the “White Pants Brigade,” and take home a portion of white bibbers to wash and return by mid-week.

The standard uniform is typically used for non-competition performances, such as half-time shows. This uniform is updated every six years or so and is included in the band booster expenses.

Transportation

Parents are responsible to provide transportation for their students to and from LHS for band camp, rehearsals and competitions. Carpooling is encouraged!

All bus transportation to and from competitions, as well as equipment trucks, are provided by Johnson’s Bus Service in Westminster, MD. CCPS policy dictates that all students **must** ride the transportation provided.

Fee Information

Annual marching band fees are approximately \$400 per student, depending on what section the student is in and their individual uniform or instrument needs. Fees include uniform (not including show shirt and compression pants), food (during special events like Extravaganza, Homecoming, and Championships), transportation costs, and instrument or equipment rental (if

applicable). Typically, a down payment (around \$150) is due in June and the balance is due in August. The down payment is non-refundable after July 1.

Role of the Boosters

Any parent with a child in any of the LHS instrumental music programs (IMP) is a member of the Instrumental Music Boosters. You can find more info about the Boosters at the website:

lhsimp.com

The IMP Boosters support all the Instrumental Music Programs including symphonic band, wind ensemble, jazz band, orchestra, percussion ensemble, marching band, and color guard. The Boosters provide Ms. Jason with resources to run these programs at a high level. These resources come in the form of both volunteering and fundraising.

Parent Volunteers

We couldn't have a successful marching band season without parent volunteers! Our parent volunteers help with events, fundraising activities, chaperoning, cleaning uniform pants after competitions, prop and pit crew and more. No experience is needed for any of these roles; however, any role that involves contact with students will require CCPS Volunteer registration/training. Volunteers also help with various fundraising activities throughout the year, including car washes, craft fairs, mattress sale, restaurant nights, food sales, and holiday grams.

All parents are strongly encouraged to sign up for one or more volunteer opportunities. Nervous because you've never done this before and don't know what to expect? You can be paired with a more experienced parent volunteer. You'll never have to figure things out on your own! Don't like talking to people? We have a wide variety of roles to fill, involving interaction with the public, handling money, behind-the-scenes setup and tear down, monitoring students, etc. If you're not sure what a particular role entails, just ask! A successful marching band season requires a village to make it happen!

Fundraisers

While the marching band fees cover a portion of the costs, there are many expenses that are not covered in the annual fees. Transportation expenses alone (including 3 school buses, 2 Penske trucks and CDL drivers to transport the marching band and show props to/from competitions) run approximately \$20,000 per year. In addition, we pay for the show music, drill (about \$4k per year) and instructors. The Boosters also help fund instrument repair, instrument purchase (if needed), and other fees as needed.

This means that fundraisers are hugely important to a successful marching band season. Some of our most important fundraisers are the mattress sale, Extravaganza and craft fairs. But even smaller fundraisers add up quickly and are key to offsetting costs.