



Westfield High School Shamrock Pride Student/Parent Handbook

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Welcome to the Westfield High School Shamrock Pride

We are very excited that your family has chosen to be a part of the Shamrock Pride Marching Band and Guard. This will be a unique and rewarding experience for both you and your student.

This handbook has been put together to assist both the student and parent. The band and guard programs provide many great opportunities for your student. As with all programs, there is a lot of preparation and support required to make everything work. We know each year many questions will arise. This handbook has been designed to help answer those. If you are unable to find the answer to your question, please contact one of the Directors listed on the first page. Let's have a great season!

Westfield Philosophy of Music Education

Young people should have an education that gives them the opportunity for a wide variety of learning experiences. Music provides a unique avenue to the imaginative and affective aspects of life and their contribution to our cultural heritage. Young people play, sing, move, compose, and listen to music through participation in the music program. They have active musical experiences of both an individual and shared nature under expert guidance. Their lives and the life of the community will be enriched by their participation.

As music educators of Westfield High School, we strive to:

- Nurture an enjoyment and understanding of music, which will enrich the students' quality of life.
- Help students realize their potential by providing opportunities for creativity and expression of feelings and ideas through music.
- Develop individual musical interests and skills that will allow participation in music-making throughout life and which may lead to a career in music.
- Expand knowledge, awareness, and appreciation of different kinds of music to cultivate discriminating consumers.
- Offer varied musical experiences through which students may become acquainted with other art forms and cultures.

Shamrock Pride 101: Getting Started

All students wishing to participate in the marching band program **MUST** be enrolled in at least two trimesters of high school band. **Advanced Concert Band I (Horn line) or Advanced Instrumental Ensemble I (Percussion) are the required courses for the First Trimester. Students involved in the Color Guard are the only exception and do not need to be enrolled in a class.** The marching season consists of the Summer Band Rehearsals/Camps, Band Camp and the first eight weeks of the first trimester. The Shamrock Pride performs at all home varsity football games, the annual homecoming parade, and in several marching band competitions throughout the state culminating at the ISSMA State Finals held at Lucas Oil Stadium.

Throughout the summer months the Shamrock Pride will schedule several rehearsals and camps. During the First Trimester of the School year the Shamrock Pride will rehearse daily during the classroom portion of the day and on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Eligibility: Earn your dot!

The Shamrock Pride is a competitive ensemble much like any other sport, but it is also a class where an academic credit is earned. In order to be successful, students must be able to commit a large portion of time and effort to the program in and out of the classroom. The Shamrock Pride is not an auditioned group, and it takes everyone's commitment and effort to be successful. To **"earn your dot"** in the competition show it is **mandatory** for students to meet the following eligibility requirements:

Summer Requirements:

1. Full participation in at least 75% of the scheduled Summer Full Band Rehearsals
2. Full participation in the Woodwind, Brass, Percussion or Guard Camp
 - Music Camp (Horn line and Percussion) June 27th – 30th 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.
 - Color Guard Camp July 20th – 24th 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.
3. Full participation in the Full Band Movement Camp July 18th – 21st 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.
4. Full participation at Marching Band Camp July 25th – Aug. 3rd
5. No unexcused nor more than two excused absences within a week as listed in the Attendance Policy

The only exceptions to the summer eligibility requirements are:

1. Attendance at any Music or Marching Summer Camps that are scheduled at the same time as a Shamrock Pride Camp/Rehearsals (e.g., Music for All Summer Symposium)
2. Contracted Membership with any Drum Corps International organization
3. Other exceptions listed in the Attendance Policy in this handbook

Fall Requirements:

1. Full participation in at least 75% of the scheduled evening rehearsals
2. Full participation in all scheduled Mini-Camps
3. Full participation in at least 75% of the Friday Night Football Games
4. Full participation in all Saturday Competitions/Rehearsals
5. No unexcused absence nor more than two excused absences within a week as listed in the Attendance Policy

Failure to meet the Eligibility Requirements will result in students NOT having a permanent performance spot in the competition show. Ineligible students will not be allowed to perform at Friday Night Football Games or Saturday Competitions. Students will be placed in Non-Performance status but will still be required to participate at the events in full uniform as determined by the Directors. Students may resume at Competitive Status once cleared by the directors.

Alternates

Students who do not meet the Eligibility Requirements may be placed in an Alternate position. Alternates may be required to “fill in” a spot for a competitive performing member due to injury or other extenuating circumstance. Alternates will be assigned an instrument group and be required to learn and perform all visual aspects of that instrument group in the competition show. If a member of the assigned instrument group is unable to perform, the alternate should be able to step in and perform that spot in the show. Alternates will be required to attend all rehearsals, camps and competitions.

Performance Requirements

As a competitive ensemble, students are required have all of their music memorized and be able to play with proficiency. They must also be able to demonstrate all marching and visual choreography with little to no errors. **Students who are not meeting the minimum performance standards may be replaced by an alternate until the standards are met.** Students who have been replaced will continue to attend rehearsals and performances so they can work on improving their skills. Once the required skills are obtained students can resume their position in the show at the approval of a director.

Rehearsals and Camps

First-Year Marchers Training

In May we have scheduled several dates to acclimate and inform first-year members to the expectations of the Shamrock Pride. Students will meet upperclassmen and staff members. We will introduce terminology and teach fundamental techniques for movement and music.

Music/Guard Camps

In June there will be a 4-day music camp from 5pm-9pm for Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion. In July there will be a camp for Guard. During these camps we will begin learning the music/equipment work for the competition show.

Movement Camp

In July all members of the band will attend movement camp. At movement camp students will learn the basic and advanced marching and dance techniques that will be incorporated into the competition show. Students will need to be prepared for being outside and wear loose-fitting clothing.

Band Camp

Band Camp is held at WHS. The first week, students rehearse from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. Lunch is provided. Supper break is from 4 – 6 p.m. The second week is Monday – Wednesday from 5 – 9 p.m. Band camp is hard work and the kids will be tired and hot. Be supportive; encourage them to persevere. If there is a serious problem, please contact a director.

Days start out early and are followed by practice. Water breaks are followed by practice. Lunch is followed by practice. Supper break is followed by (you guessed it) practice. There is limited free time. There is a “Talent Show” for all members and some time for activities and games. Parents are there to provide snacks, encouragement and supervision.

Hazing is not permitted. The band is heavily supervised. Please notify one of the directors if you have any concerns regarding student behavior.

- Everyone is expected to participate in the Talent Show.
- There are medical personnel on site.
- Personal items should be marked for identification.
- Suggested items for camp are instrument, water jug, music folder, towels, washcloths, 2 pair of tennis shoes, 2 pairs of socks per day, light jacket or sweatshirt, loose-fitting clothing, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and suntan lotion, rainwear, long pants, dot book, pencils, binder with strap, gloves for brass players, camera, insect repellent.
- There will be dress-up/spirit days. These will be advised by the Drum Majors. Awards are given to the best section and individuals.
- Hints: Even though it is summer, bring a light jacket or sweatshirt, as the nights can get cool by the time everything gets put away.

Dress

Shorts and t-shirts will be ideal dress for the week. Students may wear tank tops, but they must comply with school dress code. No spaghetti straps. Socks and good tennis shoes must be worn at all rehearsals. No Sandals! A hat or sun-visor is recommended.

Food Services

Lunch is provided during band camp courtesy of the Band Boosters. Students with special diet or food allergy restrictions will need to bring a lunch. Students may not leave the school for lunch. The menu for Band Camp will be included in the band camp mailer sent out in June. Students will be dismissed from camp for dinner.

Rules, Guidelines and Policies for the Shamrock Pride

Attendance Policy

Attendance is **mandatory at all band performances!** Any problems will be dealt with on an individual basis. Any absences from all or part of a rehearsal, summer or fall, will require a **written excuse from a parent or a doctor giving an explanation or reason for the absence.** Missed rehearsals of more than 2 days due to illness will require a note from a doctor in order to be excused. Notes must be given to Mr. Sands, Mr. Hughes or Mr. Shinault within 24 hours of the absence or at least 24 hours in advance of the absence when possible. Students with jobs will be expected to be at all rehearsals and performances. Inform your employer accordingly. Family Vacations need to be planned around band activities. Students that miss any part of a rehearsal or camp must make up anything they missed before the next scheduled rehearsal outside of rehearsal time. The instructional staff will not take time away from rehearsals to assist a student who has missed. **If a student has one unexcused or two excused absences from a rehearsal within a one-week period, they may not be allowed to participate in that week's performances.**

Parent Releases Policy – Picking up your student after a performance

Occasionally parents may need to take their student directly following a performance. This must be laid out to the directors in writing at least 24 hours in advance of the performance. **When picking up a student at the contest site, student or parent must give a written note, signed by their parent or guardian to a director.** Parents may be asked for identification if a staff member or chaperone is not familiar with the parent. Students must be seen by a director with their parents prior to leaving the event. These requirements are in place to protect you and your student. The student is also responsible for having someone else unload their instrument and anything else they are responsible for when the band returns to the school.

Financial Policy

The WHS Band operates on an annual budget of \$140,000. The majority of this sum is generated by student fees and volunteer fundraising. The Westfield Band Boosters have a financial policy form that will need to be completed and on file by the due date. The fees for the marching band season are set at \$425 for Competitive Marching Band Horn line, Percussion members and Guard members. The fee for Friday Night Marching Band members is \$250. These fees help us with our operation costs by paying instructional staff, buy equipment, provide transportation to events etc. A payment plan is in place to help break up the fees. Payments must be made by the due date, or arrangements must be made with the booster treasurer prior to the due dates in order to remain in good standing. Failure to make payments or alternate arrangements may result in students being placed in noncompetitive status until payment is made. Individual accounts are set up for each student. These accounts may be used by the student for their band fees, instrument needs, uniform needs and any travel expenses. The accounts are funded by payments made into the account and/or money earned by the student by participating in fundraisers. During the year, fundraising opportunities are provided for the students to earn money for his/her account. Each student's account is credited upon receipt for the total amount earned. Once registered at www.charmsoffice.com, you will have the ability to view your student's account at any time.

Instruments and Equipment

Students are expected to provide their own instruments, except for the larger or more exotic instruments such as percussion, tubas, baritones, bassoons, bass clarinets and color guard. Students who will be using school-owned or band booster-owned equipment must have a **School Instrument/Equipment Use Agreement** on file that has been signed by both the parent and the student. Students are not asked to pay a rental fee to use school instruments/equipment, but if a school instrument/equipment being used by a student needs repairs that are above normal wear and tear, a fine of \$25 per incident will be billed to the student to help cover the cost of the damage. Students will not be allowed to use a school instrument/equipment unless the agreement is signed and returned.

Parents, we strongly encourage you have your student's musical instrument covered on your homeowners insurance. Unfortunately, with the large number of students involved in this type of activity, accidents can happen. Carrying insurance on your student's instrument may help if an accident occurs.

Rehearsal Guidelines for Students

1. Each student is expected to be on time, if not early, to all rehearsal/performance functions, with instruments/equipment ready to begin. If you are on time, you are late!
2. The student is expected to have their instrument/equipment and music ready prior to starting for all rehearsals and performances.
3. Students should have a pencil ready to mark music, dot books, etc. **(NO INK PENS!)**
4. Students should behave considerately to whomever is on the podium or giving instructions, whether it be the director, staff, drum major or guest of the band.
5. Students should treat school/booster-owned equipment like their own. Any loss or damage of the equipment will be the student's liability and will be assessed accordingly.
6. There are four (4) places your instrument/equipment should be, whether school-owned or privately-owned: In your hands, lined up in a section, lined up in cases or in your band locker.
7. Cell phones are **NOT ALLOWED** during rehearsal. They may be in your car, locker, backpack or purse. Directors or staff will confiscate any phones out during rehearsal time and will return them at the end of the rehearsal.

Rehearsal Clothing Guidelines

Students should wear comfortable clothing to all rehearsals. Shirts (required for all rehearsals and camps), shorts, sweats, loose-fitting pants, socks and good tennis shoes are the most acceptable attire. The Guard is required to wear sports bras as well as spandex shorts under practice shorts. Please listen to weather reports in the morning or evening and plan your attire accordingly. When class time rehearsals begin, you must bring proper attire to change into if your school clothes for the day do not meet these requirements. No clothing that falls outside the school dress code policy will be tolerated. Students will be asked to call and get an acceptable change of clothes if not dressed appropriately.

Practice Begins

Your student will need a one-gallon thermos, sunscreen, GOOD tennis shoes for marching, and gloves. Make sure the shoes have good support and are in good repair (Converse or deck shoes are not good marching band shoes). Sandals or other open-toed shoes are not allowed! Consider a hat and maybe sunglasses to protect students from the sun. They need to be prepared for all types of weather. We do practice in the rain, snow and sleet!

The students will be provided a small notebook or they can make up one using 3-by-5 cards. This is called a dot book. Students will be provided a lanyard or they can adapt a strap of their own. You may want to get an old page protector or cheap piece of plastic to use as a cover.

A word of warning: Practice, especially the early days, can seem a lot like boot camp. Endurance training like running and push-ups will help the kids get physically ready for some very long days ahead. For some students it is a very intense experience that can leave them feeling frustrated and off-balance. How parents can best handle this is likely to depend on your parenting style and your child's personality. Try not to blow off your child's concerns, but try to keep in mind there are some valuable life lessons to be learned about working with others. Talk to them, support them and encourage them to hang in there. Only you really know your child and whether this program is going to be too much. Before you make any final decisions, talk to the directors and maybe an experienced band parent. Perhaps they can offer insight and suggestions on this decision.

Drop-off times: On time is late. The band must be on the field (or in their designated practice space) with their instruments, ready to go by the time practice starts. Please plan on having your child at the school at least 15 minutes before the start of practice. Earlier is even a bit better. Seniors, Drum Majors and Section Leaders may be at the school even earlier on practice days and be willing to help members who may need to work on something outside of practice time. Occasionally, a section will have an earlier than usual start. Your child should know about this in advance and keep you informed. It helps to keep checking in with your child because they get busy and they do forget.

Pick up times: To the best of our ability, rehearsals will end promptly as scheduled. After-practice responsibilities depend on what your child plays in the band. Practice may end at 8:30-9:00, but the band still needs to put their instruments away. Some sections have a brief section meeting right after practice, and members of the pit or prop team need to move their equipment from the field to the band room or semi and put it away. The pattern is pretty consistent throughout the season, and rarely do practices end early. Parents, when picking up your student please park in the parking lot outside of door 1 at WHS. Please **do not** park along the curb or in front of door 1 blocking the wheelchair-accessible ramp. It is very difficult to maneuver some of the larger pit and prop equipment to and from the band room, and we need the curb and ramp area clear to make it easier.

Thursday Nights: Thursday is the traditional night for parents to stroll to the practice field and appreciate the band's progress. You are welcome any night, but on Thursday, the week's work is showcased. You will watch the show evolve and sit in awe of your child's accomplishments. There is something really great about watching the Shamrock Pride in their element. **And remember to keep the noise down so we don't distract the kids, but feel free to cheer loudly during the final runs.**

Physical Guidelines Policy

The WHS Band department and its competitive ensembles require a high degree of physical training and conditioning. It is part of the curriculum of each ensemble to develop and maintain a certain level of athletic coordination and conditioning that in turn is part of the program for competitions. With this understood there are several guidelines the staff and students need to be aware of and follow.

- All students that participate in extracurricular activities will need to have a current health form on file dated after **June 1st 2017**.
- All students and parents must be aware that physical conditioning, training and endurance are an integral part of the skill sets required for any type of success of the activity.
- All of these ensembles will require a certain level of physical ability to participate and thrive in the activity. Inability in certain areas of physical training or conditioning could jeopardize the student's ability to actively participate in one of the activities. These issues could be because of physical skill sets or medical reasons.
- Students who have medical issues should have their doctor's permission to participate in any of these activities. In addition, the student and parent should discuss the situation with the director of the activity prior to any rehearsals or practices and have supporting documents from a doctor. It will be at the discretion of the Director to proceed or disallow the student's participation in any situation that might put the student, the Director, the band department, band boosters or WWS at risk or liability for any injuries or medical situations.
- If an emergency does occur, the band boosters will have a designated adult to provide support to students and/or staff to make appropriate decisions regarding what is best for the student. There will be an established procedure for this person to administer the appropriate steps to alleviate the emergency and then to contact the appropriate authorities, parents, and/or director.

Use of Physical Skills as Reinforcement

The WHS Band Department uses physical skill sets as a way to reinforce positive and negative aspects of its extracurricular activities. Students may give themselves one of these skill sets as a way to reinforce concentration and excellence. However, that should not take away from or disrupt the rehearsal. A standard reinforcement would be 10 pushups.

- Student leaders may deem it necessary to give reinforcement at times, but should always do so with careful consideration. Under no circumstances should any student run more than 1 lap or be given more than 10 pushups as part of this reinforcement.
- Staff members may deem it necessary to give reinforcement at times, but do so with careful consideration. It is considered acceptable to give 2 laps, or a set of 20 pushups, or a set of 25 sit-ups, or a set of 50 jumping jacks as part of this reinforcement.
- Students are not to be pushed beyond what would be considered a normal scope either for conditioning or reinforcements.

Health Services

All students are required to have a medical form on file with the Band Boosters **no later than July 1st**. Medical forms can be picked up in the band room or found on www.charmsoffice.com. We require the medical form before students can be transported by bus to events and before we are able to administer any medication to your students. In case of emergency, these forms greatly assist the Nurse/Doctor in making the correct diagnosis or in administering effective medication. There are medical personnel with the band at all times during band camp. Students who require medication to be administered during band events must provide the meds to the medical staff or a director to be kept in the med bag. All medication should be in a prescription bottle with the student's name on it. Medical services will be provided by our medical personnel and, in case of emergency, at a local hospital while at band camp. Parents will be notified immediately of any major injury or illness sustained by their child.

A word about **sunburn**, our biggest and most troublesome problem at band camp can be sunburn. Some students could even develop second-degree burns from being out in the sun with little to no protection. We would suggest a sunblock of SPF 15-30. Any lower number, you are at your own risk!

Parent Volunteers

A number of parent volunteers will be needed during band camp. From field monitors to medical staff, lunch servers, prop crew, water and ice team and student/staff support. Parents play an important role in the success of band camp. You can sign up for volunteer positions at www.charmsoffice.com.

Staff

A complete staff of qualified musicians and drill instructors have been contracted for band camp. They are experienced band personnel who will assist in field and music instruction.

****All School Rules and Band Code of Conduct Apply**

*****No Hazing!! You could be dismissed from the program or arrested by authorities**

Uniform Guidelines

Band members

During the summer rehearsals and band camp, students will be measured and fitted for uniforms. All marching band members are also required to have a pair of uniform shoes. Each member will be fitted for shoes. The \$35.00 cost of shoes, for any students requiring uniform shoes, is not included in other band fees. Band members are required to wear long black socks, dark-colored bike type shorts, and a white t-shirt under their uniforms for all performances.

Guard members

During the summer rehearsals and band camp, students will be measured and fitted for uniforms. Guard members are required to have a pair of uniform shoes. Each member will be fitted for shoes. There is a charge for shoes that will be announced at a rehearsal, and the charge is not covered by other program fees. All Guard members' hair should be a natural color during the season. Please notify a director immediately if you plan to change your hair style prior to the contest season as we try to have a uniform look with all members. Required undergarments for uniforms will be announced by the guard

director before contest, and parents will be notified via email or handout. The cost of these undergarments is not included in other program fees.

Uniform/Guard Costume Care Procedures

The following procedures are to be followed by each band/guard member.

1. All uniforms/costumes are kept in the uniform room at the school.
2. All pieces of each uniform are numbered and assigned to a particular student for the season.
3. Along with the issued uniform, the band student is to wear uniform shoes, uniform socks, white gloves, dark-colored spandex type shorts and a short-sleeve, white t-shirt at each performance.
4. Each student is responsible for hanging his/her own uniform/costume back on the hanger properly and returning it to the uniform room.
5. Students are not permitted to eat while in uniform unless otherwise instructed by the directors.
6. The proper way to wear the uniform is with the jacket all the way on (hooked and zipped), hat on correctly (not unstrapped or backwards). With the jacket off and carried it should be folded over the arm facing in a direction consistent with instructions by a director. With the hat off and carried it should be carried upright in the left hand with the arm running under the hat and fingers placed over the brim. When wearing the uniform, please look before you sit (even on the bus) to be sure you do not sit in something that will stain the uniform. Guard members will wear their warmup jackets and pants over their costumes when traveling.
7. Normal wear is to be expected, but if there is a problem with the uniform, please bring it to the attention of the Uniform Mom/Dad so that it might be corrected.

Uniforms will be worn during all Friday Night Football Games and Competitions. The only exceptions will be if it is raining heavily or in extreme heat.

The Top 13 Things You Should Know as a Student

Band Members Wisdom and Survival Tips.

1. ALWAYS be on time, which really means 10-15 minutes early.
2. When in doubt, stop talking.
3. Show respect to everyone and listen to what “veterans” have to say. They’re probably right.
4. Don’t expect to know everything and be able to do everything the first day. Even people who have marched before still have things to learn.
5. Take things seriously, but not TOO seriously. In the end IT’S ONLY HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND.
6. We are very good at what we do because we can focus when we need to.
7. Stay well rested, fed and hydrated.
8. Always have all your materials with you or close enough that you can get to them quickly.
9. Know how to work, but also know how to relax. Know that the two NEVER occur at the same time, EVER.
10. Keep up on your schoolwork. Take every opportunity to do your homework. On the bus, using extra time in class, at appointments – do whatever it takes. Be as productive as possible.
11. You will be called out eventually. Don’t be afraid. When it happens, just speak up and don’t worry about being wrong.
12. Always trust the instructors. Especially when you think they aren’t right. They are rarely wrong.
13. DON’T GIVE UP! YOU CAN DO IT!

The Top 7 Things You Should Know as a Band Parent

1. **Your student is probably more capable than you realize.** Even if you have all the time in the world, you will start to feel like a personal servant if you don't ask your kids to take some responsibility for their own stuff. Water jugs, lunch, props, laundry – it never ends. Your student can make a sandwich, fill up a water jug, and set out their stuff. If you are inclined to help them, work with them to create checklists so that they remember everything they need to bring. It will be a lot of stuff, so be ready!
2. **Get out of the car and come join us.** Adults can enter the band room without ill effect! Be respectful of practices going on, but come on in and see what is happening. Frequently, there are parents working on projects or hanging around. It is a great time to make introductions and let people know you are new to the band program and would like to get involved. Park the car and come to the field. The last 15-20 minutes of practice will often be a run-through of what the kids have learned so far. Thursday nights are the traditional nights to view, but you will find parents at the field most nights. Watching the evolution of the band and the kids is really inspiring. Speaking of parking: **DO NOT PARK IN THE FIRE LANE.** You may become accustomed to dropping off your student in front of the band room, but for all of the students' safety, **do not park along the curb.** When the kids come off the practice field, many of them have instruments they have to push up to the band room through the parking areas. Also, when the buses and trucks leave for contest, they have to park by the curb to load and unload. Leave that space free to make the process run smoothly. Join the welcoming crowd outside and come on in to see what all the excitement is about! The kids love the encouragement.
3. **Learn to manage your time and teach your student how to manage theirs.** You WILL be busy -- especially from August until the middle of November. You will receive calendars in emails, but you MUST find a way to keep track of everything. More importantly, your student will have to balance band and schoolwork. Many of the band kids are honor students, and the time management skills they learn will help them throughout their life.
4. **Band Directors are people, too.** But they are BUSY people. They work long hours, and their main focus is the kids. If you have a specific concern about your child and the band program, set up a time to discuss it. If you need general information, directors are probably not your best resource. Try a fellow parent first, another Band Booster.
On another note: Marching band requires dedication and discipline from your student. The job of the directors is to help your student excel in band. Directors speak loudly, pointedly and sometimes without pleasantries. When mistakes are made, especially due to inattention or lack of effort, there are consequences. Try to relax and allow the process to work. Encourage your student to do their best, listen, and work hard. Everyone wants your child to be successful. You will learn this as you move through the season.
5. **We can't do it without you—volunteer and come to the booster meetings.** You will be asked to commit time, energy, donations and band fees to the band program. Unlike many sports programs, the Shamrock Pride must have parent volunteers for the programs to run smoothly, and it is the best way to get to know others. Plan to attend as many Booster meetings as you can. They are only once a month for about an hour. Mr. Sands usually addresses the parents with updates on the show and will answer parent questions. It is time well spent.
About volunteering ... no experience is necessary. No, REALLY! There are tasks that require specific skills, but most opportunities do not. If you can pull a soda from a cooler, take tickets at a gate, use scissors, sew or build props - you have all the skills you need. Better yet, there is so

much to do, you are bound to find something you actually enjoy doing. You will be helping keep YOUR band fees down and have fun doing it. Trust us, we've been there.

6. Join CHARMS and READ YOUR EMAIL.

This could be said a thousand times and still not be said enough. As the season progresses, you will get multiple messages each day. READ THEM. CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY. You may not always completely understand the emails, but READ THEM. If you are completely lost, you can ask the Boosters for more info.

7. Yes, it's worth it!

All of the rides, time, and effort that as a parent, you put into getting your child to practices are worth every second. You may not be able to appreciate that in the beginning. Your student may get discouraged at first. There is a lot of repetition, hot sweaty days, failures and disappointments. Then the show starts to come together and everything changes. There is a new energy, a new excitement. This is the point where they will either LOVE band or plan a different activity next year. Most of the kids LOVE band by the end of the season, so make them tough it out for the whole season. It will be worth it.