

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the Marching Band Season?

The marching season extends from August until about the end of November (unless the football team goes deep into the playoffs, or a special trip is planned).

Practice Start/End Times

If you're on time, Your Late!

I have heard many of the High School band members say this, what does it mean?

Marching Band practice start times are the time the staff will begin rehearsals. This does not include your "prep time", i.e. getting your instrument out or filling up your water, etc. You are expected to be on the field, ready to begin at the start time for rehearsals.

Parent Tip: End times can vary, the staff will try to end rehearsals on time, but there will be times when a practice will run long.

How will I get my Uniform?

High school marching band uniforms and hats are issued during the August practices. Unlike Middle School, the High School uniforms stay at the school. All uniform jackets and pants are hung on a separate hanger (provided). No shoes are placed into the garment bags. Garment bags are hung up in the uniform room in alphabetical order with the hangers all facing one direction. Playing members will need to purchase navy blue matching band t-shirt, Dinkles, (white marching shoes), long white socks, white shorts, white gloves and gauntlets. Marching Band t-shirts, Dinkles, gloves and gauntlets will be offered through the Music Association. Color Guard members will be fitted for a uniform and they will be purchased by the Music Association. Color Guard members may need to purchase a marching band t-shirt, make-up, guard warm-up, guard gloves and dance shoes. Please note, students cannot perform without a complete uniform (including gloves and gauntlets).

Parent Tip: An extra pair of white gloves will come in handy and is recommended. Alumni Tip: label the inside of your shoes, they all look alike.

What do I wear under my Band Uniform?

Marching Band t-shirt, white shorts, white long socks (must cover the ankle). For cooler weather, light colored (grey, light blue, white) long underwear/under armor with your marching band t-shirt and white shorts overtop. No sweatpants/jeans are permitted under the uniform. For students with long hair, they will need to put their hair into their hat for performances. No jewelry or makeup should be worn for football games and competitions, except as need for color guard. This may require a hairnet. Color Guard members will be given instruction by the staff depending on the show theme and uniforms purchased.

Parent Tip: They should have 2 – 4 band t-shirts (if you don't want to wash multiple times in the week). Some weeks they will be required to wear their t-shirt for practices, so there is uniformity and to help them learn their own positions, as well as to a game Friday, and a competition on Saturday.

How do I keep my Dinkles White?

Magic Erasers work great to remove scuffs from shoes. It is a good idea to have one on hand at events to handle last minute touch-ups. Also, you can try 409, dish soap, or white sneaker polish for scuffed and dirty shoes. Using an old toothbrush also works on the sole.

When is Band camp, and do I have to attend?

There are normally mini camps held in June and July, but the main “Band Camp” is usually held the first two weeks of August. This is where you will learn the drill to the show as well as continue to rehearse music. Being a member of the band will require a high level of commitment and dedication. Please understand in advance that it is necessary to be present at all August Band Camp rehearsals. Missing just one day of camp is equivalent to missing over a week of rehearsals during the school year! If you have a summer job, make your employer aware of the schedule.

What Should I bring to Band Camp rehearsals?

Students should bring their lunch, snacks and **plenty of water**. A water bottle which can be refilled during breaks is best. It will be hot, so dress appropriately as well as bring sunscreen and a hat. All band members will need a “dot book”, which is a small spiral note card book (about 3” x 5” in size) and a pencil. Their “Dot Book” will be carried with them throughout the marching season. An easy way to do so is to wear the book as a sash style over the shoulder using a string, or two shoelaces tied together.

Do I need money at Football Games and Competitions?

For Home football games, you will be given a coupon from the Music Association to receive a meal at the Home Concession stand during your third quarter break. For away football games, you will need to purchase something to eat. For competitions, it will depend on the show. Many shows, the music association will put together a picnic meal.

Parent Tip: Each student is asked to contribute to make up the picnic meal. An assignment list, by instrument group, is distributed the week of the event needing a meal. E.g., drum line - 6 bottles of water; piccolos – 6 sandwiches. Assignments rotate throughout the season. Assigned food is brought to the band room hallway the morning of the event to be sorted into coolers and to see if there is enough food for that evening.

When do I get picked up after a performance or a Football Games?

Arrival times after events are approximate. As the busses get close to school, the staff asked that you call your ride to let them know we are almost home. Upon return to the school, students must help unload the instruments and clean up the band room; both of which can take a few minutes before you are ready to depart for home.

Parent Tip: A book, or eReaders is a great way to pass the time while waiting for your student.

Another parent tip: Directions and addresses for football games can be found under the Athletics tab, on the Spring-Ford School District website. Alumni Tip: take a throw blanket for the bus rides, since the windows are down for holding up the garment bags, it can get cold on the busses.

What is a Candy Gram?

Candygrams, airgrams, and flowers are often sold at competitions.

Canygrams are a candy bar you can purchase and write a note on it to your favorite marching member. Airgrams are sold, but the marching band staff asks that you not purchase these as it can be a distraction to the students as they are getting ready to perform. Flowers are sometimes sold and are similar to candy grams.

Fundraising

Spring-Ford Music Association will run fundraisers to raise money to support the music programs within the Spring-Ford School District. The association pays for items such as equipment, color guard uniforms, uniform accessories, music, etc. In most fundraisers, the profit is split with the students 60/40. That is 60 percent of the profit to the student and 40 percent to the association. This helps the students raise money to pay for trips and music supplies they may want. The money is placed in a student's point account, SPA, and they may use the points to purchase anything music related before graduation.

My Mom and Dad are interested in Volunteering, what should they do?

It takes a lot of volunteers to make the season successful. First, the best way for adults to get involved is to start coming to the Association meetings, SFMA meets the second Tuesday of every month (except July). Here is a list of some of the volunteer jobs to help the Golden Ram Marching Band.

Pit Pops/Moms - Transport equipment to and from practices as well as performances. Load and unload instruments, and equipment from trucks.

Chaperone - Supervise students for local and traveling events.

Concession Stand - Assist with selling concessions during games and events, as well as grill hotdogs and burgers.

Note: All Volunteers must have clearances to work with students. Information on obtaining clearance documents is available at the school website under Community – Volunteer Information.