

Hope you had a great winter break. Did you come to 8th grade night with the AHS Marching Cats? Did you have fun? Do you want to do that again? Great! This letter is to give you more information about the marching band program.

The marching band is considered an extra-curricular activity so that means your participation is voluntary and requires after school rehearsals and a regular performance schedule. You are not graded for marching band. We take our responsibilities seriously because we want to put on an incredible show. We only want those individuals to join that can dedicate the time and effort it takes to succeed. Marching band is not free, so you will need to make sure you are committed to this before your parents spend their money. Here is an example of what you can expect:

- At least one week of practice from 8am to 5pm during the summer
- Learning music and practicing skills over the summer on your own
- Weekly practices on Tuesday and Thursday (Monday also for percussion) after school
- Football game performances every Friday from late August to early November
- Travel on buses to away games and sometimes unpleasant weather
- Possibility of additional games through the winter break if the football team makes the play-offs
- One Saturday each fall for Large Group Performance Evaluation marching band style
- At least one parade per winter and possibly more

While we are serious about our performance, marching band is also a great deal of fun. The band does more than play songs; we have our own traditions, dances, cheers, and other fun things to do at football games. We also get to see other great bands perform their half-time shows.

Moving to high school can be a little frightening but if you join the marching band you will gain a family of 100 or so students that can be a great support system for your freshman year. Our group is one of the few in the school that includes all grade levels. Did you know that students that participate in school activities tend to be more successful? So we encourage you to get involved at AHS even if marching band is not the way for you.

To help you decide if marching band is the place for you, we have attached a handy guidebook to marching band for new families. Read through all of the information it contains to learn more about what you can expect, your responsibilities, the sign-up process and everything else you need to know. Then in February you will get an official invitation to join the AHS Marching Cats in the mail. If you don't get it you can always find it on our website, apalacheeband.org. Follow the instructions in the invitation and you will be set.

Mission: Preserving Live Music

Everyone knows that studies show that students that take band usually excel in academics. What is not talked about as often is that high school band is one of the last groups in our nation that performs concerts regularly in their communities for free. For some people this is the only time they ever hear a live music performance. Help keep this important tradition alive by supporting decisions by our leaders that help keep music programs in schools. It not only benefits the students, it also benefits the community at large. Thanks for all you do to support music in your child's life.

Visit us at apalacheeband.org

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