

# Southside High School Band

## Parent Handbook 2016-2017

**Congratulations! You're a member of the Orange Express  
Marching Band!**

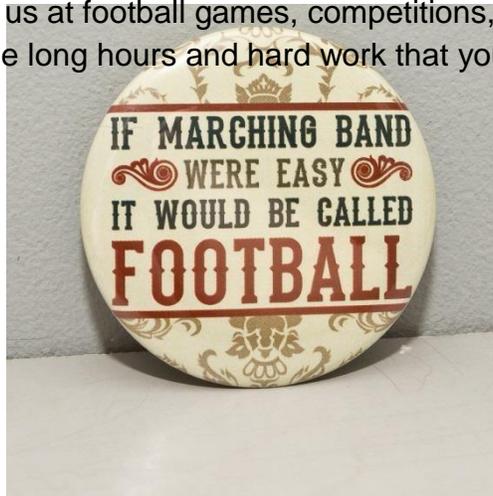
**...Now what?**

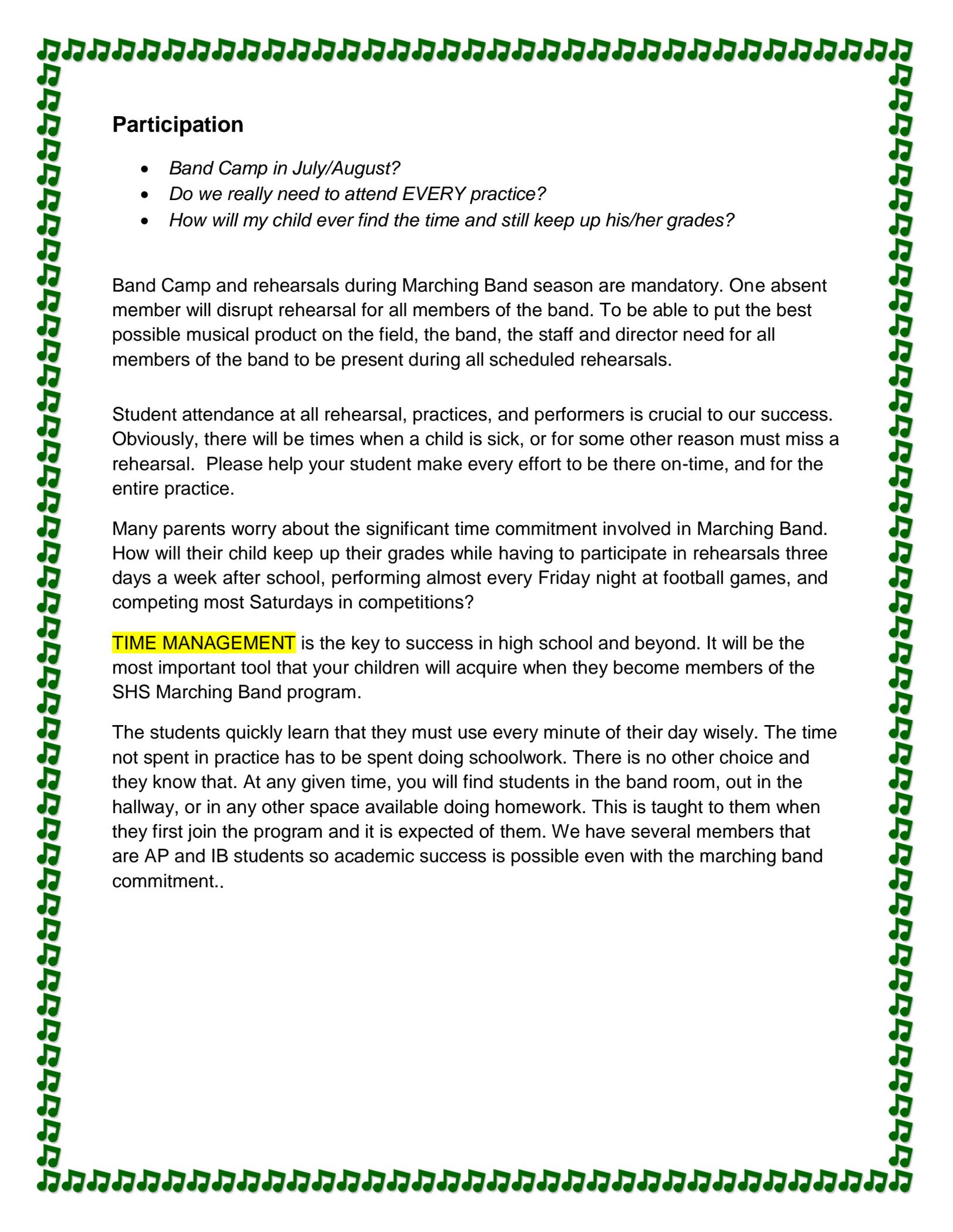
The first year as a Marching Band parent can be overwhelming and confusing, especially if you don't already know a "veteran" that can prepare you for what to expect. This handbook hopes to take the mystery out of your first year, answer some questions that you may already have, and prepare you for the many hours of excitement that you and your student have ahead as part of the Southside High School Marching Band.

As a member of the Southside High School Marching program, your child will be exposed to a variety of new experiences. As with everything else in high school, more will be demanded and expected of them than in middle school. You will be amazed at how much your child will improve and grow, even after just the first few weeks!

The Band Boosters functions are fund-raising and support. The Band Boosters manages an annual budget in order to support the Marching Band Program and the overall Instrumental Music Department. **We do not make any policy decisions for the band or band staff.\***

We encourage you to join us at football games, competitions, and parades whenever possible. Here is where the long hours and hard work that your child has given really pays off.





## Participation

- *Band Camp in July/August?*
- *Do we really need to attend EVERY practice?*
- *How will my child ever find the time and still keep up his/her grades?*

Band Camp and rehearsals during Marching Band season are mandatory. One absent member will disrupt rehearsal for all members of the band. To be able to put the best possible musical product on the field, the band, the staff and director need for all members of the band to be present during all scheduled rehearsals.

Student attendance at all rehearsal, practices, and performers is crucial to our success. Obviously, there will be times when a child is sick, or for some other reason must miss a rehearsal. Please help your student make every effort to be there on-time, and for the entire practice.

Many parents worry about the significant time commitment involved in Marching Band. How will their child keep up their grades while having to participate in rehearsals three days a week after school, performing almost every Friday night at football games, and competing most Saturdays in competitions?

**TIME MANAGEMENT** is the key to success in high school and beyond. It will be the most important tool that your children will acquire when they become members of the SHS Marching Band program.

The students quickly learn that they must use every minute of their day wisely. The time not spent in practice has to be spent doing schoolwork. There is no other choice and they know that. At any given time, you will find students in the band room, out in the hallway, or in any other space available doing homework. This is taught to them when they first join the program and it is expected of them. We have several members that are AP and IB students so academic success is possible even with the marching band commitment..

Your student will learn how to keep a schedule, how to be punctual, and how to set priorities.

**\*\*\*We suggest that your student has a planner. This will help the student plan for upcoming events and class projects. \*\*\***

A calendar is posted on the band's website at [www.southsidebands.org](http://www.southsidebands.org) listing Band Camp, football games, competitions, parades, and concerts that your child will be participating in during the school year. Remember to frequently check the website calendar for changes to the schedule. You can also sync your Google Calendar to the bands calendar (HIGHLY SUGGESTED).

Your child will also become punctual.

If Band Camp starts at 8:00 AM, that does not mean arrive at 8:00 AM. It means your child should be READY TO REHEARSE at 8:00 AM!

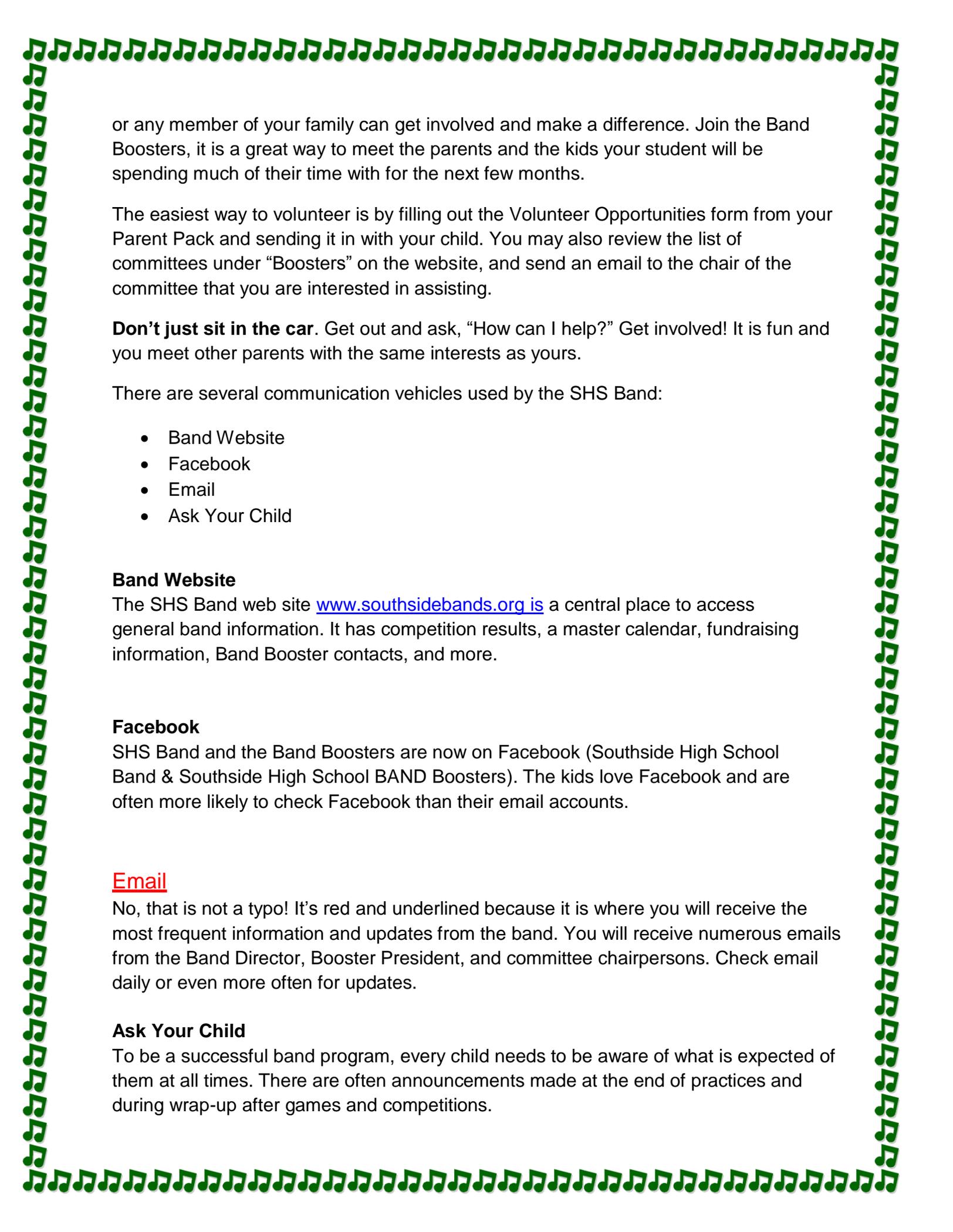
Finally, your child will learn how to set priorities. No longer will you see your children staring mindlessly at the television, Facebook, or playing Playstation and computer games for hours upon hours. Band rehearsals and homework will now fill their free time. (If only the band program could teach them to make time to take out the garbage without being reminded 100 times!!!)

## GREAT PARENT INVOLVEMENT LEADS TO A SUCCESSFUL BAND PROGRAM

- *How do I get involved?*
- *What do I do and where do I go if I am a volunteer or spectator at games and competitions?*

Getting involved in the band program will give you the opportunity to share with your child the last four years of their education, these years that go so fast and are rarely enjoyed by many parents. Your child might say they rather not have you around, but most parents find that in reality they appreciate your involvement and will thank you in the future.

The band parents are needed to support the director, and help with the details of fundraising, transporting, feeding and watering our organization. The band needs parents to be able to function; it is for this reason that we urge you to get Involved. Join one of the many committees; we need your help. Grandparents, siblings,



or any member of your family can get involved and make a difference. Join the Band Boosters, it is a great way to meet the parents and the kids your student will be spending much of their time with for the next few months.

The easiest way to volunteer is by filling out the Volunteer Opportunities form from your Parent Pack and sending it in with your child. You may also review the list of committees under “Boosters” on the website, and send an email to the chair of the committee that you are interested in assisting.

**Don’t just sit in the car.** Get out and ask, “How can I help?” Get involved! It is fun and you meet other parents with the same interests as yours.

There are several communication vehicles used by the SHS Band:

- Band Website
- Facebook
- Email
- Ask Your Child

### **Band Website**

The SHS Band web site [www.southsidebands.org](http://www.southsidebands.org) is a central place to access general band information. It has competition results, a master calendar, fundraising information, Band Booster contacts, and more.

### **Facebook**

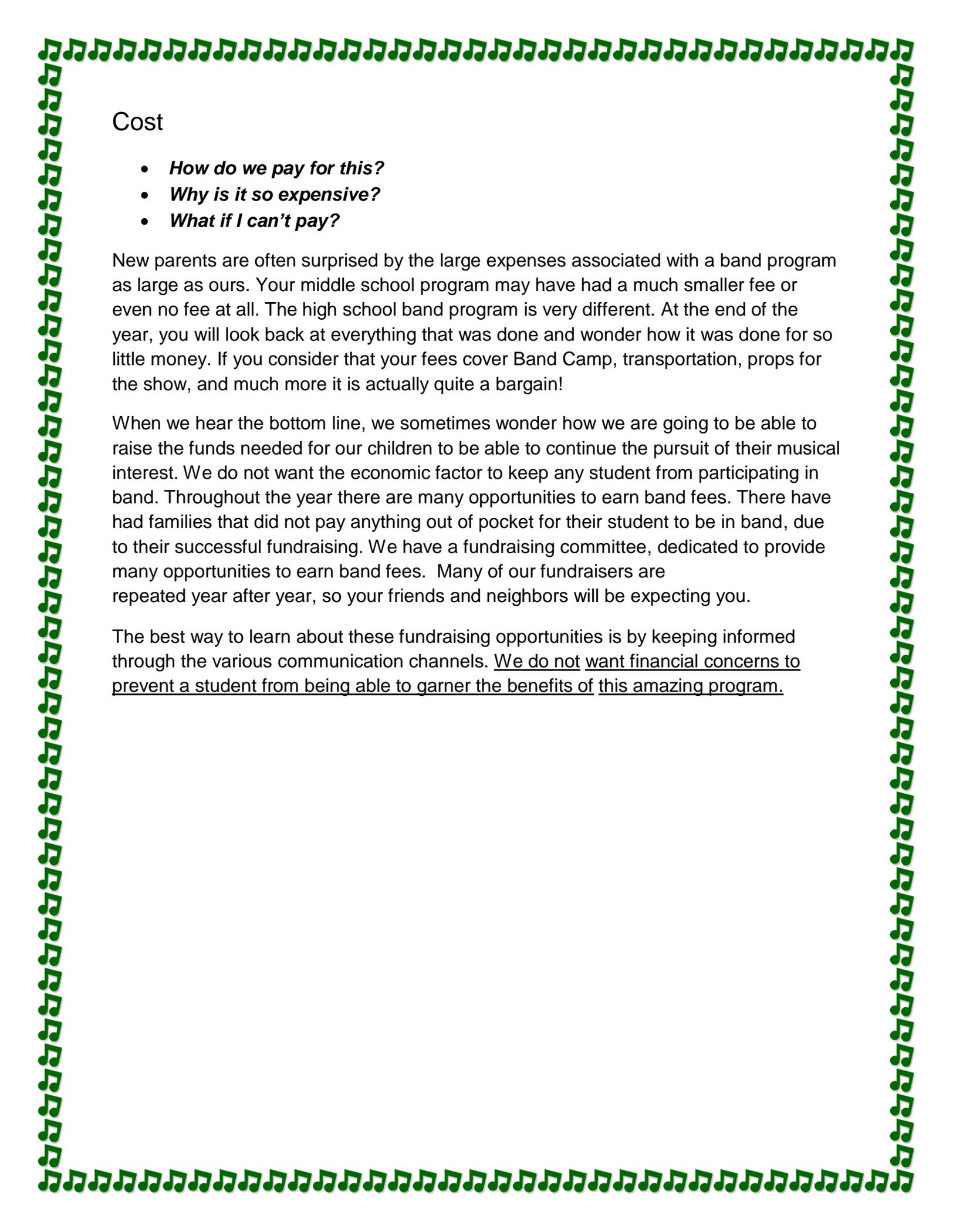
SHS Band and the Band Boosters are now on Facebook (Southside High School Band & Southside High School BAND Boosters). The kids love Facebook and are often more likely to check Facebook than their email accounts.

### **Email**

No, that is not a typo! It’s red and underlined because it is where you will receive the most frequent information and updates from the band. You will receive numerous emails from the Band Director, Booster President, and committee chairpersons. Check email daily or even more often for updates.

### **Ask Your Child**

To be a successful band program, every child needs to be aware of what is expected of them at all times. There are often announcements made at the end of practices and during wrap-up after games and competitions.



## Cost

- *How do we pay for this?*
- *Why is it so expensive?*
- *What if I can't pay?*

New parents are often surprised by the large expenses associated with a band program as large as ours. Your middle school program may have had a much smaller fee or even no fee at all. The high school band program is very different. At the end of the year, you will look back at everything that was done and wonder how it was done for so little money. If you consider that your fees cover Band Camp, transportation, props for the show, and much more it is actually quite a bargain!

When we hear the bottom line, we sometimes wonder how we are going to be able to raise the funds needed for our children to be able to continue the pursuit of their musical interest. We do not want the economic factor to keep any student from participating in band. Throughout the year there are many opportunities to earn band fees. There have had families that did not pay anything out of pocket for their student to be in band, due to their successful fundraising. We have a fundraising committee, dedicated to provide many opportunities to earn band fees. Many of our fundraisers are repeated year after year, so your friends and neighbors will be expecting you.

The best way to learn about these fundraising opportunities is by keeping informed through the various communication channels. We do not want financial concerns to prevent a student from being able to garner the benefits of this amazing program.

## Uniforms

- *What do they wear?*
- *What do I need to purchase?*
- *What is provided through the band fees?*

## Marching Band Rehearsals

Wear comfortable running style tennis shoes, no flip flops, skater shoes or other shoes that will not properly protect the student's feet. A light colored t-shirt and shorts are appropriate. Students may want an extra t-shirt in case of a sudden rain shower.

## Football Games and Competitions

As a first time Band Member, expect the following:

Purchase through the band website (estimates):

- Black marching band shoes – These are special marching band shoes that cost about \$40 for new ones. They are reusable next year, providing your child does not outgrow them
- Black show shirts \$12 (worn under uniforms)
- Gloves. They cost about \$4 per pair.

Included in your fee:

- Jacket
- Pants
- Gauntlets
- Plume
- Color Guard uniforms - change from year to year. (The color guard has additional fundraisers to help pay for these.)

Purchase yourself (Shop early and avoid last minute headaches):

- Athletic shoes
- Black belt
- Black business socks (knee length). We suggest having several pairs exactly alike. (Dryers love to eat socks.)
- White ankle or no-show socks for summer uniforms (Dryers eat white sock too)
- Band warm-up suit – Jacket and Pants – Ordered during summer (optional)

### Helpful Hints to Save You Time and Grief:

- Make your child responsible for being prepared. The first time they forget something will be the last!!! They learn to be resourceful when they have to be.
- At the end of each practice session there are usually announcements – listen up. This is your best opportunity to find out who, what, where and when things are going on.
- Network – This is how we meet each other. It is also one of the best ways to get helpful hints on band parenting from others.
- Carpool to competitions.
- Be prepared to cheer! The band loves it when they have their own cheering section. It really motivates them on the field. Purchase your SHS SWAGG GEAR.
- Don't put uniform items away in the closet or drawers when cleaned. Keep all items (socks, shoes, band shirt, gloves, etc.) in a bag. These tips will save time spent hunting for them each time they are needed.
- Purchase duplicates when feasible. The same shirts and socks may be needed for Friday night games and a competition the next day. Midnight laundry is not fun!
- Keep extra gloves, socks, needle & thread, etc. in your car or purse just in case.

| <b><u>5 Ways to Show Your Support</u></b>  | <b><u>5 Essentials For Every Band Parent</u></b>  |
|--|---|
| 1. Give your child support and encouragement for being in the band.                              | 1. Invest in the nicer stadium seat cushions. You will be sitting in stadium seats a lot.                                 |
| 2. When picking up your student from band, come early, watch, and get to know the other parents. | 2. Invest in warm clothing for cold weather. Some competitions can go on for hours, so dress appropriately.               |
| 3. Attend football games and competitions to show your support and cheer them on.                | 3. Hand Warmers. Both you and your band child will use them.  |
| 4. Volunteer and help with fundraising   | 4. Wear SHS Swagg Gear to show your Marching  |
| 5. Come to the band booster meetings   | 5. A constant supply of snacks. They are always looking for something to eat before and after competitions and band camp. |

## Terms and Phrases:

- “Band practice is at 3 o’clock. **“If you are early, you’re on time; if you’re on time, you’re late; if you are late, you’re in trouble.”** When you drop your child off at 2:45, there will be students already there, ready to play. At this point, the anxiety level for being late dramatically increases. The band actually begins practice at 3:00 and your child is expected to be ready to participate. This is when your child will be sweating bullets if the entire rest of the band is waiting for them to get ready. Always allow extra time.
- “Where’s my dot?” or “Do we line up on the hash?” This does not refer to insects or food. These terms indicate how the practice field is marked off. Students use their coordinate cards to answer these questions.
- “Oh, just sit where the band parents sit.” For football games, band parents usually sit to the right of the roped off band section. Games are more fun when you’re with a group, and parents often coordinate where and when to cheer at the next day competition. At competitions, look for the sea of orange. You’ll learn a lot about competitions from veterans and meet fellow band parents. A block of cheering fans is much more effective than if they are speckled throughout the stands.
- “Are you working the Pit?” The pit is not something bad. It’s a group of percussion instruments that travel on a trailer and are stationary during performances. Parents in the Pit Crew work feverishly to set up and take down the pit in record time, before and after a performance (and you think race pit crews are fast!!). Some of the band competitions actually gives an award for the best pit crew. Regardless of what part your child plays in the band, the Pit Crew is a great place to volunteer because you actually help the band take the field to perform.
- **“Band practice ends at 6:00” This means they stop playing at 6:00. After this they may have announcements, clean-up, cool down exercises, or other end-of-day activities. Usually your child will not be actually ready to leave until 15 minutes later.**



## You Know You are A Band Parent When. . . .

- You make three more trips than expected to drop off your child with everything they need.
- You carry spare gloves, needle and thread, safety pins, black socks and duct tape in your pocketbook.
- You follow buses around all day on Saturdays
- 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 daughter/son, but as a "freshman trumpet, freshman flute," etc.
- You prominently display a band calendar in the kitchen, have band dates marked on the calendar in your purse or on your phone.
- You use your oven more for baking goodies for band treats than for sit-down meals.
- You know that you will be wearing something orange every Friday night and on Saturdays.
- You don't leave home without cushions to sit on, camera and camcorder!
- You have your own wardrobe of Band Swag wear.
- You are cheering with other band parents.



## The Top Ten Things You Should Know as a Band Parent

### 10. 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, lunches, props, laundry -- it never ends. Your student can make a sandwich, fill up a water jug, and set out their 'stuff'. It's up to you if you want them using your washer and dryer, but they've got to learn someday.

When you see what they accomplish and how hard they work for someone else, you will be amazed. If you are inclined, help them create checklists so that they remember everything they need to bring. It will be a lot of stuff, so be ready.

### 9. Get out of the car and come join us.

Sounds odd, doesn't it? Many parents do not realize that they 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.

Park the car and come down to the field. The last 15-20 minutes of practice will be a run through of what the kids have learned so far. Watching the evolution of the band and the kids is really inspiring. It will blow your mind what your kid can do! And believe it or not, you will not see the same \*exact\* show week after week. Bring the family and enjoy the show, but remember to stay quiet so you don't distract the kids.

On competition days, come inside after the band returns. This is a good time to congratulate or encourage your student. Drop by before they leave to let them know you support them. Bring lunch mid-day (there is usually a practice before the competition)

and stay a few minutes. You may feel a bit more like a spectator than a parent, but the kids know you are there and they appreciate it.

Speaking of parking: DO NOT PARK IN FRONT OF THE BAND ROOM DOORWAY. You may have 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 of the practice field, many of them have instruments they have to push up to the band room through the parking lots. Also, when the buses leave for competitions and return, they need to park there. Leave that space free to make the process run smoothly.

**8. 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 that works for you. More importantly, your student will have to balance band and school work. It is not easy, but it can be done.

Most band members carry a full load of classes; many are honor students with AP classes. You will have to find pockets of time for homework and other responsibilities. Some students do homework on the bus when necessary. The freshman year is already a big adjustment. Between band and school there won't be much time for anything else. But it doesn't last forever!

**7. Bring cash, warm clothes and something to sit on.**

Most school functions require that you bring cash. Invitational (defined later on) charge admission, anywhere from \$5 to \$10 per person. Children under 5 are usually admitted free. You MUST bring cash. Concessions are cash only, as are some souvenir vendors.

Aluminum benches are hard and COLD, especially in October. ALL of the events are outside. Plan accordingly( The Boosters have stadium seats for sell). Something to sit on will make the experience more enjoyable and keep the cold from creeping in. Many parents bring a blanket or fleece to ward off the chill. Hats, gloves, scarves will help keep you comfortable. Obviously, if it is sunny out, remember sunscreen, hats and sunglasses. Just like the scouting motto: BE PREPARED.

**6. Take care of your Band Moms/Chaperones.**

If you would make a drawing of the perfect Band Mom (It is usually a MOM but it doesn't have to be), she/he would have six arms, three heads, and a heart of pure gold. Remarkably, Band Moms accomplish amazing things without the extra appendages. These are the people who dress your student, fix their hair, and wash their socks. They dispense wisdom, encouragement and snacks with laughter and generosity.

They are the people on the front lines that make sure your student is ready to go on the field. This is a job that deserves far more recognition than most parents give. As soon as you know who your Chaperone is, contact her/him and find out how you can help.



Band Moms/Chaperones supply snacks and beverages after EVERY competition so ask if you can buy snacks. At the end of every competition they need to gather up all the parts and pieces to the uniform and everything else that forgotten. They need help loading, unloading and sorting. It's a big, important job and you can make it easier. At the end of the season (and all through the season), remember to say "thank you".

#### **5. 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.

#### **4. You are not alone.**

Unless you want to be. Every parent -- okay, MOST parents, feel overwhelmed at first. The whole first year is a scramble to keep up. Here are some good phrases to put into use: "Excuse me, I'm new and I was wondering ...", "Hi, I'm a freshman parent, my name is ...". "I'm Ben's mom and I heard ...". You will be surprised how quickly you will be pulled into the fold. Timing is everything, of course. If you ask someone who is obviously busy, you may not get the welcome you hoped for. Rarely are other parents too busy to help you. We want you to join us and we love to share our experience with you.

Your student will be making all kinds of new friends, why shouldn't you? You can find people to carpool with, volunteer with, celebrate with, and commiserate with. Band parents are valuable resources. They can help you find solutions to your dilemmas, and there will be dilemmas. You will also get to know the parents of the kids your student is hanging around. What a bonus!

#### **3. We can't do it without you—volunteer and come to the booster meetings.**

You will be asked to commit time, energy, donations and the band fees to the band program. Unlike many sports programs, the Marching program must have parent volunteers for the program 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 90 minutes. Mr. Tillman usually addresses the parents with updates on the show and will answer parent questions. It is time well spent.

About volunteering ... no experience necessary. No, REALLY! There are tasks that require specific skills, but most opportunities do not. If you can drive a car, get soda from a cooler, 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. At first it looks like everyone else knows what is going on but you. Take the initiative "I am new, and I'm here to help." We will put you to work straight away at something that is not far outside your comfort zone. It may be just a little outside, and the feeling will pass quickly. It won't hurt a bit. You will be helping keep YOUR band fees down and have fun doing it. Trust us, we've been there.

## 2. 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 Booster President for more info. We want you to understand what is going on, but you have to read your email and ask questions. If you don't, you may have unfortunate results, miss something important, or miss something fun.

## 1. Yes, it's worth it!

All of the rides, time, and effort (and it is an extraordinary amount) 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 entire season. It will be worth it. You may be uncomfortable at points. You will feel unsure. If you can push past the confusion and the chaos, you will probably get hooked like the rest of us. There is no way to describe how amazing this experience can be, but if you get involved you will find out for yourself!

