Batavia Marching Band – New Parent Guide 2019

WELCOME TO THE BATAVIA MARCHING BAND FAMILY!

Just as each band member is a critical dot on the field, each parent is critical to the Batavia Marching Band (BMB). It takes parents banding together to support BMB.

We are so happy to welcome you to the BMB family and hope your entire family enjoys the marching band experience and that you find the following information helpful.

COMMUNICATION

Section Leaders – BMB is built on the leadership of our students. Without them, BMB would not be the successful group that it is. Section leaders are enthusiastic and experienced leaders that have interviewed for this role, received a handbook for guidance and gone through training before band camp starts. They will be an excellent role model for your students and can help with nearly any issue your student may have, from marching technique, to dot books to time management.

Encourage your child to communicate with their section leaders for any questions, issues or concerns. Now is the time for your teen to take responsibility and not rely on parents/guardians to ask questions for them.

Remember that section leaders were new to marching band too at one time, they have faced the same issues as your teen. Let them mentor your teen and provide guidance and support.

Welcoming Parents – We recognize there will be times you just want to chat with another parent. While any marching band parent will certainly help you, there is a group that has volunteered to welcome new parents. You will be hearing from them soon to formally welcome you to BMB. These parents are available to answer your questions or concerns and make you feel comfortable in the marching band family. Please feel free to email, text or call!

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**Directors** - There is an amazing team of talented professionals led by two very dedicated band directors:

- Chris Owen – chris.owen@bps101.net
- Brian VanKley – brian.vankley@bps101.net

**Email** – Directors communicate primarily via email. Once school begins there will be a weekly newsletter; please be sure to take the time to read it. Marching band is a fast moving group! The directors typically make it easy by highlighting new information.

**Marching band website** - [bataviamusic.org/marching-band.html](http://bataviamusic.org/marching-band.html) is your best friend online during marching season! The marching band page will provide details about the 2019 show, the BMB calendar and itineraries for competitions as soon as they are available.

**2019 KEY DATES**

Refer to [bataviamusic.org/marching-band.html](http://bataviamusic.org/marching-band.html) for calendar and complete list of dates:

- **Tuesday, May 28th** – New Member Camp from 4pm-6pm – Drop off for BMB camp is on the Wilson Street side of BHS; the music area entrance is set back and east of the Batavia Fine Arts entrance. 
  
  *Experienced BMB parents will be available to chat with new BMB parents at drop-off (3:45-4:15 pm) and pick up (5:45-6:15pm). Treats and coffee too, so please stop by if you can!* 

- **Friday August 9th** – mandatory parent meeting at Batavia High School orchestra room at 5:30pm. The orchestra room is located on the Wilson side of the school; enter through the music entrance set back to the east of the Batavia Fine Arts Centre entrance. After the meeting, we will walk over to Bulldog Stadium for a BMB performance and a potluck!

- **Friday, August 23rd** – Corn Boil at Bulldog Stadium from 5pm-7pm, rain or shine – the kick off for Batavia High School fall athletics and marching band season. Enjoy great food, purchase spirit wear and support your Bulldogs! If you are a booster, you can pick up your membership packet at the Corn Boil. There are tables for eating but also expect a large crowd so bringing a bag chair is a good idea, purchase tickets at the gate or online at bataviabulldogboosters.org

- **Saturday, August 31st** – first home football game – call time TBD! Please note that the rest of non-playoff football games will be on Friday nights.

- **Saturday September 14th** – first competition at Victor J. Andrew High School! Check the detailed schedule on bataviamusic.org for this and all competition dates.

- **Wednesday October 23rd** – Friends and Family Performance at Bulldog Stadium at 7:00pm – a memorable and moving event, not to be missed!

- **Wednesday, October 30** – Marching Band Banquet in BHS cafeteria at 5:30pm – be sure to come and celebrate the season! There is always a special treat for parents to end the season on a high note!
**WHAT TO EXPECT**

Each band member’s attendance at band camp every day, at all rehearsals and all competitions is important. You will hear about your teen’s dot: that is their place on the field. Unlike athletic teams, there are no substitute players, there is no one to cover their parts. Each dot is critical. A missing dot is very missed.

The show is designed to be watched as the entire band performing together. It is tempting to watch your teen perform their dot but it becomes impossible to track and you will miss out on the whole show. Be sure to enjoy the entire band. Your teen is enjoying the entire band, you should too.

Just as they perform as a team, they work as a team. No one leaves until everything is put away.

**Band Camp** – yes, the hours are long but the positive results are many. You will see your teen make new friends, improve on their instrument, struggle at times but come out at the end of camp better for the experience. It significantly helps the transition to high school. Your teen will start the first day of school seeing many friends from BMB!

The entire camp will be held at Batavia High School. It is important for the band to practice on the turf and to practice in the evenings under lights as those are the same conditions they will encounter during competitions. Band camp is long hours because it can take hours to learn what ends up being less than one minute of a show. If you multiply the number of minutes in the final show by the hours it takes to master each minute you will have an idea of why band camp and all the rehearsals once school starts are necessary.

At the end of camp, your teen will have a sense of accomplishment, will be in better physical shape, will know dozens of friends the first day of school, and will have improved musically. Plus they will be able to march and play their instrument at the same time which is not easy!

There are usually section parties or other gatherings during band camp and in the fall. Encourage your teen to attend as it will help them get to know their section members better. Many teens will make lifelong friends in marching band! If you have any concerns or questions, talk to the section leader or their parents.

**Competitions** – the best place to watch BMB is at competitions. You are VERY encouraged to attend competitions. For many parents this becomes the highlight of the season. The band does make changes throughout the season so the show at the first competition will be different than the last. You may choose to watch BMB, their entire division or spend the day. An awards ceremony follows each division.

For all competitions there are things to know before you go:

- If you are flying solo and a bit hesitant contact one of the welcoming parents – maybe there can be carpooling or a meet up. If you are hesitant for any reason, don’t let that stop you from going – make a call and we will help you out.
- The BMB itineraries will be posted on the marching band web page as soon as they are available; links to competition website will also be provided if available. Most competitions are true to their schedule but do plan to arrive early just in case, plus it will take time to park and enter the stadium.
• The day for the band usually starts at BHS with a rehearsal; band members and chaperones take buses to and from the competitions. Sections will ride together and much fun is had!
• You may notice lunches and dinners for the band sometimes will be listed at odd times. This is to fit into the schedule of competitions. The teens will survive and get used to this; pack some healthy snacks for the day.
• **A wonderful resource for marching band parents and families is the website ilmarching.com.** This website provides valuable information on competition etiquette, judging criteria, band size determination and also provides updated scoring by both band and festival categories. You can also see previous years’ results!
• For family attending:
  o There are usually entrance fees to the competitions, refer to the competition link for specifics on fees.
  o Please note that spectators are not allowed to enter or exit the stadium during a school’s performance, so plan your driving and parking time so that you are at the field before BMB is scheduled to perform.
  o Concession stand food is typically available at the competition. If BMB makes it into the finals, there is usually enough time to drive to a local restaurant and eat before the finals performance commences.
  o Check out the parking beforehand! The parking lot at the host school is used for marching band buses so don’t expect to park there. Competition links usually provide details on parking options.
  o Do not expect to visit with your teen during a competition day; they will be busy with the band. Visit with other parents and have fun!

**Football Games** – BMB performs at half-time and at the end of all home varsity games. Parents and families are encouraged to attend-plan to arrive early as the stadium fills up fast. A concession stand and indoor bathrooms are available. BMB members usually eat dinner during the third quarter of the game.

Consider joining the Bulldog Boosters. Not only can membership include reserved seating area for football games and meal tickets, but joining the Boosters is a GREAT way to support our school. Batavia is a big football town and the games are very well attended; booster membership provides awesome perks. Please note that joining the Boosters is not the same as joining the Music Buffs. For booster information: bataviabulldogboosters.org.

**ADVICE**

Band camp essentials:

- **Large** water bottle
- athletic shoes
- extra pencils (for dot book)
- sunblock
- sunglasses
- sweatshirt/layers for chilly nights
- bug repellent
- hat
- a couple snacks for break time
During games and competitions for the band members:

- Black socks – have plenty! Teens should always put an extra pair in their bag when going to games or competitions.
- Hand warmers – hard to believe after the warm days of camp, but competition days and football nights can get windy and cold. Hand warmers are life savers!
- Possibly - spending money for souvenirs at competitions or food/spirit wear at the football games.

During games and competitions for the band parents:

- If you plan on attending games and competitions, stadium seats are worth the investment. They provide an amazing amount of comfort. Stadium seats are sold at many athletic stores; the boosters sell them with the Bulldog logo and you can have them personalized.
- Layers, layers, layers. Games and competitions can go long and it will get cold.
- Buy BMB Spirit wear and wear it proud! There is always a fantastic selection of reasonably priced items. You will see opportunities/links to buy Spirit wear in the weekly BMB newsletters and also there is usually a holiday order after BMB has concluded.

**HOW PARENTS CAN HELP**

“Many hands make for light work”. It takes parents working together as a team to support our marching band. From chaperoning competitions, being a first aid parent for summer camp, donating food for competitions, or being part of pit crew, there is something for each parent to participate in. If every one can do some, it’s amazing how much can get done.

You will see opportunities to volunteer forwarded as a signup genius. Please consider helping out where you can. It is such a fun and rewarding experience and you will get to know other BMB parents and many of our wonderful and amazing students.

We were all first time BMB parents at one point and know it can feel intimidating to volunteer for competitions, etc. If you would like to volunteer, but are hesitant because of questions or concerns, please reach out to one of the parents listed on page 1 for guidance. Also, please know that there are always many experienced parents available at each competition or event to help guide you as you learn the ropes. 😊

One of the most important things parents can do is to attend as many marching band performances as possible: cheer on our marching Bulldogs at their competitions, football games, the homecoming parade, and Friends and Family night. The band loves to see and hear their fans and it means the world to them after all their hard work. And it is great fun too!
Consider joining Batavia Music Buffs. The Batavia Music Buffs is a non-profit volunteer organization that provides incredible and substantial support to the music programs in all K-12 Batavia Public School District schools. Contributions are tax deductible. This organization is vital to the musical life in our school district-details at bataviamusicbuffs.org.

**BENEFITS OF MARCHING BAND**

The benefits of marching band are many:

Social – meeting life-long friends  
Visibility – BMB is the largest organization at Batavia High School and one of the most visible  
Travel – travel locally to marching competitions and venture farther to Cedar Point, Disney World and Pearl Harbor in Hawaii  
Physically – marching band will keep you in shape.  
Musicianship – marching band will improve your musicianship, you will improve technique and endurance  
Competition – when done in a healthy way, competition is great for improvement and goal setting  
Time management – marching band is a lot of time but is also forces you to plan wisely  
Colleges – colleges like to see students who are involved academically and athletically or musically  
Teamwork – learn life skills including how to work well with others  
Community – BMB plays at parades, community events and athletic events that contribute directly to the Batavia School spirit  
Fun – lots of it!

Marching band will teach some amazing life skills and lessons, such as: setting and achieving goals, success requires hard work, how to win/succeed with class, how to lose/fail with dignity, success requires sacrifice, how to deal with pressure and stress, you’re responsible for yourself, life isn’t always fair, there will be tough times, how to manage time efficiently, respect everyone, focus on what you can control.

Hopefully this guide has answered many of your questions and has provided an overview of the program from a parent’s perspective. We recognize you may have additional questions or concerns and encourage you to contact one of the welcoming parents listed on page 1 and they will be happy to chat, email or text with you.

**WELCOME, ENJOY BMB AND GO MARCHING BULLDOGS!**