



**Emerald Viking  
Vanguard &  
Concert Band**

# **A Band Parent's Survival Guide**

**By the Emerald High School  
Marching Band Booster Club**

## What Is A Band Parent?

A band parent is one whose child is the greatest! From the first note (squeak?) through the monotonous scales, the parent beams because this young musician is learning so quickly!

A band parent soon learns that it requires considerable hard work, time and money to produce a quality band. After extending credit to purchase the instrument and finally locating a pair of khaki shorts (at the end of summer!), the harried parent is then introduced to fund-raising campaigns! This means selling nachos, donuts and pickle pops at football games - and while the band is performing its half-time show.

A band parent is a calm, multipurpose machine who can bring order out of the chaos of getting ready for football games. Dad rushes to grab some dinner while Mom locates the missing black sock, sews on a button (again), combs hair, and herds the family into the van for the quick trip to be ON TIME for Call Time!

The next week, the game is away from home and the band parent become a Chaperone (that is - nurse, dispenser of hair pins, safety pins, tape, aspirin, black socks (again), etc.) and relives childhood memories of shouting, singing and sleepy band members. Or, the band parents drive to the away game just to see the half-time show and then realize that they will only see the backside of the band and hear the echo of the performance as the band faces the host stands.

A band parent is one who criticizes the Band Director for calling extra practice sessions, praises him for instilling teamwork and discipline and loyally defends him from outside critics for any reason.

On graduation day, a band parent is a relieved person. No more hectic screaming on performance nights, no more fundraising activities, vacations can be taken at any time and not just when the band schedule allows, no more – uh, oh....

A band parent is one whose younger child announces:

**“Guess what? I’ve signed up for BAND!”**

# **Marching Band 101**

A Guide for new band parents (and veterans too)

This booklet is the product of former “new band parents” who spend a good bit of time in our first year in various stages of confusion. In the many hours we spent watching practices, picking up our kids, and going to competitions/shows we have all felt confused, lost and totally bewildered at one time or another. We hope this document will help ease you through the transition from “new” band parent to “veteran” band parent.

For most of us (parents and students alike), the transition from middle school band to the high school band program is huge, especially in marching band. The increased expectations come with great reward in terms of your student’s accomplishments, and the pride you will have in watching them succeed. This document is our attempt to share with you some of the finer points of making the most of your years as a band parent.

The Emerald High School Viking Vanguard Marching Band program is supported by a parent run organization - the EHS Booster Club. The Band Boosters exist solely through volunteer parents in order to help provide your students with enjoyable and rewarding band experience. Please help us meet this challenge by volunteering your time and talents. The students will reap the benefits. We welcome all new parents and look forward to getting to know you and your students!

We can’t stress enough how important it is for you to join the Booster Club and be an active member with the Band. We want you to be an integral part of our Band Family through attendance, participation, and volunteerism at various band activities and events. Believe it or not, but we have seen the look of disappointment on the faces of band members when their parents do not participate.

## **Communication:**

The Director and Booster Club Board of Directors will be making every effort to get you the information you need in a prompt manner so you can stay on top of all the activities associated with the Marching Band. Communication is sent through Charms, a database that is used to keep a current headcount of the marching band, fees due, student accounts and a communication tool.

The Booster Club uses Sign Up Genius for parents to sign up for volunteering opportunities.

**Email:**

One way you can stay in the 'loop' is to make sure that the Boosters have your current email address. Schedule updates, changes and important messages will be communicated via email to our families on a regular basis during the band season. So check email often. This is an immediate and inexpensive way for us to communicate to our members. If your email address changes or we do not have your address, please see one of the Booster Club Board Members.

**Notices:**

Please make it a habit to ask your students if there were any notices or forms sent home from the band. Sometimes the papers fall to the bottom of the book bags or are forgotten about until it's too late.

**Band Text Messages:**

For parents text messages sent the message @facor to 81010. You will receive all the band alerts right on your phone. Standard texting fees will occur, please know your phone plan.

**Learn the Lingo:**

- Director - District employee over the music program
- Staff - Instructors through the school district or band boosters
- Drum Major - student that leads conducting while the band performs
- Band Captain - Student leaders who assist the Drum Major and Section Leaders
- Section Leader - Student leaders that are in charge of assisting their instrumental sections
- Band Boosters - Parents and Volunteers that make up the no-profit organization dedicated to supporting the band program
- Bibbers -similar to overalls that are part of the uniform
- Call time - set by the Director - this is the time students should be in the band room getting ready.
- Percussion - any striking instrument, not just drums
- Color Guard - dancers, flag tossers and rifle tossers
- Pit - the non-marching percussion positioned on the front side lines during the field show
- Drumline - the percussionists that march on the field

### **Loading & Unloading Zone:**

Drop off, unless otherwise communicated, is behind the school.

When the Band returns from away games or competitions/shows, it is very important not to block the driveway in the back of the school or park on the curbside located between the driveway and the football stadium. The buses and the band trailers need this space to negotiate turns and unload in these areas.

### **Regarding the Students;**

#### **Fees:**

To offset some of the costs associated with the Marching Band program, there is a \$100 fee for each student who participates.

If the fee is a hardship, scholarships are available and kept confidential. There is a scholarship form that you can complete and turn into the Band Director. Please do not let this fee deter your student from participating. We will work with you anyway we can.

Students also earn a portion of the money they raise during fundraisers. This money can be used toward their fee as well.

Occasionally, we might ask for parents to send \$5/\$10 to help offset the cost of something special we have planned for the students.

### **Marching Band Camp:**

**When you're at band camp**



Camp is conducted in July and takes place before school begins. The staff and students work very hard during band camp. Band camp is where the students will learn and practice the drill and music for the marching band show for the year. Camp is a very important part of the season for all band members and should not be missed. The kids will learn something new everyday and they will grow in leadership and teamwork skills.

Tips for band camp survival:

- Wear light-colored loose clothing
- Bring a hat/sunglasses
- Bring a water bottle every day - jugs of water will be provided throughout the day. Depending on the heat, breaks are given every 20-30 minutes.
- Use sunscreen and insect repellent
- Only tennis shoes are allowed - no flip-flops or Crocs
- Remember to bring your instrument every day

New members sometimes question their desire to join the marching band after the first day in the heat. Encourage them to stick with it for a few more days. Students often change their mind once they get accustomed to the program, adapt to the heat, start making friends and feeling a bit more confident.

### **Marching Band Practice:**

When school begins, band rehearsals are typically Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 4:00 PM - 6:30 PM.

During the summer months, students need to bring shorts to change into after school for practice.

### **Football Games:**

Band students will report to the band room at the call time specified by the Director. Dinner will be offered game nights for the students.

The band will march into the stadium before the game to a drumline cadence. The band performs at all home and some away varsity football games. For the home

games, the band will do a “pregame” which includes the National Anthem and the school alma mater. A section of the bleachers is reserved for the marching band.

The marching band will perform in the stands during the 1st and 2nd quarters. They will then take the field for the halftime show. Parents may need to assist with moving the pit equipment for halftime.

The band members will have the 3rd quarter off and then play in the stands for the 4th quarter. The 3rd quarter is when the band members can take a break and get a snack/drink. The Booster club provides a snack and bottled water for the kids during this time. They are also allowed to visit the concession stand if they bring money.

Students are not allowed to leave from football games until formal dismissal, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Band Director, prior to the game.

### **Competition:**

The competition season runs from September to early November.

For the band, competitions are like “game days”. Each band will be critiqued, scored and ranked by qualified judges in the different areas of their performance. Some judges walk the field while others observe from stadium seats.

Competition days can start bright and early. The schedule for each show is announced by Thursday. The students will be told what time to come to the school for practice, when the trailers will be loaded, what time they will be dressing, what time the bus departs, our performance time and the approximate return time to the school.

At the competition, band members change into their uniforms, and have a final warmup. The band marches into the performance stadium, plays their show, and marches out. After the performance, uniforms, instruments, and equipment have been packed up, students return to the host stadium to watch the remainder of the

bands performing. Students should remain quiet in the stands. When all bands have finished, there will be an awards ceremony.

Competition days are long. Depending on our band's performance time, it can be evening before we return. The kids usually have time to hit the concession stand at the competition, so it's a good idea for them to bring some money. The Booster Club is at all competitions and provides the kids with water, snacks and depending what time of day, some kind of meal.

Students are expected to remain with the band throughout the entire competition, unless other arrangements have been approved by the Director in writing prior to the competition.

**Please note:** All students are required to return to the school after the competition/show on the bus. Upon arrival at the school, each student is responsible for getting their instrument and uniform from the trailer and putting it away. Students are also responsible to help unload the trailers. No one is allowed to leave until everything has been put in the band room. We are one band and everyone helps. Return times are often late, and even though everyone is tired, this has to be done, so, please be patient when picking up your child.

### **Competition Etiquette:**

#### **Things you should DO:**

- Be supportive of each and every band. Be considerate during each band's performance and show your appreciation for their hard work by your hearty applause at the end of every band's performance as well as when they take the field for competition. Remember, the students in the other bands have worked just as hard as our own students. They deserve our respect and applause. Every marching band member in every band is participating in an activity that is teaching them teamwork, respect and pride in what they do. There are no losers in this activity.
- Show up early. This is especially true for supporters of larger class bands. Many smaller class bands have great shows. Arrive early at the next show and see what you've been missing.



- Turn off (or at least put on vibrate/silent) your cell phone. If you receive a call during a performance, wait until that performance is over before returning the call.
- No matter what your personal opinion of a particular performance, never say it out loud unless it's complementary. Every band on the field is “somebody’s band”, and it may be the folks sitting next to or behind you. Give to the other bands the same respect and attention you hope they will give our band.
- Refrain from conversation during performances. Show respect for the band and the spectators around you.
- Do not allow children to play in the stands and distract other spectators. Obviously, children are the future of this activity. It is good for them to see why big brother or big sister are always at practice and not home. However, for their safety, and as a courtesy to others, they should not be allowed to run up and down steps and play in the aisles so others may enjoy the show.
- Do not leave or return to your seat during a band’s performance. Most competition venues will forbid entry or exit during performances. Wait until a performance has ended before moving about. You will only need to wait 15 minutes, at the most, before the next break. There is sufficient time between bands to move in and out of the seating area.
- Do not obstruct the view of others. Please avoid standing in front of people trying to watch the show.
- Buy something from the concession stand. In many cases a band competition may be the major source of a band program's yearly budget. They have made a large investment and would appreciate your support. In most cases, you will find that prices are much less than what you will pay at your local movie theater.
- Do not boo at other bands or the contest results during the awards. Unfortunately, everyone is not going to agree on the results. Booing the award winners or the judges will not accomplish positive results.
- Attend as many performances as possible to support our students and enjoy the show.

## **Emerald High School Band Booster Club:**

As mentioned above, The Emerald High School Viking Vanguard Marching Band program is supported by a parent run organization - the EHS Band Booster Club. The Band Boosters exist solely through volunteer parents in order to help provide your students with enjoyable and rewarding band experience

### **Membership:**

We would love for all parents to join the Booster Club. Booster Club Membership must be renewed each year. It has been said that “No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.” Each of you has something to give, in your own way, whether it be time, resources, connections, energy, or presence. Every contribution, no matter how big or small, is needed and appreciated as the EHS Marching Band program continues to grow and succeed.

There are two different levels you can join at:

- \$15 Annual Membership - you will receive voting rights at Booster Club Meetings and a EHS Band Car Magnet
- \$30 Annual Membership - you will receive voting rights at Booster Club Meetings, a EHS Band Car Magnet and a Friday Night Band shirt
- Additional Friday Night shirts may be purchased at \$20 each.

## **How You Can Help:**

### **Fundraising:**

While the band is a co-curricular program at Emerald High School, school funding does not cover all the expenses of operating the program. This usually comes as a surprise to new parents. Fundraising and fees help to pay for everything from caring for the uniforms, bus transportation to games and competitions, equipment and large instrument maintenance, show props, etc. There are several fundraisers throughout the year that you and your child can participate in.

### **Join A Committee:**

We have several committees that parents are encouraged to sign up for. Sign up sheets will be available at the first couple Booster Club meetings. We have committees such as pit crew, hospitality, fundraising, drivers, etc. The most help is needed at competitions. We need parents to help tow the trailers to and from the location, help the kids get ready, serve food and supervise while at the event. Booster Club members receive priority in signing up for committees.

### **Donations:**

Your children will eat well during Marching Band season. To make this happen, we rely on parents to donate items needed. This can range from chips, snacks, lunch meat to items for a full dinner for the kids. Water bottles are very important during Marching Band season, the more the better. During Band Camp, we have several gallons of water for the kids. During football games and competitions, we provide each student with at least 2-3 bottles per event. Any and all donations are very much appreciated.

### **Sponsorships:**

We now have two beautiful trailers to carry our equipment. We offer advertising on our trailers for those that are willing to provide a sponsorship for the band. If the business you work for or you know of any businesses that you think would sponsor EHS, please talk with them and have them fill out one of our sponsorship forms.

Below are the Volunteer Responsibilities if you are assisting at either football games or competitions (times are subject to change):

### **Home football games**

#### **6 pm**

- Arrive in the band room

#### **6 - 6:30 pm**

- Help students with uniforms
- Assist in setting up nacho stand

- Assist in moving snacks and water bottles to the stadium

### **6:30 - 7:30 (pregame)**

- Stay in the stands to guard band section and equipment
- Help with nacho stand (as needed)

### **Game**

- Spend the first or second half working the nacho stand
- Help pass out water bottles after pregame
- Help pass out water & snacks after halftime performance
- Help push equipment back to the bandroom, after halftime (as needed)
- Supervise students during their 3rd quarter free time and be sure they know when to be back in the stands

### **After the Game**

- Return to the band room
- Help put away coolers, snacks, and water bottles or prep for following day (as needed)
- Supervise students until dismissal

## **Saturday Competitions**

### **Call time**

- Arrive when the band is called (this may change due to morning rehearsals at EHS)
- Help load the flatbed trailer
- Help load snacks, water bottles, etc into trucks and vans
- Help with uniform issues (as needed)
- Travel to the competition in the caravan
  - Try to ride with someone who is taking supplies/equipment

### **Arrival at Competition Site**

- Help unload flatbed trailer
- Set up tents, tables, etc for food service
- Help with uniform issues (as needed)
- Remind students to apply sunscreen, drink water, and use the bathroom
- Encourage the students with pep talks and deep breathing for the stressed out ones

### **Competition Performance**

- Help move equipment to the field staging area
- Help with the props before and after the performance
- Watch the band's performance from the front sidelines and cheer loudly
- Return to the buses and help reload the flatbed trailer

**After Performance**

- Prep food to feed the band
- Clean up the area
- Reload the tents, chairs, tables, and remaining food into the vans & trucks

**Planning Ahead:****Senior Night:**

It has been a tradition in the EHS Band for us to honor our senior students and their parents near the end of the football season. Students are escorted onto the field by their parents to be greeted by the principal and the band director. Try to be there for Senior night to see the presentations.

**Band Banquet:**

It has been a tradition in the EHS band for us to celebrate our successful year with students and family. This is done offsite. You will be informed of the details later in the year.

**Tips for a Successful Marching Band Season**

- Ask your child “what’s new, did you get any handouts at practice that I need to see”?
- Make sure your child is at every practice, on time and ready to learn and play.
- Please do not schedule any vacation during band camp. If you think there is a conflict with band camp, then you need to speak to Ms. Tanner immediately. Please do not wait until band camp starts.
- Please mark all of our playing engagements on your calendars—the home and away football games, competition and the Christmas Parade. The calendar will be distributed.
- Make sure that we have your email address and phone number for communication throughout the season
- Please read all of the other information included in this packet, and keep it for future reference.

- Participate in our fundraisers and make sure your child is participating as well.
- If you have suggestions let us know, but be kind—all of our members are volunteers with families and jobs just like you, trying to do the best job for your students.
- Get ready to have fun!

### **You know you're a Marching Band Parent when...**

- You make 2 or more trips to the high school almost every day, starting in July
- You can't pick your child out of the crowd because they all look alike
- You can pick your child out in the formations when the marching band performs
- You prominently display a band calendar in your kitchen and have band dates marked on your work calendar
- You know the Viking Chant and how to do the dance
- Your newest best friends are fellow band parents!!!

### **Conclusion:**

We hope this has been helpful. Anytime you feel lost, tap a “veteran” parent on the shoulder and ask for help! Our goal is for each student to have a great experience being a member of the Viking Vanguard Marching Band and to continue the tradition of musical excellence.

**Contact Information for  
Band Director and Band Booster Board**

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact one of your board members. The Booster Board President acts as liaison between the Band Director and Parents.

Director: Charlotte Tanner - [tannerc@gwd50.org](mailto:tannerc@gwd50.org)

Booster Club Board President: Becky Gardner - [dandbgardner@yahoo.com](mailto:dandbgardner@yahoo.com)

Booster Club Board Vice President: Carey Divilbiss - [cedivilbiss@hotmail.com](mailto:cedivilbiss@hotmail.com)

Booster Club Board Treasurer: Angela Easterling - [afeasterling@gmail.com](mailto:afeasterling@gmail.com)  
Angela Burdette - [burdette\\_angela@yahoo.com](mailto:burdette_angela@yahoo.com)

Booster Club Board Secretary: Kathy Maez - [kathydmaez@gmail.com](mailto:kathydmaez@gmail.com)