

What to Expect When Your Child Joins Marching Band

Welcome to OOMPA! You don't remember joining OOMPA? Well the moment your child joined the Oakmont Overlook Marching Spartans, you became a member of the Oakmont Overlook Music Parent Association. OOMPA is a booster club of sorts for the Marching Band specifically, and the Music programs in the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District. This document is to familiarize you and your family with what to expect from becoming a part of the Marching Spartans. If you have never been a part of a competitive Marching Band this will be eye opening, and if you have, you know that each organization, each staff, is managed some-what differently.

OOMPA is “guided” by an executive board made up of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary, as well as the Music Director for the Marching Band/High School. The board, with the exception of the Band Director, is elected annually by the parent members of OOMPA during the May business meeting. The goal of OOMPA is to help keep music programs in our school district, and to promote, and assist through time, abilities, and fund-raising the Marching Band.

Questions you may be asking yourself:

What is expected of me?

We expect every family to chaperone at least one event, to assist with the various volunteer opportunities, participate in the fund raising efforts of the band, to participate in the parent meetings, to really share this experience with their child to the best of each families abilities.

What is this going to cost?

Marching Band can take a lot of money, our program runs on a budget of approximately \$42,000 annually. That is why OOMPA has many fund raising opportunities that uniquely go toward assisting your family in paying for your marching band expenses, in addition to aiding the entire organization. First year members additionally face some one time only “rookie year” expenses as listed below:

One time only, rookie year approximate expenses: Shoe Fee,(\$25) Band Jacket(\$65), flag fee if color guard member (\$10).

Yearly approximate expenses: Band Camp (\$300), Band Banquet(\$25pp), Fund raiser buy outs if you don't participate in the fund raiser, any additional trips, Disney World Florida, Out of Region USSBA competitions for example. Instrument needs; reeds, valve oil, mouth piece, insurance policy rider for instrument strongly recommended.

Parent expenses: Admission to OHS football games (\$6), Admission to Band Competitions(\$10), Parent gear if you choose to purchase any, food money for students traveling to band competitions (around \$10 is plenty), black socks for your student and white short sleeved t-shirts (Wal-mart brand is perfect) or similar undergarments required for colorguard members.

How much time is this going to involve?

A lot of time is consumed by the marching band. The band season is year-long, your child will have intensive levels of practice July-October, then it tapers off, it is equivalent to varsity level sports. Practice is generally held Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday for the competition season with most band competitions occurring on Saturday evening/night or Sunday afternoon. Most parade requests are in the afternoons, and most football games are on Friday nights, the band only participates currently at the home football games with the exception of Thanksgiving Day and any Super bowl events for the Spartans. Basically from August band camp through Thanksgiving Day your child will be practicing or performing for Marching Band almost every single day of the week. Practice is all day on

Saturdays, generally the students leave directly from practice to load buses to attend band competitions, and from about 5pm until 8:30pm during the week. Band Competitions can get the students back to the school around mid-night or later depending on how far away the competition is.

Band Competitions:

Band competitions can be very fun, exciting, and educational. It is the roar of the crowd, the pride in performance, and the pleasure of the judges that the students and staff work so hard for. They also can be far away, most of our competitions take place in Connecticut, or other areas of Massachusetts. We strongly recommend attending a band competition if you are able to, many families go to them all. Carpooling is always a great way to share the ride and the expense of fuel. Your student will be required to be with the band and the band's chaperones at all times, so they will not be able to sit with you, however you will have the opportunity to visit them in the student seats to congratulate them, or give them money , (which you know is all they really want us for!)

In closing, we can't say enough about the positive impact being a member of the Oakmont-Overlook Marching Spartans has been to the students and families that have performed with the ensemble through the years. You will find the group of students and their families, along with the staff to be friendly, open, and supportive. Anyone will be more than happy to answer your questions, address your concerns, and just plain welcome you. If you wish to reach out to, or be contacted by current families, just let Mr. DeMoura know, or visit www.marchingspartans.net and you will find a list of contact information for the OOMPA executive board members.

With Pride!

The Oakmont Overlook Music Parents Association