

What to Expect on a Competition Day: For Parents

Are the boosters ready for LHS Marching Band's first competition?

For those families who are about to experience this for the first time, we want to share with you what many have learned through experience: what to expect on a competition day!

Check the schedule for the day and see if your band member has everything they need before they leave the house. This includes:

- their show shirt
- a hat/sunscreen
- water
- their dot book and music
- money for concessions
- hoodie/jacket for those cold nights
- their own snacks for the bus ride
- portable phone charger
- for the band:
 - instrument and supplies (reeds, oil, etc.)
 - Vipers and black socks
- for the guard:
 - shoes and gloves
 - bobby pins and rubber bands
 - hair spray

Hopefully, you have purchased a t-shirt or hoodie sporting this year's show design in order to show your support for the band. Make sure you wear band attire on Competition Day! As the season progresses, it gets a little chilly at night in the bleachers, so be sure to check the weather. Most families will bring a blanket or seat cushion to sit on. You may think about bringing rain ponchos and "Hot Hands."

If you know ahead of time that you will be going, you should buy presale tickets. Presale tickets for all our competitions will be available at Mr. Goss' office a week before each competition. The presale ticket is \$6, or \$8 at the venue the day of the show. This will not only save you a couple dollars, but more importantly, it will save you a lot of time when you get to the show site. When you get to the high school, most schools will have two lines at the gate: one for presale admission and one for purchasing tickets. Plan on getting to the show site when the gates open, as seating is usually limited, and the seats go fast. The top, center rows of the bleachers are the best seats, but don't worry if you don't get seats on the 50-yard line. Any seats between the 30s are still good. When you get there, look for Lancaster families and grab a seat. Save a couple seats near you and others from Lancaster will join you. They'll save a few seats and so on...then, before you know it, we have our own LHSMB cheering section!

Make sure you bring cash as there are usually no ATMs/credit cards at the schools. There will be programs for sale and 50/50 raffles. You can bring snacks with you, but it's a good idea to help out the host band by buying something and you might find it hard to resist some of the food and drinks for sale. Make it a point to purchase a Candy Gram for your band member. They really appreciate having that extra kudos after a great performance (the candy is always nice to have, too)!

The NYSFBC encourages an audience etiquette like that of attending an outdoor symphony concert, so everybody can enjoy the performance and appreciate the hard work that went into creating each band's show. Noise makers and banners that detract from the live performance are highly discouraged. LHSMB fans are notoriously loud (but never obnoxious) in the stands. We cheer for all the bands because we know that all of the kids, no matter where they are from, have worked very hard to perform their show. We never boo or voice negative opinions about other bands or the judges.

Once the show starts, you cannot enter or leave the stands while a band is on the field. It takes a few minutes for one band to leave and another to enter, so make a run for it if you must, but never before LHSMB is about to perform! You might not get back into the stands in time and you'll miss all the excitement.

Still pictures are allowed at all shows if the flash feature is turned off on your camera. The flash on the camera can interfere with the performance and safety of the band members. Each band is videotaped by the show host and a video is given to each director for educational purposes. Audience members are NOT allowed to video tape bands due to copyright regulations.

After the last band performs, the home school recognizes their senior class. Make sure to honor those students who have given years of hard work to their band by being respectful during their recognition. After recognition is retreat. The drum majors from all the bands line up on the field and scores are announced. Please make sure to applaud for everyone because, as mentioned earlier, we know that all of the bands worked very hard to perform their show.

After the competition, the kids load up on the buses and wait for the directors to get back from the judge's room. Once the directors get back, the band heads back to LHS where they will put everything away and clean up before they leave. Sometimes events beyond the band's control effect their arrival time at LHS, so please be patient and understanding if, and when, the band does not arrive on time. Once they get home, remind them and yourself to feel good about a great performance. Then, get some sleep and get ready for the next competition.

Hope to see you there!

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