

# Parent FAQs

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## Practice

### What time should my child arrive for practice?

On time is late. The band must be on the field (or their designated practice space) with their instruments, ready to go by the time practice starts (5:30PM or 9:00AM). Please plan on having your child at the school *at least 15 minutes before* the start of practice. Occasionally, a section will have an earlier than usual start. Your child should know about this in advance and keep you informed. It helps to keep checking in with your child because they get busy and they do forget.

### What should you bring to practice?

Your child should have a one-gallon thermos, sunscreen, and GOOD tennis shoes for marching. Make sure the shoes have good support and are in good repair. They need to be prepared for all types of weather. (We do practice in the rain!)

The students will also need a small notebook called a dot book.

Bring lunch for the noon break on Saturdays.

### When do they have breaks?

Aside from lunch, there is also a break around 3:20 p.m. on Saturdays for bingo teams who need to set up at 3:30 p.m. over at Britton. Bingo teams will need to arrange for a ride to and from Britton (carpooling is encouraged).

### **Is this marching band or sports?**

In short, it is both. Practice, especially the early days, can seem a lot like a sports practice. Modern marching band requires quite a bit of athletic and musical training. Endurance training like running and push-ups help the kids get physically ready for some very long days ahead. The modern marching band member must be flexible, powerful, conditioned, and expressive. For some children it is a very intense experience that can leave them feeling sore, frustrated, and off balance. How you handle this is likely based on your parenting style and your child's personality. Try not to blow off your child's concerns, but keep in mind there are some valuable life lessons to be learned about working with others. Talk to them, support them, and encourage them to hang in there.

### **What time does practice really end?**

Pick up times vary after practice and a lot depends on what your child plays in the band. If practice ends at 9:00 pm, the band still needs to put their instruments away. Some sections have a brief section meeting right after practice, and members of the pit need to move their equipment from the field to the band room and put it away. Do not be surprised if your student does not leave the school until 9:15PM. The pattern is pretty consistent throughout the season and practices do not end early.

### **Can parents watch the practice?**

The last 15-20 minutes of Thursday night practice is a good time to stroll to the stands and appreciate the band's progress. You will watch the show evolve and sit in awe of your child's accomplishments - just remember to keep the noise down so you don't distract the kids.

Keep in mind: 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.

## **Football Games**

### **Do I have to pay?**

You will need to buy a ticket to the football game, unless you volunteer for the pit crew.

### **What should I bring?**

You are encouraged to bring cash if you need to buy tickets, concessions, and/or merchandise. Bring a jacket (the evening cool-down may surprise you) and something to sit on - stadium seats are a worthwhile investment!

### **Where do the band parents sit?**

The band sits in the bleachers under the press box (around mid-field). Their section is painted and reserved. We sit to the left of the band (if you are facing the bleachers). Keep an eye out for our Band Booster family cheering on the LOER in our show shirts and Live Oak colors!

### **How can I help?**

Pit crew volunteers are needed to push equipment and props on and off the field at half-time. We also need parents to bring water and cups for the band in the stands. Of course, you can also show your spirit and cheer for the band in the stands!

### **Do I need to go to every football game?**

We only perform at home games, and this is a great way to see the show develop (football half-time shows are like dress rehearsals for competitions). Your kids will appreciate your support (even if they don't show it), and the Live Oak Acorns usually put on a good game! The band plays the national anthem at the beginning of the game, plays in support of first downs and points scored, during time-outs, and performs their show at half-time.

### **When are they finished?**

The band is expected to stay for the entire game, which usually lasts until 9:15-9:30 p.m. You can pick them up in front of the band room after they have put all of their equipment away and changed out of their uniform.

## **Competitions**

### **What do I need to bring to competitions?**

You will need to pay for a ticket into most competitions (\$5 to \$15 per person). Bring cash. Tickets and concessions are usually cash only, as are some souvenir vendors.

Many times you will be sitting on concrete bleachers - stadium seats that you can carry in are great investments for competitions and football games!

### **What time should I be there?**

The performance time for LOER will be listed on the competition itinerary. Give yourself PLENTY of time to find the venue, park, and get through the gate. Parking can be a challenge and the gates can get backed up during peak times. You will not be allowed to enter the seating area once a performance begins. If you cut it too close, you will be listening to your child's performance from the parking lot.

### **Is there a proper etiquette for competitions?**

After the band takes the field, the announcer will introduce the band and the crowd quiets. DO NOT yell out your child's name or anything else during this quiet time. This is not a football game. The kids are nervous and trying to focus on the task at hand ... performing the show.

Clapping and cheering during the show is appropriate when there is a pause in the music, or after a difficult piece of choreography. (Look for LOER shirts and parents in the stands, and cheer when they do!)

Cell Phone Etiquette: If you have an emergency, leave the stands and make your calls. *Do not talk on your cell phone* or carry on a loud conversation during any of the performances. It is

disrespectful to the bands and to your 'neighbors.' Put down the phone and enjoy the experience; most matters can wait an hour or two.

We believe in showing appreciation for ALL of the bands that take the field. Do not make derogatory comments about anyone. First of all, all of the participants have worked hard. If you have something you don't like about a show, save it for the ride home. This is about respect. Besides, you have no idea who you are sitting by or with. We clap after EVERY band that performs. The kids appreciate it and you will feel good at the end of the competition.

### **How can I see my child after their performance?**

Band members are encouraged to stay together before and during competitions. Do not be offended if they don't notice you or wave, they are "in the zone"! After they perform, they usually return to the Emerald Regime's big green semi-truck ("Big T") in the student parking lot for a meal. After they load their instruments, they will be able to talk with you while they eat and have some downtime. This is also a great chance for you to socialize with other parents, or help out serving!

### **Can we leave straight from the competition?**

Students are required to stay for the entire competition (including awards) and return to school on the bus. If they bring their cell phone, they can text you when they arrive at school (this is often very late at night). Keep in mind, they will still need to unload Big T and return all of the equipment to the band room before anyone can leave (this usually takes another half hour). Plan accordingly!

## **Volunteering**

We can't do it without you! Unlike many sports programs, the LOER must have parent volunteers for the programs to run smoothly, and it is the best way to get to know others and support your child. You will have the opportunity to sign up for the volunteer activities of your choice at parent orientation, but you can volunteer at any time!

**Cooking:** A band travels on their stomach. The cooking committee arranges meals at competitions and camps, as well as snacks and desserts at special events. This is definitely a great place to help out - you can't have too many cooks in our kitchen!

- The head cook decides on a menu and shops for ingredients, which are loaded onto Big T before competitions.
- At each competition, we need help setting up the tables, easy-ups, grills, wires, and serving items.
- We need assistants to help prep, cook, and serve the meal.
- Afterward, we need help cleaning up, loading all of the supplies back onto Big T, and transporting dishes for washing. (These dishes need to be returned to Big T before the next competition.)

**Equipment:** Equipment parents help all year with whatever needs to be moved, fixed or built. Some of our shows require props. We need volunteers that can saw, hammer, nail, glue, and paint to build these props.

**Pit Crew:** During marching season and drumline season, we need parents that will help move all the pit equipment on and off the field/floor. It helps to have a regular set of parents who do this at football games and competitions, since the equipment needs to go in the exact same place every time. The pit crew may be asked to practice with the band on Thursday evenings, especially at the beginning of the season. This is a great way to be close to your kid and really share the band experience!

\*For competitions the pit crew may get a wristband (free entry), but these are limited and not guaranteed. Please be prepared to pay for a ticket to get into each event.

**Band Chaperones:** As various student groups participate in competitions and performances throughout the year, chaperones are needed to accompany the groups. These events may vary in length of time, from just a few hours to overnight or two to three day events. Male and female chaperones are required when boys and girls are housed separately.

**Sewing:** Throughout the entire school year, we need volunteers to help with sewing. We make some of the show flags used in the Marching Band Show and Winter Guard shows. You do not need to be a great seamstress to help. There can be hand sewing, machine sewing, cutting and pinning, gluing, and a variety of other tasks that need to be done. If you are at all comfortable with a pair of scissors, needle and thread and /or a sewing machine, please let the band boosters know.

**Uniforms:** The band members all have to be measured at the beginning of the year. Special uniform accessories are often part of the show. If you have good organizational skills or just a desire to help, this could be your spot. We are in great need of people who can make alterations, mostly hemming and some taking in and letting out.

**Transportation:** During the Winter Percussion and Winter Guard season, parents are needed to transport the band members and color guard to competitions. We will ask for drivers at the beginning of the winter season.

## Fundraising

**Bingo (All Year)** - This is the biggest money maker for the LOER. We need volunteers to work bingo throughout the entire school year. The money raised by bingo helps to support the general funding of the band programs. This is how many of the bills get paid. Bingo also allows individuals to offset their fair-share contribution. You will receive a form, asking for your

commitment to a team for the calendar year, during the first mandatory parent meeting. All student band members are asked to work on a Set-Up/Clean-Up Team.

**Crab Feed** (February) - This is an annual community event of fundraising and eating. Band members are expected to sell at least two tickets before the event. Parents are needed to sell tickets, host the bar, run the silent auction, set up, prepare, and clean up. The Jazz Band entertains while the other Emerald Regime members serve tables.

**Gilroy Garlic Festival** (end of July) - The LOER staffs the Stuffed and Marinated Mushrooms section in Gourmet Alley during the Gilroy Garlic Festival. We clean, prepare mushrooms, make stuffing, stuff mushrooms, cook and sell them. This event requires a massive amount of people (about 35 per shift, two shifts per day, Friday, Saturday and Sunday). The Garlic Festival group pays the Emerald Regime based on total hours worked, and participation contributes to your student account. Volunteers are required to wear long pants, closed-toe shoes, and a hat.

**Popcorn** (seasonal) - Students sell popcorn to neighbors, family, and friends. Part of the individual sales contribute to your student account.

**Beef Jerky** (seasonal) - Students sell beef jerky to neighbors, family, and friends. Part of the individual sales contribute to your student account.

**Gourmet Apples** (seasonal) - Students sell gourmet apples to neighbors, family, and friends. Part of the individual sales contribute to your student account.

## JOLT

### What is JOLT?

JOLT stands for Journey Of a LifeTime. It is offered every other year as an opportunity for band members to travel outside of the state together. Students who wish to participate must have a positive balance in their student account to qualify.

### How can I find out more?

There will be separate meetings for JOLT. Please look for information coming home and attend these meetings for information on cost, dates, itineraries, and more.

## Communication

**Band Booster Meetings** - Booster Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the band room at Live Oak. The best way for you to be informed is to attend the booster meetings regularly. Mr. Locsin usually addresses the parents with updates on the show and will answer parent questions. It is time well spent.

**Website** - Visit our website for current information at <http://www.emeraldregime.org/>

**Google Calendar** - Our website maintains a Google Calendar with important dates, times, and details. You can "sync" the band's calendars to your smart phone.

**Facebook** - The LOER Band Boosters have a Facebook page where announcements, pictures, and reminders are posted (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/940680019329394/>). Parents and students are encouraged to join.

**Charms** - Be sure to sign up for a “Charms” account. The Charms account is online and you can use it to check/download important forms, check your account balance, and many other important features. This is the band’s new PRIMARY means of communication so it is extremely important that you sign up! PLEASE check your emails frequently especially once competitions have begun...things often change fast!

**Email** - You may also receive emails from LOER Band Boosters at LOERBB@gmail.com or SignUpGenius.com (please make sure these emails are not going to your SPAM folder).

**Band Director** - Band directors 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, the band director is probably not your best resource. Try a fellow parent first, a veteran Band Booster. Visit the Band Boosters link on the Emerald Regime webpage for an email directory of board members. They can answer many of the questions that you have!

## Glossary

**Auxiliary:** AKA the Color Guard.

**Band Boosters:** The success of the band program is threefold: the dedication and talent of the staff, the hard working dedicated students, and the ongoing efforts of the volunteers. Make no mistake; the boosters are made up of parents (and some alumni band parents, and grandparents) that work year round to make sure the band has everything they need to be successful.

**Baritone:** The baritone is a valve instrument. Some marching bands, Live Oak included, use baritones instead of trombones.

**Captions:** Awards are given in competition to acknowledge specific excellence in the areas of Music, Visual, and General Effect. There is a relationship between these awards and the final competition scores, as the captions are subcategories used in the overall scoring. It is possible to win the caption awards and still not win the competition, although more often the winner of General Effect is also the winner of the overall competition.

**Class A, AA, AAA, AAAA:** Designations assigned by school size for purpose of competition. The circuit currently has five divisions:

- Class A: Bands with up to 60 members
- Class AA: Bands with up to 80 members
- Class AAA: Bands with up to 100 members
- Class AAAA: Bands with up to 140 members
- Class AAAAA: Bands with more than 140 members

**Cryogenic black crumb rubber:** You will likely never hear these little black crumbs referred by this name. The kids have various pet names for them such as ‘turfies.’ You will experience this

'fill' material for as long as your child is in marching band. It is on the practice field, so it collects in their shoes and is tracked through your house. It looks, as one parent described, like "small mouse droppings." Have your child empty their shoes outside. You and your carpets will thank us for it.

**Dot Books:** Your child will be required to acquire and maintain a 3x5 notebook that is their personal map of the show. The dot book contains their specific show coordinates, spot on field, relation to other people, relation to the form, direction that they come from and the direction they move. They also include counts for each set and extra notes such as step size and visual details. If a show formation is the map, the dot book is the "YOU ARE HERE" for each band member. The band members build and maintain their own dot books.

**Drumline:** All marching percussion instruments (not including large pit instruments)

**Euphonium:** A valved brass musical instrument resembling a small tuba of tenor pitch.

**Hornline:** If you can blow wind through the instrument, it is on the hornline. The hornline consists of trumpets, mellophones, baritones, euphoniums, tubas, saxophones, clarinets, flutes, and piccolos.

**JOLT:** Journey Of a LifeTime, an opportunity for band members to travel outside of the state together (optional).

**LOER:** Live Oak Emerald Regime - The reason we are here!

**Mellophone:** A brass instrument that is typically used in place of the horn (sometimes called a French horn) in marching bands or drum and bugle corps.

**(The) Pit:** The non-marching portion of the band. Includes keyboards, certain drums, some percussion instruments, and whatever instrument that is not practical to march. The pit requires a 'pit crew' to help get equipment on and off the field. If you are going to be at the show anyway, consider helping out!

**Props:** Short for 'properties' are used to enhance the shows. Flags, hoods, sabers, all manner of structures, are all props. We make most of our own show specific props and it is a big undertaking. Whether we need carpenter skills or sewing skills depends on the show. Watch for requests to help out.

**Sections:** Each instrument is a 'section.' Each section develops its own pride and personality.

**Shakos:** The hats worn by the marching band with the big plumes in front.

**Sousaphone:** Instead of the upright concert tubas seen in orchestras and wind ensembles, this horn is used. It's the largest and lowest-pitched wind instrument in the marching band. Rather than being held, the sousaphone is worn around the upper body of the musician, with the bell of the horn coiling around the player's back.

**WBA (Western Band Association):** The WBA organizes a marching band circuit with competitions held throughout October and November leading up to the circuit championship competition. Visit their website for competition updates and scores at <http://www.westernbands.org/>