

Dear Parents of a prospective 2022-23 CHS marching band student,

You are receiving this letter because your child can be a part of the Charlottesville High School Band program. They are therefore invited, not required, to march with the award-winning Charlottesville Marching Knights. I believe the marching band to be the best opportunity Charlottesville has to offer both new and returning students. The Marching Knights are one of the most decorated programs in the state of Virginia. Last year they were one of only two groups to increase in members from the previous season in VMBC. We've also marched in parades from as close to home as the Dogwood parade and as extravagant as the London New Year's Day Parade.

Marching Band is a varsity sport with some prerequisites. Woodwinds, brass, and drumline must be members of one of the concert band ensembles. Drumline members must also pass an audition as there are a limited number of spots. Front ensemble members (percussion that does not march) must be a part of any performing ensemble at CHS, including orchestra or choir, or have piano experience. Color guard members may be selected from anyone within the school. Students that participate in Marching Band at any level will receive a varsity letter or star.

It is important to understand the idea that marching band is a varsity sport because it helps to explain both the competitive aspect of marching band and the amount of rehearsal time involved. The band will attend four to five competitions this year, one of which we are hosting. It is important that all marching band members are present at the competitions, because, unlike other varsity sports, we do not have a second string; everyone plays, and everyone is a valuable contributing member. The second thing to note is the rehearsal schedule. Full Camp begins August 1st and meets every weekday until and including August 12th. Full Camp meets from 9am-4pm. Students should bring their lunch. This is followed by a week of evening camp from 5pm-8:30. Guard and percussion will still have sectional rehearsals from 9am-noon the week of evening camp. Our complete marching schedule can be found at [cvillebands.com](http://cvillebands.com).

If you are a new parent to the marching band world the amount of rehearsal time over the summer is daunting. I can assure you that we are rehearsing no more than any competitive marching band, and once school begins we actually rehearse quite a bit less than most other programs. Our band has a family atmosphere. Every activity, whether music rehearsal, marching rehearsal, teamwork game, or sharing a meal together, is vital to help to build teamwork and esprit de corps.

I also want to encourage you to personally get involved. Our band booster organization is set up to help transition new parents into the high school band program, and provide support to the hard-working students. Each of you is important to the success of the marching band. Being involved will provide you with first-hand

information on what is going on with the band program, give you the opportunity to volunteer thereby becoming an active participant in your child's musical experience, and give you more opportunities to see them grow as they perform.

Two questions I get most often are: Can I do marching band and another varsity sport? Yes, for the first time in a few years marchers can even participate in the one act play next year. We have marching band students that run cross country, play volleyball, field hockey, golf, and we have even had a football player or two in the past few years. The second question I get is how much does it cost? Marching band dues are \$150. If the student needs to rent an instrument there is an additional \$100 fee. There is no rental fee for front ensemble next year. **No student is ever turned away from the marching band because of their inability to pay.**

Please let me know if you have any further questions. I can be reached via email at [hackwoj1@charlottesvilleschools](mailto:hackwoj1@charlottesvilleschools). You can also check out our website [cvillebands.com](http://cvillebands.com) or facebook page Charlottesville HS Bands.

Welcome to the High School Band Family,  
Jason Hackworth  
Director of Bands  
Charlottesville High School