

July 22, 2020

Dear CCSD Marching Band Families:

With the safety and security of our students as our number one priority, the Cobb County band directors have made the difficult decision that Cobb County bands will not participate in a competitive marching band season this fall. While none of us wanted to make this call, due to concerns with the substantial and growing community spread of COVID-19 in Cobb County and the surrounding metro Atlanta area as well as the uncertainty regarding how or if marching competitions will be held this fall, we feel this is the best decision for the safety of our students and the viability of our programs.

The CCSD band directors believe fully in the marching band activity and in the life-changing positive experiences the activity provides for the thousands of students who participate in CCSD marching bands. As you are aware, undertaking a competitive marching season involves significant amounts of time, planning, energy, and fundraising. We take the investment of these resources very seriously but believe it is in the best interest of our students, families, and schools to provide a marching experience that we can be sure will allow all students to safely participate.

Even though our bands will not be competing this year, we are still planning for students to march; our directors have been working hard to develop plans that will allow our students the best possible experience. When circumstances allow, our bands will still engage in the marching activity in conjunction with the Georgia High School Athletic Association football season. Should conditions and opportunities allow, we encourage programs to explore alternative marching arts activities for our students.

Our bands have already postponed scheduled summer rehearsals, and with the recent announcement by Superintendent Ragsdale that CCSD will move to 100% virtual instruction, we do not feel it prudent to engage in face-to-face rehearsals at this time. Following Georgia Music Educators Association and Cobb County Fine Arts marching band guidelines, CCSD band activities will be 100% virtual until the CCSD allows for in-person marching activities to resume.

The CCSD Fine Arts Department will continue to monitor the situation, listen to the guidance of local health officials, study the current research on best safety practices regarding the playing of instruments, and work to adjust our plan throughout the fall. We will continue to devote our time and energy to our student-musicians, providing them with outlets for creativity and expression, creating opportunities for camaraderie with friends and the band community, all within the framework of working to assure the safety, health, and well-being of our students.

Individual directors will have more details to share in the coming days, and we look forward to working with all of our students and creating memorable experiences very soon.

Thank you for your support and understanding as we work to provide students with the best possible band experience while keeping them as safe and healthy as possible.

Sincerely,

Cobb County Bands

