

# Flowery Branch High School Marching Band



## Marching Band Handbook 2026

**Flowery Branch High School**  
4450 Hog Mountain Rd.  
Flowery Branch GA 30542

**Mr. Joey Farah, Principal**  
**Mr. Miguel Guisasola, Band Director**  
**Ms. Sable McIntyre, Asst. Director**

## GETTING READY FOR MARCHING SEASON

One of the keys to success for the Falcon Marching Band is the preparation before marching season begins each fall. By early May, the band staff has already invested countless hours of preparation. For most new students, preparation begins in July with Rookie Camp. Percussion and Colorguard students will begin pre-camp rehearsals in early July. Woodwind sections have optional rehearsals in June and July.

### MARCHING BAND PARTICIPATION POLICY

- ◆ Students **must** be registered for a band class to participate in marching band.
- ◆ Auxiliary (Colorguard) students who have never played a band instrument do not have to participate in a band class.
- ◆ Students who drop band class will not be allowed to participate in marching band.
- ◆ All marching band students, including auxiliary and percussion students, **must** attend band camp.
- ◆ Marching band is a commitment of rehearsals and performances from July through December.

### MARCHING BAND REQUIRED ATTENDANCE

- ◆ Attendance at **ALL** practices is **MANDATORY**.
- ◆ For planned absences, students must submit a absence request form (<https://fbhsband.org/absence-request-form/>) to Mr. Guisasola
  - 4 weeks in advance of a performance
  - 2 weeks in advance of a rehearsal
  - Requested absences will be considered, and students will be notified of the director's approval or disapproval as quickly as possible.

Emergencies (illness, accident, death in the immediate family, etc.) will be handled individually.

- ◆ A student will be dismissed from the marching band if they exceed the following:
  - 3 unexcused practice absences
  - 1 unexcused performance absence

<b>Examples of Excused Absences</b>	<b>Examples of Unexcused Absences/Tardies</b>
Illness (resulting in a school absence) w/school note	Doctor's Appointment
Death in the Family	Work/Interview
Family Emergency	Camps/Retreats
	Club Meetings
	Make-up Work

Once school starts, the usual marching band practice schedule is as follows:

- three to four afternoons per week in August, September, and October
- one afternoon per week in November

A full calendar of rehearsals can be found on the band's web page ([fbhsband.org](http://fbhsband.org)). Each student and parent must sign off an acceptance of the schedule.

### ROLL OUT AND CALL TIME

**"If you're on time, you're late!"** **Roll out** is when uniform racks are rolled out. Students pick up their uniform bags and get dressed as directed. **Call time** is when all students should be present with all materials for practice or performance and **ready to go**. This is **NOT** the time when you are walking through the band room doors. Doors generally open one hour before call time on non-marching events, so students are able to get ready. Failure to be at Call Time may result in loss of third quarter break. The weekly schedule is always posted on the whiteboard in the band room and is also distributed through our communication channels.

## JUNE TECH REHEARSALS

Tech Prep are **optional** practices in June that provide opportunities to learn marching and playing basics, which will help during band camp. These practices are especially helpful for new students to become more comfortable before band camp.

The drumline and color guard will have rehearsals throughout the summer that will be communicated through their instructors and/or student leaders.

## **Summer Band Camp**

### ROOKIE CAMP (LEADERSHIP, PERCUSSION, GUARD, AND ROOKIES ONLY)

Rookie Camp is designed to help new marchers be successful when full camp begins. Guard and Percussion rehearse during this time as well.

#### **Rookie Camp**

July 20 (7:30am – 4:30pm daily)

### BAND CAMP WEEK 1

Pre-Camp is designed to focus on fundamentals and music in preparation for 14-hour days the following week. **Breakfast & lunch is provided each day in the FBHS cafeteria.**

#### **Band Camp Week 1**

July 21-24 (7:30 am – 4:30 pm daily)

**Hydration is critical for all students.**

**Begin NOW to drink plenty of water during rehearsals and throughout marching season**

### BAND CAMP WEEK 2 (FULL DAY & EVENING)

**Breakfast & lunch is provided each day in the FBHS cafeteria.**

Band camp is an intense week with multiple goals. The students make great progress toward learning the season's show before the school year begins. It is hard work that results in a rewarding experience. The band performs one complete show each season. The marching element is quite intricate, and the music is challenging. During band camp, students learn drill, practice/memorize/rehearse the music, and combine these two elements to create the show.

Attendance at both weeks of camp is **mandatory** for participation in the Falcon Marching Band.

#### **Band Camp Week 2**

July 27-30

7:30 am – 9:00 pm

July 31 (7:30 am - 7:00 pm)

Friends & Family preliminary show debut: Friday night 7/31 at 6:00 pm

**Breakfast & lunch is provided each day in the FBHS cafeteria.** Primary activities alternate between inside and outside. Therefore, rain doesn't cause rehearsal cancellations typically. There is a two-hour break from 4:00-6:00 pm each day so students can rest, go home, or stay at school to relax with a movie in the band room. **Dinner is on your own.**

### WHAT TO BRING

**REQUIRED** items for all band rehearsals:

- ◆ Instrument/Equipment (includes mouthpiece, reeds, oils, mallets, etc.)
- ◆ Red water cooler (part of your uniform, provided in band dues), labeled with your name and filled with water
- ◆ Small spiral-bound notebook for drill coordinates and directions (provided for you by your section leader)
- ◆ Pencils

Suggested items to make students more comfortable during marching band rehearsals:

- ◆ Light colored, loose fitting clothing (**NO JEANS** or other long pants)
- ◆ Sun screen
- ◆ Hat or visor AND sunglasses
- ◆ Insect repellent
- ◆ Cooling towel
- ◆ Small gym sack/bag
- ◆ Personal cooler with your own additional drinks (Water or sports drinks – **NO SODA!**)
- ◆ **EAT BREAKFAST EVERY MORNING without milk** and DRINK PLENTY OF WATER EACH NIGHT!!

### **COPING WITH THE SUMMER HEAT**

The band staff is keenly aware of the challenges that come with July heat in Georgia. Students are given frequent mandatory hydration breaks, shade breaks, and practice rotations from outdoors to indoors. Fans and misting tents (when needed) are provided during breaks.

The band has multiple parents with medical expertise, and a parent is always on site during camp. Volunteers go onto the field if they suspect a student is not well and ask the student to take a break. **Parents: Please make sure your child takes reasonable precautions such as staying hydrated.** Students are required to complete an annual medical form before camp as another level of safety and is a requirement for participation for the entire season.

**As per Hall County regulations, a heat index monitor will be on the field during all outdoor rehearsals.** Since rehearsals can be inside or outside, rain will not cause a cancellation.

### **REGULAR MARCHING BAND REHEARSALS**

After band camp—when school begins— regular rehearsal schedule starts.

Rehearsals generally follow this schedule for August and September:

- Mondays and/or Tuesdays: 6:30-9:00 pm
- Wednesdays: off
- Thursdays: after school to 6:30 pm

Attendance is **MANDATORY**. Official dates and times will be posted on the band calendar, the band Facebook page, weekly newsletter, and on emails. As the weather cools and daylight hours dim, rehearsal times may adjust to immediately after school.

### **FOOTBALL GAMES**

The marching band performs in the stands during each game and performs their show on the field at half-time.

Football Friday Highlights:

- Students wear the show shirt to school, except Fridays before a competition or Homecoming when students dress-up (Fancy Friday)
- Students play at the pep rally before or during the school day
- See game schedule below

### **Parents are needed for all football games!**

- Roadies: Move equipment and props for home and away games
- Chaperones:
  - Home: Help with before game meal, Free entrance to game; sit in designated seating with band; help distribute plumes; be a fun second mom/dad to students!
  - Away: Help with before game meal, Ride bus, free entrance to game; sit in designated seating with band; help distribute plumes; be a fun second mom/dad to students!
- Concessions: Home games only (includes 9th grade and JV games)

## 2026 REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE:

- 8-21 CASS (JUNIOR FALCON)
- 8-28 @ CHEROKEE BLUFF HS
- 9-4 @ GILMER CO. HS
- 9-11 MONROE AREA (GOLD OUT)
- 9-18 NORTH HALL (HOMECOMING)
- 9-25 BYE WEEK (OPEN)
- 10-2 JEFFERSON
- 10-9 WINDER BARROW (SENIOR NIGHT)
- 10-16 @ NORTH OCONEE
- 10-23 BYE WEEK (OPEN)
- 10-30 @ EAST FORSYTH
- 11-6 @ MADISON CO.

Students will receive a game day agenda each week that will be shared through our established communication channels (see Communication Channel section).

### *Sample schedule:*

- 4:00 pm Skull session rehearsal on field
- 4:45 pm move from practice field
- 5:00 pm Dinner
- 5:45 pm Dressed in uniforms; Talon awards
- 6:15 pm Band warms up in parking area outside cafeteria
- 6:50 pm Band marches to stadium
- 7:00 pm Band enters stadium and marches into formation for National Anthem
- 7:15 pm Band performs National Anthem
- 7:20 pm Band forms "tunnel" for football team's entrance onto the field
- Immediately following: Proceed quickly to designated seating in stands
- First Quarter: Band performs stand tunes
- Second Quarter: Band performs stand tunes until approximately 9 minutes before half-time
- 9-minutes before half-time: Band proceeds to track to begin formation for show
- Halftime: Band marches onto field to perform Show
- Immediately after Show: Band proceeds to track to watch visiting band's show
- Third Quarter: Band break only for students who have completed the weekly assignments
  - Students may buy food at concessions during this time
  - No food is allowed in the designated band area of the stands at **any time**.
  - Front Ensemble students load equipment and receive a break during 4th quarter.
- Fourth Quarter: Band performs stand tunes
- Post game:
  - Band performs until stands are clear and FB football team has departed the field.
  - Band marches out of the stadium and gathers at the embankment outside band room for final recap.
  - Students (parents can help, too) store equipment and uniforms.
  - Clean up.
  - Students dismissed (approximately 45 minutes after game ends).

**NOTE: PARENTS:** The Falcon Marching Band makes its stadium entry at approximately 7:00pm for a 7:30pm game. You will want to be in your seats to watch them march inside the stadium and perform pre-game. Band parents are encouraged to wear band spirit wear and sit in the section next to the band. Band parents who are not serving as chaperones or working home game concessions are required to purchase an entry ticket to watch the band perform at the football game.

### AWAY GAMES

Students will receive a game day agenda each week, with a departure time and estimated return time to Flowery Branch after the game. Most away games are in the North Georgia area. Parents are encouraged to attend away games to support our band and football team. Parents serving as chaperones and equipment crew receive free entrance to games. All band members are required to ride the buses to and from away games. **Students are required to stay for the**

duration of the game. After the game, students may be checked out by their parents only. Parents must personally sign-out their student directly with Mr. Guisasola only.

### GAME MEALS

Pre-game meals are included in band dues. Additionally, students may purchase concessions during the third quarter break only if all weekly assignments have been completed.

### MARCHING COMPETITIONS

The Flowery Branch Falcon Marching Band performs in two to three competitions each season (usually the end of September and during October). The band travels by bus to competitions. Students will receive an itinerary the week before the event. This itinerary will include departure time from FBHS and an estimated return time. **Parent chaperones are needed for all competitions, and this is an excellent way to earn service hours, see award winning bands from across Georgia, and spend time with other band parents as well as our fabulous students.**

**\*\*\* Dates for football games and competitions are posted on the website calendar. \*\*\***

### BRANCH CLASSIC

The Flowery Branch Falcon Marching Band will host their 4th annual marching competition **October 18th**. This is our single largest fundraising event of the year. We will host 20+ bands from across Georgia competing for rank by size of band. **All band families are required to work during this event.** As host band, the Flowery Branch Falcon Marching Band will close out the day with a performance of their halftime show.

## Marching Band Dues and Costs

Marching Band is classified as a co-curricular activity meaning that while it is designed to enhance and enrich the educational experience received in the classroom, it is a program that receives very little financial support from the county school board. The funds required to run a marching band are considerable and are raised through fundraising efforts organized by the BPA and through collection of student dues. Dues are listed below along with what you can expect for incidental expenses throughout the season. Marching Dues are expected to be paid in full by the beginning of band camp. Outstanding Marching Dues after band camp begins will result in limitations in participating including but not limited to loss of third quarter break, inability to travel to away games, or removal from the marching band program.

Your dues include the cost of band camp, uniforms, pregame meals, transportation to games and competitions, awards, show music and drill, props, equipment, bookkeeping, yard signs, competition fees, instruction, administrative expenses, maintenance and repairs and more.

Registration requires a \$200 non-refundable deposit which goes towards your dues and must be paid to reserve your spot. **YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED UNTIL DEPOSIT IS PAID.** We require all dues (\$400 for wind players, \$550 for percussion, \$550 for ColorGuard) to be paid by May 1, 2026.

We offer two options for Dues. You may choose to pay the full cost of membership which includes opting out of the service hour requirement. We offer a discounted rate for dues, that along with the 30 hour commitment to service hours, help provide the funds to the BPA to cover the remaining cost.

	<b>Full Dues</b>	<b>Discounted Rate w/ Service Hour Commitment</b>
Marching Dues- Musicians	\$1,750	\$400
ColorGuard Dues	\$2,000	\$550
Instrument Rental (includes percussion and all students using a school owned instrument)	\$150	\$150
BandAid (non marching middle school)	n/a	\$115

Marching band incidentals:

Optional Patch Jackets \$135

Letterman Jackets \$200-\$400

Replacement Marching Shoes \$40

Replacement Water Jug \$20

Additional/Replacement Show Shirt \$20

Additional/Replacement Dry Fit \$20

Replacement Guard Bags \$45/\$65

Replacement Guard Shoes \$35

Gloves \$3

Socks \$3

Spending money for away games concessions, meals on competition days, Spirit week items

Concert band (band class) incidentals:

Formal Concert Wear \$150

Jazz Honor Band Auditions \$30

District Honor Band Auditions \$35

District Honor Band Participation \$40

JanFest \$100

Solo and Ensemble Performance Fees \$10

Steel Drum Shirts \$20-\$35

Spending money for meals on concert travel days

## Fundraising

Fundraisers are conducted to raise the additional funds required to fulfill the operation of the band's budget. All parents and students in all band programs are expected to participate in order to maximize the efforts to fund the band program. Participation includes working in our two biggest fundraisers, football concessions and our hosted marching competition, The Branch Classic as well as some of the other sale and event fundraisers we host throughout the year (see Service Hour Section for more information). All revenue from fundraisers are deposited to the band's general operating fund based on current interpretation of the IRS regulations as they apply to 501(c)(3) organizations and may not be applied to individual student accounts. However, DONATIONS may be accepted for individual students toward their dues, outstanding account balances or special trips. Any donations received toward a student's account must be explicitly listed as such at the time of receipt and as with any payment method toward dues, are NOT tax deductible. Please see our Student Financing Resource document on the fbhsband.org website for more information and ideas for outside financial assistance.

# Marching Band Uniforms

**UNIFORM FITTING:** Wind and percussion marching band students will be fitted for marching uniforms during band camp. The fitting process will take approximately 15 to 30 minutes. A t-shirt and gym shorts are typically worn under the marching uniform, so students should plan to wear them on fitting day to ensure an accurate fit. Shoe sizing will be provided for students who need to purchase marching shoes. Long black cotton socks should be worn while trying on marching shoes for accurate fit. Auxiliary students will be sized during spring tryouts.

Drum Majors, Winds, Brass and Percussion Marching Band students will wear the Flowery Branch High School Marching Band uniform. This consists of:

- ◆ Jacket with hip cape
- ◆ Bibbers (pants)
- ◆ Shako (hat) and shako cover
- ◆ Plumes (inserts into shako, only worn for halftime, not in the stands.)
- ◆ Gloves (first pair each season included in dues; additional/replacement gloves must be purchased by the student)
- ◆ Dinkles Shoes (provided in the first season marching; additional/replacement shoes must be purchased by the student)

Students should wear the following underneath their uniform:

- ◆ Gym shorts (warm weather)
- ◆ Black DriFit Shirt (provided at the end of band camp)
- ◆ Black long cotton socks
- ◆ Black long johns/under armor (cold weather)

Marching uniforms are the property of Flowery Branch High School. This includes the shako, bibbers, jacket, and plumes. Uniforms stay at school and are stored in the uniform closet. One pair of gloves is included in the student band fees. Students need to supply their own long **all black** socks. Additional socks and gloves will be available in our cash only vending machine located in the band room.

Wind and Percussion students are required to wear their Show Shirt and Jeans to school on performance days unless otherwise noted for special Friday events (Homecoming, Competition weekends). Uniforms are cleaned regularly by parents assigned by each section of the band, and repairs are made as necessary. Students and parents should inform a member of the uniform committee if a repair is needed. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO ALTER THE UNIFORMS YOURSELF!**

**COLOR GUARD UNIFORMS:** Color Guard uniforms are purchased by each student as part of the color guard fees. Students will be fitted for uniforms during spring try-outs. Performance costumes are to remain in the band room uniform room. The band will launder these costumes as needed. If a student is not in uniform, they will not be permitted to perform. Parts of the uniform included in the dues payment are performance costume, shoes, gloves, show shirt, corps shirt, backpack, equipment bag, and warmups.

In addition to the uniform, color guard students must cover the cost of any replacement uniform items due to loss, damage, wear and tear or improper upkeep. Makeup, hair and undergarments/hosiery are to be purchased by the student in the style dictated by directors and/or student leadership.

- ◆ Shoes
- ◆ Gloves
- ◆ Equipment Bag
- ◆ Jacket/Warm Ups
- ◆ BackPack Bag
- ◆ Dri Fit/Show Shirt

- ◆ Makeup and/or hair accessories
- ◆ 2 pairs of nude colored support hose/tights (sheer to the waist).
- ◆ **Color Guard members are required to wear DriFit/ show shirt to school on performance days.**

**B-UNIFORMS:** On performance days when there is a chance of rain, the Director may require students to wear their B-uniforms, consisting of:

<b>Winds, Percussion, Drum Majors</b>	<b>Auxiliary Units</b>
Rain Jacket	Rain Jacket
Dri Fit Shirt	DriFit
Jeans	Jeans
Marching Shoes	Tennis Shoes

Students will be permitted to wear the following band spirit wear in the stands on Friday nights:

- ◆ Band Hat
- ◆ Band Jacket or Sweatshirt
- ◆ Letterman/Patch Jacket

In addition to the band spirit wear, there is a “show shirt” that is specifically designed to showcase the marching band show for that year. Parents and other family members may purchase the show shirt to wear to football games and other events. Shirts can be preordered for parents and family members at registration, however the show shirt design is not “unveiled” until the last day of band camp when shirts are distributed.

## Pictures

Full Band and section pictures (individual, if time permits) in uniform are taken on the last day of Band Camp. Professional photographers may be engaged for individual band student pictures during school early in the marching season, and parents will have the option to purchase their child’s pictures. The band’s parent photographers take photos at all band events and performances and make these photos available to all band families at no charge. You may submit any photos taken throughout the season to be shared with parents as well. Photos can be sent to [2425photos@fbhsband.org](mailto:2425photos@fbhsband.org)

## Communication Channels

A marching band season is like a machine with many moving parts. From July through December, we coordinate band camp, rehearsals, football game performances, concessions operations, parades, competitions, fundraisers, meals, equipment transport and more. To keep this machine running smoothly, we have set up several methods of communication so that our entire band family can stay connected and informed. While we do our best to update all channels with the same information, sometimes last minute changes happen. We recommend that you are active with at least three of these options on a regular basis during the season so that you don’t miss anything.

- Band Calendar on fbhsband.org
- Parent Portal on fbhsband.org (Password protected “Band2026”)
- Email-we use the information provided at registration so please make sure it’s the best way to contact you.
- Facebook BPA Group-This is a private group. Please join at the beginning of the season.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/363347924024021/>
- Track it Forward will provide all of our current service hour opportunities  
<https://www.trackitforward.com/site/flowery-branch-hs-band-parents>
- Remind: **Class Name:** Flowery Branch High School Marching Band **Class Code:** @FBHSMB

# Lettering

Marching Band is a varsity activity eligible for earning a letter. Letters are awarded at the end of each school year at our annual awards ceremony in May. Band Aids are not eligible to earn a letter. Any dues still open in May from the previous school year will activate an administrative hold on receiving a letter or award at the ceremony until the balance is paid.

## Service Hour Commitments

The vibrant award winning Flowery Branch Band Program succeeds in part because of its dedicated parents. Everyone has a talent or resource that can benefit the band program. **All parents and/or guardians** are required to work service hours. Service hours for each season begin for service worked after June 1st each year and are tracked digitally through our Track It Forward site. Parents are responsible for signing up and logging their hours on this site throughout the season as this is the only data we use to determine service hour fulfillment.

### Service Hour Commitment:

- 30 service hours per band family (See 8/8/14 guidelines)
- Hours are tracked by our online system, Track It Forward. Parents are responsible for ensuring hours are entered accurately within seven (7) days of service.
- Service hours are tabulated by a minimum of 8 hours in concessions, 8 hours at Branch Classic and 14 hours of general/chaperone/other hours.
- Service hours can be met with the help of grandparents, family members, friends, and/or neighbors.

### Service Hour Opportunities: .

- Chaperone, including those who administer first aid
- Equipment Crew – from building props to moving equipment
- Feeding the students on Friday nights and before competitions
- Parade Guides - escort the band on the parade route
- Uniforms – both marching and concert – fit students, distribute and maintain
- Fundraising & Sponsorship Committees
- Recruitment & Volunteers - assist Board with soliciting organizations to volunteer time with the band
- Senior Committees
- First Aid – medical professionals who can serve the students during travel, practices, etc.
- Website Maintenance/Design
- Spirit Wear/Graphic Design
- Marketing/Publicity
- Painting/Carpentry – props, field painting

**Band camp** is a great opportunity for parents to get involved, including:

- Providing water during practices
- Helping move equipment (“roadies”)
- Helping with lunch and snack preparations
- Donating food and drinks for meals and snacks

Look for service hour needs and requests through our communication channels.

## Extracurricular Overnight Travel

As an award winning band program, we are presented opportunities to travel at different times during the year. The most common travel trip for the band is a spring trip. This trip may or may not have a performance opportunity for our students and will be presented as each trip is made available. These trips are an awesome opportunity for students to bond and celebrate the accomplishments of the season.

### CONDITIONS FOR TRAVEL ELIGIBILITY:

- All high school band students (concert and marching), members of the color guard or winterguard and 8th graders who marched at least one season are eligible to travel. Band Aids are not eligible to travel overnight with the high school.
- All student dues must be current before registering for any trip.
- Financial aid is not available for trips.
- Family commitment of 30 service hours must be met for marching and colorguard students.
- Student remains in good disciplinary standing. Violation of school rules, local, state and/or federal law, suspension and expulsion leading up to and during the trip will result in immediate removal from the trip with no reimbursement.

### TRIP FINANCES:

- All deposits paid to initiate booking travel with the band are non-refundable.
- Failure to pay your trip payments by payment plan due dates may result in forfeiture of your spot without reimbursement for any monies paid to date. Paying on time is vital as we are subject to hard deadlines regarding tickets, hotels, flights, etc. The band does not subsidize or provide scholarships of any money for student or chaperone travel.

## Participation & Financial Commitment

### STUDENTS:

I recognize that I am choosing to be a member of an organization where the utmost is expected of me in terms of excellence and character. I make a commitment to this organization in terms of time, energy, and focus. I will give my very best at all times, make practice a priority, and I realize that rehearsals are for the good of the ensemble. As a member of the Flowery Branch High School Marching Band, I will be in attendance for all scheduled rehearsals and performances unless of family need or emergency. I further expect of myself that I must demonstrate on a daily basis maturity and good character. I am part of an organization where others depend on me and I will expect the best from myself.

### PARENT/GUARDIAN:

- ◆ I understand that there is a financial commitment of
  - \$400 for the 2026 season associated with each member of the marching band. A commitment of \$1750 per member of the marching band does not require any service hour commitment.
  - \$550 for percussion to include your instrument rental fee.
  - \$550 for the 2026 season associated with each member of the color guard. A commitment of \$2000 per member of the color guard does not require any service hour commitment.
  - \$115.00 per member participating as a Band Aid.

- \$150 for 2025-2026 School instrument rental fee for students to use school owned instruments. This includes but is not limited to: Percussion, tuba, baritone, mellophone, tenor sax, bari sax, front ensemble, bass clarinet, etc. (Percussion is included fee above)
  - Additional \$20 Dry Fit, \$50 Band Shoes, \$20 Water Jug if necessary for replacement to all veteran marchers
- ◆ I understand that all past band financial commitments must be paid in full prior to registration for a new season. Open balances will prevent participation.
  - ◆ I understand that all 2026 dues must be paid in full May 1, 2026 . Open 2025-2026 balances after Band Camp will prevent participation including traveling to away games, limited participation in senior activities, loss of third quarter break, and possibly termination of membership in the marching band.
  - ◆ The FBHS BPA offers a payment schedule, and I will adhere to the recommended payment dates: March 3, April 1, and May 1 2026
  - ◆ I understand that if the band travels overnight, my student will be allowed to participate only if they are up-to-date on their dues payments and my service hour commitment has been fulfilled.
  - ◆ I understand that I am responsible for logging and checking the status of my service hours on my TrackIt Forward account. I understand that hours must be submitted within 7 days of service and that TrackIt Forward is the only means the FBHS Band will verify the fulfillment of my service hour commitment.
  - ◆ I understand that should my child's participation in this program end, whether by their choice, my choice or as a result of a violation of marching band policy or disciplinary action, there is no refund or reimbursement for paid program fees and dues. Due to IRS tax regulations, all money paid to the FBHS BPA is non-refundable.
  - ◆ **Families who may need special consideration**: I understand that if I anticipate any difficulties in meeting this monetary requirement, I may fill out the **Financial Aid Application** available on our website **BEFORE** April 1, 2026, which will enable a meeting with the BPA president, BPA treasurer, and the band director to discuss potential new financial payment plans or scholarship opportunities. If a new financial agreement cannot be arranged and agreed to by all parties, my child will not be permitted to participate in the 2025-2026 FBHS marching band. I also understand all financial matters will be kept confidential and will be shared only with the band director and the BPA executive board.
  - ◆ In addition, if I do not communicate any financial difficulties to the persons listed above by the date stated, the BPA and the band director will assume I will make the necessary payments at the required times.
  - ◆ I understand and commit to 30 (8/8/14) hours of service hours to the FBHS Marching Band program to be structured as a minimum of 8 concession hours, 8 Branch Classic hours and 14 service hours from chaperoning/general/other. Failure to meet my family service hour commitment will result in loss of eligibility from spring travel/extracurricular trips.

## **Financial Aid Applications**

It is important that every member pays their dues in a timely manner. However, we understand that many times circumstances arise where assistance may be needed. The band program operates on the foundation that everyone pays their fair amount AND works fundraisers in order to keep our dues low. We currently offer two forms of financial assistance; extended payment plans and scholarships. If an extended payment plan is requested and agreed upon, failure to adhere to the plan may result in loss of participation in the program and forfeiture of future requests for financial assistance. Scholarships are available in various amounts up to \$500 per family, depending on needs. Financial aid applications to apply for either one of these options are available on the fbhsband.org site.

- ◆ A condition of acceptance for a scholarship is meeting the required 30 service hour commitment hours. Accepted applications will not have money disbursed to student accounts until the volunteer requirement is met. Failure to meet this requirement will result in forfeiture of application status ineligibility for future scholarship applications.

Fill out a confidential application on our website before April 29, 2025 to apply. Financial aid is not applicable to Spring Travel Trip fees.

## Commitment Dates

TECH TUESDAYS (Optional- Please Come if you are in town)  
JUNE 2026 (Adult led, Student led)

### REHEARSALS

- July 7 Guard/Percussion 6:30p-9p (Winds optional)
- Week of July 14 Guard/Percussion
- July 20 Rookie Camp 7:30a-4:30p
- July 21-24 Band Camp 7:30a-4:30p
- July 27-30 Band Camp 7:30a-4:30p; 6:00-9p
- July 31 Band Camp and Performance 7:30a-6:30p
- Weekly Rehearsals Monday and/or Tuesday, 6:30p-9p (refer to calendar on Fbhsband.org); Thursday 4:00-6:30p

### FOOTBALL GAMES

- Home Games | 8/21, 9/11, 9/18, 10/2, 10/9
- Away Games | 8/28, 9/4, 10/16, 10/30, 11/6
- Playoff games TBD-required once announced

### COMPETITIONS, EXHIBITION & EVENTS

Hall County Bands Exhibition September 2026-TBA

2 Saturday Band Competitions to be announced (potential performances in late September-early November 2026)

Branch Classic October 17, 2026

Potential: Braselton Christmas Parade and/or Flowery Branch Christmas Parade, TBD

*Please clear your calendar for these dates*

## Useful Terms and Phrases

If you are new to the world of marching band or Flowery Branch High School, below are some words, terms and phrases you will hear regularly throughout the season. This list should help you get ready for the best season ever at The Branch!

### Band Ensembles:

- **Jazz Ensemble** that meets before school and includes trumpets, trombones, saxophones, piano, drums and bass guitar
- **Marching Ensemble** that provides parade entertainment, pre game hype, game time pep and halftime field performances. Not all instruments played in concert band are played in marching band-no oboes or french horns!
- **Steel Drum AKA Sheer Panic Ensemble** that meets before school and plays the spirited sounds of the tropical steel drum.
- **Symphonic Concert Band** class
- **Wind Symphony** Concert Band class available by audition.

### Marching Band Terms:

- **Arc:** Arrangement of the band by section to perform warm ups and receive announcements before dismissal. Also referred to as “arcing up”.
- **Dot book (drill book)** The personal accounting of each band member's drill. A MUST to keep track of at band camp.
- **Drill** The composition of each member of the band's spot, steps and marching counts on the field throughout the show as well as the orchestrated moves they make into different formations.
- **Fancy Friday** Dress up days before competitions. The fancier, the better!
- **Hype Video** Pregame presentation that introduces the band's stadium entrance. A new video is filmed each year to capture the current show.
- **Leadership** Positions applied for by students to lead their sections and perform specific duties vital to the success of the band. Typically includes drum majors, Brass, Wind, Drum and Color Guard Captains, section leaders, uniforms, equipment and other positions.
- **Marching Falcons** The official name of our superior rated marching band.
- **Paper Plate Awards** A band camp tradition that you just have to experience to understand!
- **Pep band/pep rally** On game days, the band plays before school as students arrive. Sometimes, pep band goes on the road to elementary schools for morning drop off too.
- **Pre Game** Pep band tunes performed on the field before home games. The band helps form a tunnel for the football team's hyped up entrance.
- **Pride of the Darkside** Also a name for the Marching Falcons.
- **Props** Equipment used in the show to enhance the visual experience or theme of the show.
- **Rookie** First year marcher. Not necessarily a freshman but applies to musicians and auxiliary.
- **Sections** The marching band is made up of many sections and many more instruments. This includes Drum Major (usually 2 or 3 students who stand up on the platforms to conduct and guide the band-they're the ones in the grey uniforms), colorguard (they dance, spin flags, rifles and sabres and get glitter EVERYWHERE), majorettes (performs through dance and twirling batons. Lead majorette is referred to as Featured Twirler) drum line (the ones carrying the drums on their shoulders, duh! Think snare, bass and tenor/quad, sometimes cymbals. A division of percussion.), front ensemble (aka the pit-they play marimba, xylophone, vibraphone, keyboard, sometimes drum set and bass guitar. A subdivision of percussion) woodwinds (sometimes called winds, these include piccolos/flutes, clarinets, and saxophones. Sometimes broken down further into their own sections by specific instrument), brass (includes trumpets, trombones, tubas, euphoniums, sousaphones, and mellophones. Sometimes split into low/high brass).
- **Show** Halftime show or anything related to the performance. At home games, we perform after the visiting band. At away games, we perform first. The halftime show is performed after the game on Homecoming.
- **Skull session** Friday run through of the show before meal time. Time to get pumped!
- **Stand Tunes** Short pep songs played during pregame and throughout each football game. Includes the fight song (played after a score), ESPN (a fan favorite) and Low Rider.
- **Talon Awards** Weekly awards presented by band leadership and staff to students who exemplify the Falcon Spirit.
- **Veteran** Any member of the marching band who has marched at least one season.
- **Who Are We?** The only correct answer when you hear Mr. G yell this is “FB!”

#### Colorguard:

- **Equipment** Consists of flags, rifles, sabres, poms and batons. Can also include various props that can be held, tossed or danced with.
- **Flag** consists of fiberglass or aluminum pole 5-7' long and various weights and a colorful silk. Can also come in short swing poles, double poles, or chain flags
- **Flagbag** Long bag, usually embroidered with each person's name to carry their personal equipment.
- **Floor** Decorative tarp that Winterguard performs on. It must be folded and transported to each competition and is very heavy!
- **Pom poms** cluster of spirit streamers in red, black and silver. Used in pregame pep and during stand tunes dances.

- **Rifle** 36"-39" 2.5lb wooden non-functioning rifle. Used in spinning, tossing and dancing.
- **Sabre** 39" @ 2lb all metal sword. Used in spinning, tossing and dancing.
- **SAPA** Southern Association for Performing Arts is the organization that puts together various competitions and hosts the season finale competition in Chattanooga, TN each April.
- **Winterguard** Colorguard that performs without musicians to pre recorded music in January-April

### Concert Band Terms:

- **All State** Ensemble by audition for GMEA consisting of musicians from around the state. Auditions are held in January and the All State event clinic and performance is held in February
- **District Honor Band** Ensemble by audition for GMEA District 14. Auditions are held in December and are a prerequisite to audition for All State. There is a fee associated with auditioning and all students are encouraged to prepare for auditions. Auditions consist of a lyrical etude and scales. Students accepted to District Honor Band attend clinics and performances that are held in January.
- **GMEA** Georgia Music Educators Association is the foundation that serves to advance music education in that state of Georgia. They are the body that hosts District Honor Band, All State, LGPE, Solo and Ensemble as well as Marching Band festivals and competitions. They offer a statewide standard of assessing band performances through their ratings of Fair, Average, Excellent and Superior. FBHS is in the 14th District of GMEA and is consistently rated Superior in the above mentioned events.
- **JanFest** Weekend clinic and performance honor band hosted at UGA's School of Music in early January. Prospective students are submitted by recommendation from Mr. Guisasola. There is a cost to participate if accepted, typically \$95.
- **LGPE** Large Group Performance Evaluation. This is equivalent to EOC (End of Course) testing for band. This event is hosted by GMEA and a selected school in our District 14 each year. The band travels to the hosting school to perform their musical selections and receive ratings.
- **Solo/Ensemble** GMEA hosted event for students to perform and receive evaluation on an individual or small group basis. There is a small fee associated with performing, usually \$3-\$5.

### School:

- **Alma Mater** Our song of school spirit performed at every football game. Learn the lyrics and sing along!
- **Falcon's Nest/Red seats** Season ticket reserve seating sponsored by football boosters. Seats are located just below the press box.
- **Game themes** Each game (home and away) is given a theme by the Darkside. These are typically color themes and are called \_\_\_\_\_ Outs (Black Out, White Out, Pink Out). Themes are posted on Instagram @fbdarkside. The band participates through coordinating bandanas, face paint, etc.
- **Mascot and Colors** Falcons-Red, Black and Silver
- **The Branch** Nickname for Flowery Branch High School
- **The Darkside** FBHS student section.

*All hail to the Falcons  
 We lift your name on high  
 To you, we pledge our honor,  
 Your light will be our guide  
 Push onward through all battles  
 The Falcons will prevail  
 To conquer all around them,  
 Red and Black will never fail*