

Message from FBISD Band Directors: July 27, 2020

With the steady increase in COVID-19 virus cases in our community during the recent weeks, and with the safety of our students as our greatest concern, Fort Bend ISD high school band programs will operate differently during the Fall 2020 semester.

All of us in FBISD are committed to the safety and wellbeing of our students above all other considerations. At this time, the District has canceled all face-to-face marching band practices for the remainder of the summer break and during the fall semester while the District is offering instruction in an online-only format. Students still may rehearse in a virtual format using online communication platforms. Fort Bend ISD will continue to monitor the situation, listen to the guidance of local health officials, and remain flexible throughout the fall semester.

When students return to face-to-face instruction, the need for social distancing in both rehearsal and performance settings, as well as the potential for reduced numbers of students allowed in any setting including transportation, has led us to make the following alterations to fall marching bands performances:

- **Protocols and practices:** FBISD band directors will monitor the health and wellbeing of their students and follow the guidelines established by the District, UIL, and TEA. The District may resume in-person extracurricular activities the week of September 7 if conditions in the community are safe to do so. Prior to making this determination, Fort Bend ISD will continue to assess the conditions in our community with local officials and the District's COVID-19 Advisory group.
- **Field Shows:** FBISD bands will produce a field show that, while displaying the level of excellence for which they are noted, will be greatly reduced in length, demand, and other areas.
- **Competition:** FBISD bands will not take part in any competitive events, including UIL events.
- **Football game participation:** The administration will evaluate attendance and participation of bands at football games hosted within our school district on a weekly basis. Decisions made regarding game participation will apply to all high school band programs, in consideration of the most current state guidelines on social distancing at the time, and in the interest of the health and safety of our students.

This decision is one that we believe will allow our students to have a positive and safe experience while meeting the musical and social-emotional needs of our students. We ask for your flexibility as we work to provide our students opportunities for self-expression while keeping them as safe and healthy as possible