

2025



MADISON COLORGUARD

PARENT/GUARDIAN PLAYBOOK

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Welcome Colorguard Parents/Guardians

We're *thrilled* to have you, and your child join the vibrant world of **Madison Colorguard**! As part of this dynamic team, your child will step into an exciting journey filled with dance, teamwork, dazzling performances, and unforgettable memories — all while being a key member of the **James Madison Marching Band**.

You might already be hearing words like *band camp*, *Winter Guard*, or *Friday night lights* — and wondering what on earth you've just signed up for. Don't worry — we've been there!

This **Parent/Guardian Playbook** was lovingly crafted to help you navigate each season, from summer practices to winter competitions, while keeping your sanity (and sunscreen!) in check.

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What is Color Guard?

Think ballet, gymnastics, drill team, and cheerleading — then mix in marching band, vivid flags, and theatrical flair. That’s **Color Guard!** It’s a visual performance art that brings music to life through movement and creativity. At Madison, the Guard performs with the marching band in the fall and competes independently during the winter, more on that later.

How to Stay in the Loop

You don’t need a secret decoder ring — just a few trusty tools to stay connected, informed, and ready to cheer your Guard star on!

 Tool	 Who It’s For	 What It Does (and How to Join)
 GroupMe App	Colorguard Parents	This is your real-time, all-the-details, quick-alert system direct from the Colorguard leadership team — including the Director, Liaison, and Head Chaperone.  Download the GroupMe app and search ' JMColorguard ' to hop in!
 CutTime	All Band & Colorguard Families (Parents + Students)	The official update hub used by Band Directors and the Booster President. Think rehearsal notices, trip updates, and more.  Make sure your email is on file with the Booster Board to stay in the know.
 Band Socials	Everyone!	For fun, photos, shout-outs, and important info, follow our online presence:  Website: madisonbandandflags.org  Facebook: <i>MadisonBandAndFlagsBoosters</i>  Instagram: <i>@jmcgofficial</i>
 Band Parent Meetings	All Band Parents	Held every 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Madison HS Band Hall. Come for the info, stay for the community! Learn about events, fundraising, and how you can get involved

Parent/Guardian Involvement

While your child is twirling, dancing, and dazzling on the field, your behind-the-scenes support helps keep the magic alive.

You don't need pom-poms (unless you want them), and you don't have to be there 24/7. Whether you've got five minutes or a free weekend, there's a role for every parent — big or small, behind the curtain or front and center.

 Here's how you can jump in and make a difference:

- 🍎 Donate snacks
- 🔧 Help repair wooden rifles (screwdrivers and tape, anyone?)
- 📦 Assemble goodie bags during football season
- 💰 Help secure sponsorships for Winter Guard or needed supplies
- 🧰 Donate essentials like:
 - Electrical tape (all the colors!)
 - Strapping tape
 - Tools (screwdrivers, a hand drill, wood glue)
- 🗨️ Rally your friends, neighbors, and second cousins to come see the shows — the more cheers, the better!

 Interested? Reach out to the **Guard Liaison** or **Head Chaperone** or simply send items in with your child.

Pro Tips for Color Guard Parents/Guardians

Think of this as your cheat sheet to surviving (and thriving) during marching season:

- 📱 **Join all the communication apps** – Let's be honest, your kid probably won't tell you everything.
- 📅 **Use a shared family calendar** – Band season is like a full-time job. Keep everyone in sync!
- 🪑 **Go to parent meetings** – You'll stay in the know *and* meet awesome fellow parents.
- 💧 **Push hydration and sleep** – Tired + dehydrated = grumpy Guard kid. Save yourself the drama.
- 🧴 **Pack the essentials** – Water bottle, snacks, bobby pins, makeup, change of clothes. (Trust us.)
- 🎉 **Celebrate effort over perfection** – Every toss caught, every hour of rehearsal, it all matters. Show the love!

A Year in Color: What to Expect Each Season

From sun-soaked practices to spotlight performances, here's your colorful roadmap to a year with the Madison Colorguard!

SUMMER: Band Camp Vibes & New Beginnings (July-Aug)

What's Happening:

Full-day rehearsals, sweaty high-fives, and the first steps into the fall show. This is where friendships are formed, and routines come to life!

\$ Estimated Cost: \$545 (installment plans available)

🎯 Pro Tip: Take advantage of fundraising options!

How to Prepare:

- Keep water bottles filled and snacks flowing
 - Drop off lunch, pick them up, or send them packed and ready
 - Encourage rest — they'll be TIRED (but in the best way!)
-

FALL: Marching Season Mayhem (Aug-Oct)

What's Happening:

Early morning rehearsals, football halftime shows, and all-day Saturday competitions. The energy is electric!

\$ Estimated Costs Vary: Snacks, gifts, concessions, game tickets

How to Prepare:

- Buy football tickets — halftime is your kid's time to shine!
 - Pack those stadium seats, fans, water, and maybe an umbrella
 - Expect early drop-offs, late pick-ups, and lots of loud cheering (bring a cowbell!)
-

WINTER: Time to Sparkle — It's Winter Guard! (Jan–Apr)

What's Happening:

Indoor competitions in local gyms where the Guard takes center stage with their own show. No band, just pure Guard greatness.

\$ Estimated Cost: \$250–\$300 (varies by show)

How to Prepare:

- Gear up for weekend competitions
- Plan for transportation and pick-up
- Bring blankets, stadium chairs, and plenty of spirit to the stands!

SPRING: Growth, Gratitude & New Goals

What's Happening:

Recruitment for next season, leadership tryouts, and year-end celebrations. It's a time to reflect and get excited for what's next.

\$ Estimated Cost: Varies — especially for captain tryout attire

How to Prepare:

- Encourage your child to explore leadership roles
- Share your experience with incoming families — help grow the team!
- Celebrate everything they've accomplished this year 

Spotlight Ready: All About Performances

Behind every epic performance is a carefully chosen costume, a whole lot of glitter, and a team that looks sharp from head to toe!

Uniforms & Equipment

- Whether it's fall marching season or the sparkle of Winter Guard, your child will receive a show-specific uniform and flag — handpicked by the directors for maximum wow factor.
- These items are loaned for the season and must be treated like treasure. Clean, respect, return!

Hair & Makeup Magic

- Directors will provide a glam game plan — from sleek ponytails to smoky eyes. A supply list will come out in summer, so you'll have plenty of time to gather everything.
- Help your performer shine by supporting their prep!

Peak Performance: Health & Wellness Tips

Being in the Guard isn't just about style — it's about **stamina**! Think of it as part dance team, part athlete, part superhero. Here's how to help your child stay strong and safe all season long:

Get Fit to Spin!

- Rehearsals include **physical conditioning** to build endurance, flexibility, and strength.
- Encourage extra practice at home — a little core work goes a long way!

Hydration = Superpower

- **Water is everything**, especially during summer camp. Send them with a full (and clean!) jug.
-  Reminder: Water jugs should be washed often. Bacteria and mold are not welcome in Guard life!

Dress for the Weather

-  Hot days = light clothing, hats/visors, sunglasses, and lots of sunscreen.
-  Cold days = layers, layers, layers! Always keep a hoodie or rain jacket in the bag — just in case.

Safety First!

- If something hurts, they need to **speak up immediately**. Injuries caught early mean faster healing and more time on the field.

Clean Gear = Happy Guard

- After every rehearsal: empty the bag, air out the clothes and shoes, and freshen things up.
- Stock their kit with baby wipes, powder, deodorant, and anti-bacterial spray to keep everything (and everyone) fresh.

Friday Night Lights: Football Game Fun

When it comes to football games, our Guard doesn't just show up — they **shine!** Whether it's a home turf showdown or an away game adventure, the Guard rides in style on their **dedicated bus**, side-by-side with the band. Don't worry — the **Head Chaperone** is always there to keep things running smoothly.

 **Important Note:** Only students are allowed in the band section, and Guard members must get director permission before leaving the stands.

Game Day Timeline: What to Expect Each Quarter

Quarter	What's Happening for the Guard
1st	In the stands, bringing the spirit and cheering on the team
2nd	Time to stretch, breathe, and warm up before their moment!
Halftime	SHOWTIME! The Guard takes the field and dazzles the crowd
3rd	Quick break — bathroom, water, recharge — then back to cheer
4th	Back in formation, cheering and supporting till the end

 After the final whistle, the Guard rides back to Madison with the band. Parents can meet them **at the school** for pickup.

Parent/Guardian Playbook: Game Day Tips

-  **Clear bag:** Required at stadiums. Keep it light and transparent!
 -  **Pom-poms & noise makers:** YES! Bring the hype!
 -  **Outside food/drinks:** Not allowed in the stadium — plan accordingly.
 -  **Stadium seat:** Your back will thank you.
 -  **Merch booth:** Look for spirit wear and support the team at every event!
-

Game Day Go-Bag: Colorguard Essentials

Help your performer pack smart! Here's a list of items that will save the day:

- ✓ Makeup wipes & handheld mirror
- ✓ Hair ties, bobby pins, accessories
- ✓ Hair gel, spray, and brushes
- ✓ Deodorant and body spray
- ✓ Change of clothes for after the show
- ✓ Blanket for chilly nights
- ✓ Portable charger
- ✓ Snacks for energy boosts

Marching Band Competitions: The Big Stage!

Get ready for goosebumps — this is where all those hours of spinning, marching, and perfecting every eight-count come to life. Competition days are high-energy, high-impact, and high-volume (bring a cowbell!). You'll witness the Madison Guard and Band transform into a precision performance machine — and trust us, you'll be bursting with pride.

What to Expect at a Competition

Event

What Happens

Call Time

This is when your child needs to be at the school for loading buses and heading to the competition site. Directors will send out times via **CutTime**. Guard-specific times may vary and will be shared directly by the Guard Director. Drop them off, give a good-luck high five, and you'll see them again at showtime!

Performance Time

Time to shine! The band and guard will perform their show, typically made up of 3 full “sets.” Early in the season, you might only see 1 or 2 sets as the show develops. Watching the growth from one weekend to the next? Pure magic.

Prelims Awards

After their first performance (aka *prelims*), scores are announced. If they qualify for finals, you'll get new performance times. It's your chance to grab food, recharge, and get ready to cheer even louder! The students will be fed by boosters between rounds.

Final Performance

If they make finals, they perform again — this time under the lights, with adrenaline, pride, and crowd energy at full tilt. You'll want to be there for this one!

Final Awards

Cue the drumroll — it's awards time. The band and guard await results with nerves and excitement, while families light up the stands with support. Bring signs, cheers, and your best stadium voice!

Pick-Up Time

After all is said and done, the buses return to Madison. Parents will pick up their tired, glittery, proud performers back at the school. Watch for pickup time updates from the directors.

Pro Parent Tips:

-  Follow the hosting organization's website or social media for real-time schedules and updates.
-  Bring comfy stadium seating, noise makers, snacks, and water — competition days can be long but thrilling.
-  Take photos, videos, and enjoy the ride. These are core memories in the making.

Winter Guard Season: Where Art Meets Athletics (Indoors!)

Just when you thought the magic was over — *bam!* — **Winter Guard** twirls onto the scene! Starting in **January** and running through **April/May**, this is Color Guard's time to shine solo, with breathtaking choreography, storytelling, and creative visuals, all set indoors in a high-energy, competitive setting.

Unlike the marching band season, Winter Guard competitions are **Guard-only events**, giving your child the spotlight to dazzle against teams from other high schools — and trust us, they do not disappoint!

What to Expect on Competition Day

 Event	 Details
Call Time	Time to report to school for bus loading and departure — expect early mornings and clear communication from the Guard Director via text or app. Drop off your performer, wish them luck, and grab a coffee!
Performance Time	Your child's team will bring their custom show to life in a gymnasium. Shows are choreographed to music and evolve weekly — early competitions may feature partial performances depending on progress, making it <i>super fun to watch their growth each week!</i>
Officer Retreat	After performing, student officers will gather outside the gym for a brief retreat and return in performance order for the awards ceremony.
Award Ceremony	Trophies, medals, and major bragging rights! Awards are given by division — and unlike marching band comps, there's no finals round. One shot. One show. One standing ovation.
Pick-Up Time	Once the buses return to Madison, parents will meet their performer at the school for pickup — expect a happy, tired kid and maybe a bit of confetti!

 **Pro Tip:** Keep an eye on the event host's website or social media for exact performance times, ticket info, and parking instructions.

 These are some of the most creative performances you'll see all year — so don't miss a moment. Bring your energy, your camera, and your loudest cheer!

Rollin' Out: Riding the Bus Like a Pro

Whether it's game night, competition day, or a full weekend adventure, the Guard hits the road **together** — and the journey is just as important as the destination!

Here's the lowdown on riding the bus Madison Guard-style:

1.  **The Head Chaperone = Bus Boss**
They're the friendly adult in charge, making sure everyone's safe, accounted for, and behaving like champs.
2.  **Post-Performance Comfy Mode**
After a long day of spinning, leaping, and performing their hearts out, Guard members are welcome to change into **comfy clothes** for the ride home. Think sweatpants and fuzzy socks!
3.  **Pick-Up Protocol**
Parents, you'll pick up your tired (but glowing) performer at **Madison's school parking lot** after each trip. No need to travel — just be ready with hugs and snacks when they roll in.
4.  **Absolutely No Student Drivers**
No matter how old or confident they are, students are **never allowed to drive themselves** to band or Guard events. Safety first, always.

Let's Talk Fees: Funding the Fun

Putting on epic performances, traveling to competitions, and dazzling the crowd takes more than glitter — it takes resources too. Here's what you need to know:

- **Color Guard Fee: \$545**
This covers most of the essentials and is due **by the end of summer rehearsals**. Installments may be available — check with the Booster team.
- **Extra Costs May Include:**
 -  Jazz shoes & jazz pants for performances
 -  Winter Guard gear, props, and costumes
- **But don't worry — fundraising to the rescue!**
Our amazing **Band Boosters** offer fundraising opportunities all year long to help reduce the financial load and support the full program.

 *Pro Tip: Get involved in fundraising early! It's a great way to save money AND meet awesome band families.*

 **Who to Contact**

Director: Alyssa Hostos - 210.350.4196

Parent Coordinator: Erika Lanciault - eklanciault@gmail.com

Colorguard Head Chaperone: Amy Roussin – roussinamy@gmail.com

Madison Colorguard Parent/Guardian Playbook

2025 Season – A guide to an exciting year of color, music, and movement