

As a senior about to graduate high school, I have made many lists of all my activities during high school for my college and scholarship applications. Over half of my extra-curricular activities were band-related like marching band, band camp, All-Region, solo and ensemble, drill captain, etc. Though my list is long, looking back I see that band at FHS has been much more than the awards and placements. I have felt a certain comfort knowing that in this school of over 2,000 students I have always had somewhere to belong.

Traveling to Phoenix, AZ for the Fiesta Bowl Parade my sophomore year and to Pasadena, CA for the Rose Bowl Parade my junior year were fun experiences when everyone bonded—of course being on a bus together for over 24 hours one-way left us little other choice. Still, the real bonding came from our marching band rehearsals, traveling for competitions, the chaotic process of checking out uniforms, and especially the Friday night football games. At the games the band came alive; in-between stand-tunes everyone cheered and shouted and while we played we made up crazy dance moves and motions for each section. The band section really sparks the school spirit at football games.

But leaving the marching field or band room doesn't mean you are leaving the band. Everywhere you go in FHS there will be someone you know from band. Passing people in the halls there are always people waving, shouting greeting, or making silly faces to you because you have spent so much time with them in band that you can't pass each other without acknowledging that time.

When I think about all of the people in this school that I know and the close friends I have made, I cannot imagine what high school would have been like if I hadn't met them in band. Now, getting ready to leave this school, I am proud of the things I accomplished in band, the commitment I made to the music program, and all of the experiences I had because I was part of the band.

Gina Smith