

Parents, students plead to keep music, marching band

By **Kevin Duffy**
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Mindful that the Daniel Boone School Board is still talking about cutting programs, parents and students implored district officials Monday not to remove music and marching band programs from the curriculum.

Theresa Walter of Douglassville urged the board to think long and hard before coming to a decision.

"Do your homework. Do your research on what music can do for children," she said. "We parents are expecting you to make an informed decision."

Angela Bongiovanni, a 12th-grade marching band member from Birdsboro, told the board, "I take great pride in participating in marching band, and I cringe when I think of not being in drum line."

Fellow drum line member Louie Lacek of Birdsboro said almost all 25 members of the drum line, except for those practicing elsewhere, were at the meeting to support the program.

"We're all seniors, and wanted to further point out our commitment to this program to keep it going," he said.

Faced with a \$5 million budget shortfall and struggling with ways to address it, board members did not make any promises.

Board President Andrew Basile said that determining what portion of the budget will be allocated to the marching band program is difficult until the budget is finalized.

"Whatever the budget is for marching band until the board comes to some sort of a conclusion on the budget, it's hard to do," he said. "We can't do anything until this board ratifies the cuts that we're making."

Board member Walter P. Sheehan said no decision has been made to limit or eliminate the program.

One possibility the board is considering is a user fee for participation in sports and marching band, but Basile said the fee won't guarantee the program remains unchanged.

Board member Margaret M. Fiset said it is still too early to speculate.

"I think we still need a few more weeks because we haven't had the discussion of what the activity fee will generate," she said.

The board will continue discussions as part of a budget workshop at 7:30 tonight at the middle school.

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