



STRATFORD ACADEMY

October 9, 2008

Mrs. Laura Thompson, Headmaster
Gatewood Schools
139 Phillips Drive
Eatonton, GA 31024

Dear Gatewood Community:

We wanted to express our thanks to your administration, faculty, students and parents for your overwhelming hospitality at last week's football game. My first impression of your fine school was a phone call from Coach Harper offering to share the athletic facilities with us so that our students would have a dressing area. He also told me of the cheerleading performance scheduled for half-time, but asked us to perform first as the school's guests. In twenty-six years of teaching, this was the first time I've ever had a coach call and offer to provide the band a dressing or warm up space.

When we arrived at the school, Ms. Thompson was there to meet our bus and to take our color guard members to a dressing area. As we unloaded our equipment truck, several parents stopped to welcome us and to tell us that they looked forward to watching our half-time performance. During our show, your parents and students were such a warm and receptive audience, and our band parents agreed that it was the best audience we could remember. We were particularly amazed at how your youth cheerleaders sat and watched the show so politely and attentively. It had to be tough to be so patient in the moments preceding their own performance.

After the game, several Gatewood parents, and high school students stopped by our bus to thank us for coming and to compliment our performance. My students were overwhelmed by the kindness of so many of your fans. I was also pleased to have the opportunity to meet Mr. Kauffman and to talk with him, and it was exciting to hear that you have a band program at your school as well. We look forward to a time when we can be a gracious host to your band. We wish you much luck in the remainder of your school year. Let me just finish by saying that Gatewood School is certainly doing something right to have such a gracious school community.

Sincerely,

Laura Voss, Band Director

On Behalf of the Spirit of Stratford Marching Band and Color Guard