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**Hopatcong, NJ –Hopatcong School District  
Participate in Football Band Day**

**Title: Marching Chiefs**

The Hopatcong Marching Chiefs were honored to participate in this year's West Point Football Band Day on Saturday, October 10. The event planning started last spring when the Chiefs were contacted by the Army Black Knights Football to be invited to the event. Shortly after the conclusion of Friday night's Chiefs football game, the Marching Chiefs pulled out of Hopatcong at 4:30 AM for the trip to West Point. Arriving at West Point shortly after 6:00 AM, the Marching Chiefs rehearsed for two hours along with seven other bands and the West Point Cadet Band. As a special surprise, the bands were treated to an up-close performance as the West Point Parachute Team landed 6 members onto the 50-yard line as a "warm-up" for two more jumps later in the day.

After the rehearsal, the Chiefs walked across the campus to "The Plain" where parents met them with a bagel breakfast before watching the West Point Band and Silent Drill Team perform before the Cadet Review. The Cadet Troop Review was followed by another Parachute jump! Following the review, the Band walked back to Michie Stadium to change and relax before the start of the game, where they watched the Army Rock Band perform before the game in the concessions area.

The start of the game was rocking as the West Point Band took the field to play traditional Army and college marches on the field. That was followed by the Black Knight Football Team and Cheerleaders running onto the field along with two beautiful Mules in a dazzling pre-game spectacle which was followed by a third Parachute jump! During the second quarter the band was split into two sections, one outside the stadium where students made so new friends in other bands, while the others watched the game from the sidelines.

At halftime, the bands played for the first sellout crowd of the Black Knight season.

The band stayed to cheer on the Knights, but unfortunately, the Knights got crushed by Duke 44 – 3. Band Director Mr. Zimmermann said, "The history of the West Point Academy alone was worth accepting the invitation, but I really had no idea how much fun the whole day would be! The kids couldn't stop beaming and talking about what a great day it was. And the weather was PERFECT! But watching our students rehearse at 6:00 am like it was normal and the high level of professionalism they showed participating at a college football game is yet another career highlight for me. I couldn't be prouder! "







