



HANDBOOK

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Introduction

Welcome to the Wilson Central Band Family! We believe band is just that...a family. We strive to build positive relationships that will foster productive musical growth. It is our goal that we will always be “Better Today Than Yesterday, Better Tomorrow Than Today.” To ensure the success of the band organization, certain expectations and areas of responsibility must be established. This handbook is created to assist with each student’s participation in band. It is very important that each parent/guardian and student read EVERY page of this handbook. While this handbook is filled with many rules and regulations, they can be summed up in two simple questions:

*Did you do the right thing?
How have your actions affected others?*

Philosophy

Education in instrumental music is similar in purpose to education in English; in both subjects, understanding and self-expression are the desired outcomes. The emphasis is on individual progress rather than on the accomplishments of a class or musical ensemble. The basic objective of instrumental music education is for students to learn performance skills in order to understand the musical language and to experience the joys of recreating music in the expressive medium of their choice. The most profound emotions of the human condition are expressed through the symbolic language of music. In 1983, the College Entrance Examination Board wrote that, “Works of art often involve subtle meanings and complex systems of expression. Fully appreciating such works requires the careful reasoning and sustained study that lead to informed insight. Moreover, as thorough understanding of science requires laboratory or field work, so fully understanding the arts involves firsthand work in them.”

To accomplish these ends, an instrumental program should offer a broad range of musical experiences. There is an extensive solo and chamber music repertory that provides subtle opportunities for nuance and complex systems of expression. The school jazz ensemble stresses rhythmic precision, understanding of harmonic progression, and creative improvisation. The core of the program, however, is the school orchestra and concert band where our musical heritage is transmitted through inspirational compositions by the most creative composers. Service activities such as marching band are often important to the school and community; there are social, educational, and musical values gained through participation. Evaluative competition and district festivals can raise standards and motivate progress and are scheduled with concern for the many responsibilities that students have in addition to their musical studies, and must never be the focus of the instrumental music program.

Pluralism is one of this country’s strengths. Our nation is indeed at risk if we neglect aesthetic education in an effort to emphasize science and technology. Students who elect instrumental music do so for a variety of reasons: as an outlet for creativity, as a source of enjoyment which enhances the quality of life, as a possible career choice, for gratification that comes from recognition by responsive audiences, for the development of social skills learned through cooperative efforts in musical organizations, for the self-discipline learned from study and practice, to give service to school and community. The arts provide unique forms of knowledge, present a basic means of communication, and produce lasting works that are the hallmarks of a

civilization. The United States is a land of opportunity when the schools develop individual talent, whether it is in music or other areas of interest. Students who are encouraged to develop their own talents and interests participate in a continuous regeneration of democratic ideals.

Grading Policies

There are two basic parts of your grade. Classwork and rehearsal attendance counts 50% of your grade. Tests/performances count 50% of your overall grade. Missing a performance without being excused will greatly impact your grade in a negative manner. Students who miss a performance must ask the directors for an alternate assignment if they want to “make up” the missed grade.

Attendance Policy

Attendance at all after school rehearsals is vital to the success of both the individual student and the band as a whole. When a person misses a rehearsal, it not only affects them but also everyone else in the group. Absences from rehearsals will be deemed excused or unexcused on a case by case basis. Reasons for excused absences include death in the family, church or school related activities, illness which causes a student to be absent from school (not leaving after school to go home sick), and doctor’s appointments (which we respectfully ask be scheduled on days we do not have a rehearsal). All these reasons must be verified with proper documentation, i.e. a doctor’s note. Other reasons, such as work, will be considered unexcused.

Upon the 2nd unexcused absence for the semester, a student will not be allowed to take part in the next performance, whether that be a football game, competition or concert. However, as a part of their grade, they will still be required to attend the performance.

Leadership

The cornerstone of any successful band program is its leadership team. If students work hard and motivate each other, it will help the band reach its goals and achieve a superior level of musicianship. Student leadership positions may include:

- Section Leaders
- Student Assistants
- Band President
- Drum Major(s)
- Music Librarians/Uniform Managers/Equipment Managers
- Other positions as deemed necessary by the directors

Specific requirements for each leadership position may be found in the Band Leadership Applications. Any student not maintaining a high level of conduct may be removed from any leadership position at the directors’ discretion.

Rehearsal Etiquette

1. Be present and on time — you cannot reap the benefits of a rehearsal or rehearsal segment you miss. Don't make plans that involve leaving rehearsal early or arriving late. Often some of the most important teaching in a rehearsal happens at those times.
2. Be actively and intently involved in the rehearsal
 - A. Just “going through the motions” during rehearsal is as bad as not being there. **Always be thinking about your performance.**
 - B. Your only focus should be the objectives the ensemble is trying to achieve during that rehearsal. **There is to be no unnecessary talking.**
 - C. Members are expected to give their utmost efforts during rehearsals in the pursuit of excellence in performance — **any less is an insult to your peers, your staff, and yourself.**
 - D. Instructions given by directors and staff should be followed not just to the letter, but also in the spirit of the intent.
 - E. Horseplay, throwing ice or water, or other such activities will not be tolerated
3. The proper attitude during rehearsal affects the value of that rehearsal
 - A. **An instruction that has to be given twice robs the band of rehearsal time and focus.** Don't cheat us all because you are not paying attention.
 - B. **Be cooperative.** Even if you don't understand the motivation for a rehearsal activity, have confidence that your staff does and execute as you are asked.
 - C. Disrespect towards directors, staff, and student leadership will never make the band more successful; **all students should show the proper respect for their peers, staff, and leadership,** and avoid exhibiting disrespectful attitudes such as eye-rolling, pouting, talking back, being unsupportive of directors and staff or in any way questioning any instruction or direction given.
 - D. **Being negative in rehearsal is a sure way to lessen the effectiveness of that rehearsal.** If you say things like “this will never work” there will probably be people around you that either believe what you say or are at least influenced by your opinion, and in either case they (like you) will be less productive.
 - E. **Offer encouragement to your peers, instead of criticism.** It takes a lot of pats on the back to erase the sting of a kick in the pants.
4. You can't be effective in rehearsal if you are unprepared
 - A. Arrive early enough to be in place, with all necessary equipment and materials, BEFORE rehearsal starting time.
 - B. Know all music/work that is due to be worked on in rehearsal. It is your responsibility to catch up should you be compelled to miss a rehearsal.
 - C. Have your materials in order and readily available.
 - D. Be certain your equipment is always in good working order.
 - E. Be dressed for the weather. Not having the proper attire is not a satisfactory reason for having a poor rehearsal.
 - F. Never be an obstacle to the success of others. If you are keeping someone else from achieving his or her objectives, the entire organization is losing ground.

The WCHS Band can only reach its highest level of success when each individual, each section, and each element are all at their highest possible effectiveness. It is the responsibility of each individual to do everything possible to reach that level, and to do nothing that would keep themselves or others from reaching their goals.

Behavior Guidelines

- All school rules and policies are in effect at all band functions.
- All band members are expected to follow the instructions of any teacher, staff member or chaperon *without question* unless said instruction is a violation of civil law or moral standards.
- Any band member possessing or using any controlled substances, which include tobacco and alcohol, during any band function is subject to immediate removal from the organization, referral to school authorities, and if applicable, the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- Band members will not play on or play with the equipment of others. This practice can lead to potential damage and a general lack of respect for the property of others. If you see someone picking up an instrument or equipment that is not his or hers, remind him or her.
- Destructive activity will not be tolerated, whether it be something as seemingly innocent as playing on a wall, locker, or door with drumsticks, or bumping things with horns or equipment, or something more overt as deliberately damaging equipment, throwing objects, writing on walls or leaving trash around. An organization with class, mature members, and pride will not permit acts such as this. It is the responsibility of everyone to see that these types of things do not occur. If you see it, stop it. If they refuse to stop, notify a director, staff member, or chaperon immediately.
- All students travel to any off-campus activity on the bus. If you wish to ride home from an event with your parents, they must sign you out in person, at the conclusion of the event, and you will be removed from the bus roster. Students will be released only to parents or guardians. Please be aware of this policy -- it is for your protection as well as ours.
- Band members are expected to use good judgment and show respect for others in displaying affection. An impassioned embrace or more ardent demonstration of feeling is best kept for private moments. Band trips and activities are not a date! Keep your raging hormones in check and don't embarrass your friends or cheapen your relationship by taking things beyond the limit of common decency.

Bus Rules

- Do not load buses until dismissed by the directors in the bandroom.
- Buses are loaded in an orderly fashion.
- ***Boys and girls may not sit together.***
- Respect and follow the instructions of the driver, directors, and chaperones.
- No playing of radios, etc. without personal headphones.
- Remain in seat while bus is moving. Do not kneel in seats or sit facing backwards.
- No loud talking or profanity. No horseplay. No playing of instruments on the bus.
- ***No switching buses.***
- Hands, arms and other body parts inside the bus at all times.
- Keep the bus clean.

Stands Rules

- SIT IN YOUR SECTION!
- Be ready to play at any time.
- Do not wear hats in the stands or with your uniform (except shako). If it cold, stocking caps, ear muffs, or something for warmth is permissible.
- Students will have on a designated band shirt under their uniform if they are going to take their uniform jacket off. All parts of the uniforms will be properly worn at all times!
- There is to be no random playing of instruments at any time. This includes percussion!
- No outsiders allowed in the band section.
- Be back from break at the designated time.

Marching Band

This ensemble is the most visible of all performing ensembles at Wilson Central High School. The marching band performs at all pep rallies, football games, competitions, and parades. To prepare for the halftime/competition show, an intensive rehearsal schedule is required. Students must attend all after school rehearsals and attend Band Camp. Exceptions must be approved by the directors in advance. Each member must meet all financial/fundraising obligations (as set by the boosters/directors) and must attend all performances (contests, parades, and football games).

Concert Bands

Concert Band—This ensemble will have a major focus on fundamental playing techniques. Students should have their instrument, book, concert music, and all other required materials in class each day. The concert band will perform at school concerts and concert festival during the year. Performance attire will be black top/black pants/black shoes.

Symphonic Band---This group will be composed of students selected by audition. This ensemble will continue to stress fundamentals but will play concert literature of a more advanced level. Students should have their instrument, book, concert music, and all other required materials in class each day. The Symphonic Band will perform at school concerts during the year plus any concert festivals, etc. Dress for this ensemble shall be formal performance attire.

Other Ensembles

Percussion Ensemble--- In addition to preparing marching and concert literature, these students will work on music specifically for the percussion ensemble. This will help develop independence in playing as well as emphasizing the importance of being a “total percussionist.” Performance attire will be the same as the student’s concert ensemble.

Jazz Band---Participation in this ensemble is voluntary, but consistent rehearsal attendance will be a requirement in order to perform with the group. Rehearsals will take place after school. Ensemble attire will be determined for each individual performance.

Chamber Ensembles---Small ensembles such as woodwind/brass quintets, instrument choirs, etc. will be formed as a part of the band experience. Performances may take place at school concerts, community functions, and solo and ensemble performance assessment. Rehearsals for these groups will take place after school or during one hour lunch. Performance attire will be determined.

Color Guard

The WCHS Color Guard will be the auxiliary unit that performs at all marching band functions. Members of this group shall be selected by audition. They will observe the same rehearsal schedule as the Marching Band members and shall pay the same fees.

Winter Guard

The WCHS Winter Guard is an indoor visual ensemble that performs at competitions in the Southeastern Color Guard Circuit (SCGC). Members of this group will begin rehearsing late in the fall semester and will compete throughout the spring. Wind and percussion players may also participate in Winter Guard. Anyone participating in winter guard must be paid in full on their band fees and shall pay a separate winter guard fee.

Uniforms/Concert Attire

Marching Band--When you are in uniform, you are no longer just an individual, but a representative of our band, school, and community. Your uniform is to be complete at all times when in public: you will receive detailed guidelines regarding the proper manner to wear the uniform, with which you will be expected to conform. **Jewelry, nail polish, and student selected accessories are not permitted. There is to be no hair on the collar or showing around the face when wearing shakos.** The only headgear worn with the uniform is that provided by the band. The student must pay for any lost, damaged, or destroyed articles of the uniform. Improper care or wear of band uniforms will NOT be tolerated. All band members must have black marching shoes for performance and can be ordered through the band. Shoes will be clean for each performance. Students must wear *full length* BLACK SOCKS when in uniform. Color Guard uniforms are to be worn in the prescribed manner. Make-up, jewelry, and hairstyle are as much a part of the uniform as the uniform itself. Guidelines for these will be established and members will be expected to conform. The way you wear your uniform reflects the pride you have in your band. Our uniform, when worn properly, projects an image of pride and dignity. It is everyone's responsibility to see that all members respect and care for the uniform and that the uniform is worn properly at all times.

Concert Attire---Concert Band shall wear solid black shirt, black pants, black socks/hose, and black dress shoes. This attire should be dress attire---no jeans or tennis shoes are acceptable. Symphonic Band shall wear formal concert attire. This will consist of a tuxedo, black socks, and black dress shoes for men and a formal black dress, natural hose, and black dress shoes for ladies. The tux jacket and pants will be provided for men and the dress will be provided for ladies. Other parts (like tux shirt, shoes, etc.) will be the responsibility of the student. As with marching band, the way you dress reflects the pride you have in your band. Our concert attire, when worn properly, projects an image of pride and dignity.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are the key to developing an outstanding musical organization. Students who study their instruments privately show rapid improvement in individual musicianship. As these students improve, their excitement towards practicing increases, they continue to improve, and they become a stronger contributor to the overall success of the band. Private instruction has a great impact on the individual student and on our band program both this year and in the future. Private lessons are available at WCHS, from instructors approved by the directors. Students are responsible for paying lesson fees to the band boosters at the beginning of each month or each week as their lesson is taken. Students may also fundraise lesson fees after band fees are paid in full. When a student misses a lesson without 24 hour advanced notice to the instructor (except in the case of a school absence), they will still be responsible for the cost of the lesson. Summer lessons (though strongly encouraged) will not be arranged through the band boosters. The key to satisfactory results from private instruction is to start as soon as possible ... SO START NOW.

Individual Opportunities

All-Midstate Band, All-Midstate Orchestra, All-Midstate Jazz Band, All-State Band, All-State Orchestra, All-State Jazz Band, Solo and Ensemble Festival, and other Honor Band activities provide students with the opportunity to excel individually on their instrument and to receive recognition for their musical achievements.

Auditions for All-Midstate Band, All-Midstate Orchestra, and All-Midstate Jazz Band are held in November and December. Students perform required music, scales, and sight-reading (no scales for Jazz auditions). The audition process ranks the students from Middle Tennessee on their specific instruments. Students selected for one of the Midstate ensembles prepare and present a concert. The top students from the All-Midstate Band, Orchestra, and Jazz Band receive All-State status and present a concert during the Tennessee Music Educators Association State Conference. To be eligible for these auditions, students must be members in good standing of the Band program at Wilson Central High School and pay an audition fee.

There are always outstanding musicians in the Wilson Central Band, and we strongly encourage widespread participation in these activities. Often, colleges and universities use membership in these organizations as partial criteria for music scholarship consideration. Other "Honor Band" activities may be available to Wilson Central Band students during the school year, either based on audition or application. Students will be notified of these events and their application/audition process.

Solo and Ensemble Festival, held in March or April, also gives students an opportunity to excel individually or in small instrumental groups. Students may select their own music (with the directors' approval) or directors will assist in the selection. There is an entry fee for each participant.

Extended Lunch

Students are NOT allowed to eat lunch in the bandroom and are NOT allowed to be in the bandroom without a director present. Students are expected to sign in upon entering the bandroom and are asked to sign out when they leave. Students will be allowed and **encouraged** to come in the bandroom for individual or small group practice. This time may be used to have required sectionals or other small rehearsals as needed (for half of lunch). Students not practicing *may not* be in the bandroom. This is a unique opportunity we have at WCHS and can serve to benefit both the individual student and band program as a whole.

Awards

Awards for years of service, musical accomplishment, leadership, etc. will be given each year at the band banquet. Some awards are voted on by the band members, while others are chosen by the directors. In addition, seniors may qualify for honor cords at graduation by being in band for four years and making Midstate/Allstate Band or Governor's School at least one of those years.

Instruments/Equipment

School-owned instruments and equipment become the responsibility of the student to whom they are issued. Any damage other than normal wear and tear will be repaired at the student's expense. Individual instruments must always be maintained in top playing condition. Always show the director your instrument before taking it for repairs. Remember that horseplay can cause damage to instruments and equipment. Be careful with your own instrument, place it out of harm's way if it is necessary for you to put it down, and never play around with or play on anyone else's instrument.

Band Fees/Fundraising

The Wilson Central Band program is only partially funded through the Wilson County Board of Education. The bulk of the funds necessary to operate an organization such as this are generated in two ways. First, each member of the band has a "fair share" fee they must either pay or generate through fundraisers designated as "individual fundraisers." This fee is approved by the band booster membership at the April or May meeting. Students must pay their fees by the approved deadline or must work out a payment plan with the Booster Executive Board. Second, the band will have other fundraising events labeled "general fundraisers" in order to raise funds for larger expenditures, i.e. instrument purchases. All students will be expected to participate in general fundraising events.

Band Boosters

The purpose of the booster organization is to promote the Wilson Central Band and its activities and keep parents informed about events and activities. As a result, the key functions of the group involve communications, chaperones, and financial support.

The time and date of meetings are set by the Booster President and will be communicated well in advance. All parents are welcome to attend and participate.