

# East Wake High School Band & Orchestra Handbook

Mack Garner, Band & Orchestra Director

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## Overview

The purpose of the band program is to educate young people through performance. Students are motivated through teamwork, performance objectives, and evaluation to mature as a musician, a performer, a student, and a person. The curriculum is varied and cyclical in nature. The comprehensive program encompasses four year of high school study. Individual development of character, esteem, teamwork, and group accomplishment can be additional rewards of the program.

# **OUR MISSION STATEMENT:**

"To develop lifelong skills in young musicians through education, performance, and experience in the performing arts."

# **Curricular Ensembles**

Wind Ensemble, Concert Band, Orchestra

These ensembles meet during the school day. Students enroll in one of these courses for academic (elective) credit. The curricular band program is the core of this band program. Students develop the necessary skills in music performance in the curricular band ensembles, and these skills are applied toward the success of the extracurricular band ensembles.

Brass, woodwind, and percussion members must be enrolled in the appropriate fall semester band class in order to participate in marching band. Extenuating exceptions may be granted by the director. It is the preference of the director that students are enrolled in both semesters of a band class. Students who do not participate in both semesters of band may not be considered for the advanced bands. Exceptions may be considered by the director in the case of schedule conflicts, graduation requirements, etc.

In order to maintain success in musical performance in all aspects of the band program, students should choose a main instrument to focus on throughout high school. If a student chooses to play a secondary instrument in one of the extracurricular ensembles (including guard), they should be sure to master the first instrument and to take care of all responsibilities for the class on that instrument before committing to playing a secondary instrument.

At times, a student will be asked to play a secondary instrument or to switch instruments completely by the director. This is either because the director feels that a student would be more successful on another instrument, there is a shortage in another instrument section and/or a surplus in the student's current section, or both.

# **Extracurricular Ensembles**

These groups meet outside of the school day and are sponsored by the East Wake High School Band Boosters. The bulk of this handbook covers information relating to extracurricular ensembles, especially Marching Band and Winter Guard. There is a cost associated with extracurricular ensembles.

Marching Band: This is the largest and most visible component of the East Wake High School program. Marching Band is open to all students, regardless of year in school or ability level. The season will begin with band camp mid-July and last through the beginning of November. The marching band also marches in up to three Christmas Parades in November and December. The marching band practices twice per week and performs at all home football games. There are weekend obligations, including most weekends in October and early November. (Reference season calendar for specific days and times)

Winter Guard: This is an extension of the guard section in the marching band. Membership is open to any student enrolled at EWHS. Membership in the fall color guard is required to participate in Winter Guard. No experience is required, but dance/guard experience is preferred. Middle School students are also allowed to audition for and participate in Winter Guard. Auditions are in November and the season runs from November-April. The Winter Guard practices 2-3 times per week and performs in 5-6 local, regional, and national competitions. Weekend obligations include camps and competitions. (Reference season calendar for specific days and times)

Concert Percussion: This is an extension of the percussion section in the marching band. Membership is open to any student enrolled at EWHS. Membership in the fall percussion section is required to participate in Concert Percussion. No experience is required, but percussion/piano background is preferred. Auditions are in November and the season runs from November-April. The concert percussion practices 2-3 times per week and performs in 5-6 local, regional, and national competitions. Weekend obligation includes camps and competitions. (Reference season calendar for specific days and times)

*Musical Pit Orchestra:* Instrumentation is dependent upon the show selected. Rehearsals generally begin in January-February with performances in mid-March.

# ATTENDANCE POLICY (also reference season calendar)

**Overview:** Rehearsals and performances are only 100% effective if there is 100% attendance. The success of every performing arts ensemble begins in rehearsal. A performance is only as strong as the rehearsals that precede it. In order to achieve success in rehearsal, the attendance of every member is essential. Each individual absence affects the progress of the entire group.

If you must miss a rehearsal, it is best not to miss an entire rehearsal, and it is best not to miss the full band rehearsals, as opportunities to rehearse with the full band are limited during the regular season.

An absence from rehearsal that, in the director's judgment, jeopardizes the success or safety of the performance for the student or for others will result in the student being pulled from the performance. This includes excessive absences or the last rehearsal before a performance.

Performances and Band Camp: Attendance at performances and band camp are mandatory. This includes Christmas parades. If there are conflicts with any of these dates, please indicate on your registration paperwork. Membership is probationary until approved by the director. Extenuating circumstances for last minute absences include death in the immediate family or extreme illness or injury (contagious, prevents members from being able to perform, etc.) and may be excused. An unexcused absence from a performance or camp date will result in probationary membership or dismissal from the group.

Communication: In the event that an absence from a rehearsal is unavoidable, an absence form (found on the website under "Forms") should be submitted as early as possible and no later than 48 hours in advance (but as early as possible) unless there are extenuating circumstances. If last-minute absences or tardies when submitting an absence form is not possible, a parent note or email will suffice (or a note from the teacher). Please be sure to let Mr. Garner know, even if the student was absent from school. If a student misses any portion of rehearsal, he/she may be asked to make up the time after rehearsal by completing extra duties or responsibilities. It is not acceptable to send a message about an absence with another member.

**Absence from school:** If a student is absent or leaves early from school due to illness, they are not required to attend rehearsal. A parent email to Mr. Garner is required in order to excuse the absence. However, every effort should be made to attend rehearsal (even if a student must sit on the sideline). **If you attend school, you are expected to attend rehearsal.** 

**Student-scheduled sectionals:** There will be times when a student leader schedules a rehearsal. They will consult all members of the section before scheduling a time with the least amount of conflicts. **Students should make every effort to attend these. If a student is unable to attend, they must communicate with the section leader.** 

Excessive absences: If a member has excessive absences, they may be asked to make up the time by attending rehearsals outside of the schedule or completing extra responsibilities. If a member is unable to complete the time, they may be asked to stand on the sideline for the following performance(s) at the director's discretion. In some events, a student's standing in the group may be reviewed.

#### **Excused Absences or Tardies**

- Illness, injury, or quarantine
- Death in the immediate family\*
- Wedding of immediate family member\*
- Medical appointments\* Please try to schedule on days you do not have rehearsal. In any case, a student should attend part of the rehearsal (they should not miss an entire rehearsal for an appointment.)
- Court or administrative proceedings\*
- Religious observances\*
- Other pre-approved educational opportunities\*
- Other school-sponsored events which, in the opinion of the school, take precedence\*
- Staying after with a teacher (for extra help or otherwise): *Please try to schedule these on days that you do not have band rehearsal. Bring a note.*

<sup>\*</sup>Submit an absence form in advance.

# **Unexcused Absences or Tardies**

- Work/Job
- Driver's Education
- Transportation Issue
- "I forgot"
- Too much schoolwork

It is expected that all members are responsible for completing their academic course work independently from their commitment to the ensemble. By committing to an extracurricular activity, you are agreeing that you will manage your time appropriately in order to honor all commitments. Under no circumstances should rehearsals or performances be used as an excuse for failure to complete assigned coursework. Conversely, at no point should school work be used as an excuse to miss scheduled events with the ensemble. It is well within each member's ability to handle the responsibilities of their academic courses as well as their commitment to the ensemble. Time management is an important skill, and one that each student will find invaluable in their college and professional careers.

#### MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

# **General Expectations:**

- **Professionalism:** *Members act with a level of professionalism consistent with the EWHS Blue Spirit standard, both in and out of performance.* 
  - No "PDA" (public display of affection). The most allowed is holding hands.
  - No profane or inappropriate language.
  - All equipment should be handled with care and respect and stored in an organized and professional manner.
    - Equipment and Instruments are stacked or lined up neatly in rows and unified as directed by section leaders.
    - Only you are to touch your own instrument. Never leave your instrument unattended (especially on the ground or on the bleachers).
    - Musicians never play their instruments in public unless it is organized. "We all play, or we don't play."
  - We clean up after ourselves. We leave a place better than how we found it, both on and off campus (practice field, gym, buses, cafeteria, etc.)
  - We use our inside voices when inside other schools.
  - We are respectful and supportive of performers from other schools. Students remain seated and quiet while watching other groups (no getting up or moving around during a performance). Every group is deserving of a standing ovation and our applause. As audience members, it is generally considered rude to have conversations or use electronic devices or have headphones in during a performance.
  - We always look presentable and wear appropriate attire (show shirts or EWHS approved SpiritWear).
  - We do not goof off or horseplay in public.
  - We always move as a group in two lines. People from outside of our group should not "break rank." If someone tries to break rank, the closest student leader should **politely ask them once** to go around. When in formation, students are quiet and orderly.

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# • If we are in uniform, we follow the awards protocol detailed below:

- We stand during awards.
- During the awards ceremony, we stand at "parade rest" with our heads up.
   There is no talking.
- If our band is called by the announcer, the representatives from the leadership team will call you to the position of "Attention." **There is no talking.**
- In the event that we do not follow awards protocol (if we are in the stands around a lot of other people, outside of uniform, etc.), we clap politely for other groups as well as our group. You should respect and support all other performers. There is no excess and unprofessional celebratory behavior, just as there is no unprofessional behavior if we do not "win."

#### • Social Media:

- Any posts about the EWHS Blue Spirit Band or posts that can be connected in any way to the EWHS Band & Orchestra Program will represent the program positively and professionally. Negative comments about other programs or any other statements that do not represent our program's philosophy are not acceptable.
- No video clips of the performance should be posted online without the permission of the director.
- No pictures of the uniforms/costumes or props should be posted online before the first competition performance.

## • Respect:

- Chaperones: The instructions they give are an extension of the director. Use "sir" and "ma'am" and show appreciation to them for giving their time and energy for you. Do not let them move equipment and props if you are not doing anything. This is your ensemble, not theirs.
- Staff: Their expertise is crucial to our success. Listen and apply their feedback.
   Respect their decisions, even if you don't understand or agree at the time. Never take instructional corrections personally.
- Student Leaders: The hierarchy of student leadership is also vital to our success and the normal operations of our program. If you feel that someone is out of line, do not take matters into your own hands; follow the chain of command (section leaders, captains, drum majors).
- Other Members: Any team activity requires support among its members. Be kind to one another. Encourage your fellow team members to do their best for their own sake and for the success of the group. Compliment their improvements and keep them motivated when they seem to feel they can't go any farther. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated in the EWHS Band Program.

- *The Program and School:* You are an advocate and representative for the director, the program, the school, our town, and sometimes even our state. This tremendous responsibility should not be taken lightly.
- Yourself: Behaving in a professional way means you take yourself and your organization seriously. Taking yourself seriously allows for mutual respect with others.
- Nutrition and Health: Members take care of themselves by practicing proper nutrition.
  - Drink plenty of water throughout the season. Stretch before and after rehearsal.
     Do not skip meals before rehearsals. Bring a water bottle to EVERY rehearsal and competition. Avoid sodas, fruit juices, and dairy products before rehearsals (especially camp days) and performances.
  - o Do not share water bottles. This helps prevent the spread of colds and viruses.
  - Should a student acquire an injury or illness within the season we will do our best to accommodate them within the show. If it is a long-term injury we may have to pull them out of certain parts of the show. We will do our best to work around these types of situations but there is a risk that you may not end up in the entire show.

# REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

- *Members PRACTICE individually at home. We REHEARSE together.* Do your part to contribute to the group by working outside of rehearsal on the things that you need to in order to perform them at or above standard.
- All members sign up for a committee and complete responsibilities as delegated by the committee chair.
- Members come to rehearsal prepared and with proper attire. Rehearsal attire consists of comfortable and athletic clothing (no excessively baggy clothing and NO JEANS) and athletic sneakers with socks. Marching band members wear white shirts on visual days. Long hair needs to be pulled back. Visible jewelry is not allowed. Guard members and some brass members are required to have gloves. Because our practice areas are normally very visible, following the school dress code is also important. Always wear appropriate length shorts and shirts that do not expose midriffs, stomachs, ribs, or nipples, etc.
- Members are prepared to begin rehearsing at the designated start time of each rehearsal. Members are present and participating in organized warm-up activities at the moment they begin. Plan to get to rehearsal in time to begin any necessary stretching and set up before rehearsal starts. "To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late."
- Members do what they need to do to be mentally prepared for rehearsal as well as physically prepared. This means there is no goofing off or horseplaying right before rehearsal begins.
- Members are prepared for rehearsal with all items necessary for an efficient rehearsal, i.e. personal equipment, dotbook, instrument with all necessary supplies, sticks/mallets, music (in a binder with sheet protectors), pencil, etc. Failure to do such will result in limited participation in rehearsals.
- *Members stay quiet and alert during rehearsal.* When any person of authority is talking, all other talking should cease. Do not talk unless otherwise instructed to help someone around you or an instructor is talking to you.
- *Members respect the rehearsal protocol/process*. There is no talking or moving at the position of attention and there is no talking during a rep. The position of attention is a position of focus and discipline. Likewise, any time you are marching or in a rep, you uphold a level of discipline. Always use proper marching technique and strive to look and sound your best.
- Members are expected to be working at all times during rehearsal whether it be self-directed or with an instructor. The only exception will be designated breaks.

- ALL members are responsible for putting equipment away at the end of each rehearsal.
  Rehearsals END at the time listed in the calendar. This does not necessarily mean that
  students will be able to leave directly at that time. NO student should ever leave a
  rehearsal without checking out with their section leader or committee chair as
  appropriate. If every member helps with clean-up, then EVERY member gets to leave
  earlier.
- *Members make arrangements to make-up anything that was missed due to an absence.* This will be done prior to the next rehearsal.
- There is to be NO food in any rehearsal area outside of scheduled breaks. Members take note of areas where no food item is ever allowed, such as the fine arts hallway, band room, main gym, and other areas designated by the staff.
- Members leave cellular phones and other devices off during all rehearsals and performances unless otherwise specified by an instructor.
- *Members leave their personal lives outside of rehearsal.* If you had a bad day, do not take it out on your fellow group members.

#### TRIP EXPECTATIONS

- Members follow school rules at all times. All trips are sanctioned events sponsored by East Wake High School. This means that all policies (EWHS and WCPSS student/parent handbooks and rules, EWHS Blue Spirit Handbook) are enforced on said trips, and participants (students, staff, and parents/volunteers) are held to the rules and regulation outlined by each. Any behavior that takes place on a trip that violates school policy must be communicated with school administration immediately following the events. Administration will determine proper disciplinary action.
- Members are required to travel with the band to the competition. Students are expected to travel with the band home from the competition. This encourages team bonding and allows for all students to complete unloading and clean-up responsibilities upon return to the school. Parents requesting an exception to the travel policy may request to take their students home from the event only by submitting a transportation exception form (reference Transportation Exception Form from website) at least one week in advance. The student is allowed to leave when the rest of the students are loading the buses or other transportation to return home. The student is required to find another student to complete unloading and clean-up responsibilities on their behalf.

#### **BUS EXPECTATIONS/SAFETY**

- When on the bus, students follow the instructions of the driver and other adults.
- Bus lists are posted prior to the trip. Students may not change buses without the approval of the logistics chair.
- Students sit in a seat facing forward, feet on the floor, and speak in a normal tone of voice so as not to distract the driver.
- Food and other items may only be consumed on the bus with approval of the driver and chaperones. Water is the only drink allowed on the buses.
- Students do not hang body parts or throw things out of bus windows.
- Students are responsible for picking up their trash and leaving the bus cleaner than they found it.
- Students thank the driver when entering and exiting the bus.
- No co-ed or couples seating on overnight or late evening bus trips.

# **OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

- Rooming lists are posted prior to the trip. Students may not change rooms without the approval of the logistics chair.
- For overnight trips, students are to stay in a student room. Exceptions to this rule may be granted by the director.
- On overnight trips, the director communicates a set curfew each night. The chaperones enforce this time with hallway and room checks as necessary. Students that violate curfew rules will face disciplinary action consistent with their actions.
- No fraternization between genders will take place inside of a hotel room. Any visiting between genders will take place in the hotel lobby with adult supervision.
- No congregation of large groups of students inside a single hotel room unless a specific situation has been approved and is supervised by a chaperone or staff.
- Students may not leave the premises of the hotel unless in an extenuating circumstance (ex. Injury or illness that requires medical care).
- The only adult allowed in a student hotel room is a chaperone or the band director.

# **EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Members are responsible for having and maintaining equipment. Handle all equipment with care and respect. Store in an organized and professional manner. Your equipment is a reflection of the East Wake High School Band. It is the students' responsibility to transport, load, and store equipment— not the chaperones or staff.

#### **Brass and Woodwinds:**

- A working instrument. Larger instruments can be rented from the school (reference Instrument Agreement Form). For smaller instruments, some families may choose to purchase a secondary instrument to use for marching band and use their primary instrument for Concert/Symphonic Band. In any case, the instrument used should be of high quality and in good working condition. Brass/silver instruments should be polished before each performance.
- All necessary supplies. Valve oil, reeds, etc.
- Music (in a binder with sheet protectors). This is printed by each student.
- Dotbook. Completed as directed by the staff.
- Black marching shoes and gloves (for performances). Purchased at registration.
- Some brass members will need rehearsal gloves.

# **Percussion:**

- Sticks, mallets, stick bag. A complete intermediate-level package can be purchased at <a href="https://www.steveweissmusic.com/product/innovative-percussion-fp2-mallet-pack/stickmallet-pack">https://www.steveweissmusic.com/product/innovative-percussion-fp2-mallet-pack/stickmallet-pack</a>. Some sticks and mallets are also provided by the school.
- Earplugs
- Music (in a binder with sheet protectors). This is printed by each student.
- Dotbook. Completed as directed by the staff.
- Black marching shoes (for performances). Purchased at registration.

# Guard:

- Dotbook. Completed as directed by the staff.
- Practice equipment. Purchased at registration.
- Show flags and weapons, properly taped. Flags provided by the band.
- Rifle (every member). <u>www.designsbyking.com/king\_kong\_rifle.php</u> (Specs: 37.5" rifle with black strap and black bolt)

#### **UNIFORM/COSTUME PROTOCOL:**

Be sure to follow the uniform requirements exactly. The uniform/costume is a reflection of our program. Professionalism, neatness, consistency, and unity are among the core values of the EWHS Band Program. The purpose of the uniform is to take the focus off of each individual and place the emphasis on the group as a whole. When you are in uniform you are representing the band and school. Take pride in how you look and act. The uniform committee will inspect prior to performance.

- Never run in uniform. Always walk.
- Do not sit or lay on the ground in uniform (outside of the performance of the show).
- Do not obscure the uniform/costume with a jacket or other covering (even if it is EWHS Band attire) or wear an article of clothing with the uniform that doesn't belong to the uniform (ex. baseball hat, tennis shoes, wrong color socks, etc.). Specific exceptions may be made for the entire group by the director (ex. guard warm-ups, percussion jackets, etc.). Winds and percussion students may wear a solid black headband under the shako if it helps keep the hair back or improves the fit of the hat.
- No eating or drinking in uniform with the exception of "hands clean" snacks provided by chaperones.
- No PDA (public display of affection) or other personal contact (including horse playing) in uniform.
- Wear the entire uniform or none at all. Wearing just the pants is not acceptable. Always
  wear every part of the uniform the correct way (hats not backward, coats not unzipped,
  etc.). Specific exceptions may be made for the entire group by the director (ex.
  half-uniform for equipment loading, etc.)
- The appropriate way to carry your hat is with your free hand and two fingers on the brim. Do not leave your hat unattended.
- No jewelry unless it is part of the uniform.
- Hair up and inside hat and off the collar. Hair should be of natural color (not purple, green, etc.) unless it is part of the uniform.
- If you have cut-off gloves your nails cannot be painted.
- Do not wear makeup unless it is part of the uniform.
- Your hat should be two fingers above your nose (eyes barely visible).
- Wear the pants so that the hem touches the top of your shoes without breaking the crease of the pants.
- Wear long black socks with your uniform (should not see skin when sitting or walking).
- Our casual uniform may be worn at some football games, the band camp preview
  performance, in the stands at competitions, while to and from competitions, and other
  events. It includes a show shirt, black shorts (or long pants, depending on weather), and
  tennis shoes. Sunglasses may be allowed in certain cases.

#### HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE EWHS BAND

- Always do what is best for the group, not necessarily what is best for just you. We are a team and we must work together.
- Have full faith in yourself and your capabilities. Everyone will be learning new things and facing new challenges. Do not doubt yourself for one moment. People are going to learn at different rates; try your best not to compare yourself to others. Even if you are picking up on something quickly or know the task that is being asked of you, allow yourself to take it to the next step. (Consistency, performance, technique). Don't let someone else have more faith in you than you have in yourself.
- Commit to giving 100%, 100% of the time. Expect to work hard. There is no first-string and second-string, and when one person gets tired we cannot send another player in as a substitute. Everyone is performing all of the time. We are only as strong as our weakest member.
- Take responsibility for your actions and learn from your mistakes. Apologize when you know you are wrong, and mean it.
- **Rehearse as you want to perform.** We are working toward consistency. Anything that happens in rehearsal will likely happen in performance.
- Make efficient use of our rehearsal time. Take notes in the music of changes, things to practice, and suggest improvements during rehearsal. Listen even when the director may not be talking directly to your section, as it may apply to you later in the music.
- Take every opportunity to watch other groups perform. They are doing the same thing that you are and you will learn a lot from watching them (both good and bad). While at a competition at another school, spend as much time watching as possible. Use scheduled breaks to take care of restroom and concession needs.
- Winning isn't everything. Competition certainly motivates us, but your primary motivation should be the desire to improve. As long as we get better with each performance, we stay in competition with ourselves. Intrinsic motivation is much more powerful and rewarding than the extrinsic motivation to win a trophy. The performance of others should never determine the quality of your own performance. During awards ceremonies, be proud of our group and our school no matter what the results and if you agree or disagree. You should not cheer any louder for winning first place than for placing last.
- **Do not expect exceptions to be made on your behalf.** Making an exception for one would lead to others expecting the same exception.
- Stay positive and offer and accept help! Everyone is going to have some form of critique offered to him or her. Please understand that this is how we all grow. If you are experienced at a task, please offer assistance when the instructor has asked for you to do so. We are going to get better by helping each other.
- **Practice!** If you are struggling with a task, don't be upset. Keep working on it. Growth and improvement speak volumes over those who are naturally gifted but don't push themselves to the next level! Never get satisfied with yourself; be the best you can be. Constantly work to improve your performance ability.

# **COMMITMENT CONTRACT**

The Blue Spirit Marching Band performs at numerous public and school-related events and represents East Wake High School. The highest level of discipline, commitment, and conduct will be expected of all members. It is important to our success that all members have standards of excellence in commitment, professionalism, performance, and attitude that are consistent with the vision of the program.

Signatures on the attached form indicate the student's intent to join the EWHS Band Program. By signing the attached form, the student and parent(s) agree to accept the responsibilities associated with participation and the fees associated with membership.

- 1. I have received and reviewed the **season calendar** for performances and rehearsals, and I agree to follow the **attendance policy** for all rehearsals and performances. We agree to the participation commitment involved in this activity and will make the necessary arrangements in our family's schedule to allow for rehearsals, competitions, and performances. *Please list any known conflicts with camp or performance dates (include reason for conflict).*
- 2. I have received and reviewed the member expectations and will do my very best to live up to the standards of the EWHS Band.
- 3. When off campus for a performance or other band trip, I will always represent EWHS with maturity, sophistication, professionalism, and dignity. I understand that school rules apply on band trips.

Any failure to follow any of the guidelines set forth in the aforementioned contract are grounds for one of the following consequences:

- 1. Dismissal from rehearsal
- 2. Standing on the sideline (in uniform) for performance(s)
- 3. Removal from portions of the performance (temporary or permanent)
- 4. Dismissal from group

# **Student Agreement:**

I have read and discussed with my parents/guardians the rules and regulations of the EWHS Band. As a member of this organization, I agree to abide by the rules and regulations set forth on the previous pages and/or online registration as well as the school rules stated in the East Wake High School handbook. I understand the policies concerning attendance, participation, performance, and discipline. I fully understand and accept the position I am given, and I will fulfill my commitment to participating this season.

Student Printed Name	
Student Signature	Date
Parent Agreement:	
I have read and discussed with my child	the rules and regulations of the EWHS Band as outlined
in this handbook and/or presented as a p	art of online registration. I give my child permission to
participate and will help reinforce all rul	es and regulations of the group. I understand the
attendance, participation, performance, a	and discipline policies of this program, and I will
encourage my child to honor this comm	itment.
Parent Printed Name	
Parent Signature	Date