

***WHITEHALL HIGH
SCHOOL
“MARCHING ZEPHYR
BAND”***



MEMBER HANDBOOK

Dear Band Member and Parents:

In order to maintain an award-winning status, it is necessary that we have a strong foundation of solid guidelines. Enclosed within this handbook is vital information concerning all policies, procedures, rehearsal and performance information, and a variety of other general information with which all parents and band members need to become familiar. Please don't take anything for granted – ***you need to read this handbook cover to cover!***

Please also realize and understand that Marching Band is the “ultimate team sport.” Each student of the ensemble is a contributing member and their decisions and actions affect everyone else involved in the group. ***Do not take this responsibility lightly!*** Together, with everyone pulling in the same direction, we can achieve great things! I look forward to taking those steps with you as a member of the Whitehall High School “Marching Zephyr Band.” Welcome aboard!

Respectfully,

Mr. Matthew Tanzos

Band Director

Whitehall High School “Marching Zephyr Band”

PERSONAL EXPECTATIONS

Take a minute to think about the following statements. These statements all refer to qualities that you will need later in life to be successful. Many of the above qualities are items which employers look for in their workers. It should be obvious to you now that through the participation in this group, you will be learning MUCH MORE than how to play an instrument or spin a flag – participation in marching band teaches valuable lessons and traits which you will need to function in society after you graduate from high school.

Without any doubt, being a member of this group is a privilege. As a member of this band, you are also a member of a highly visible group within the Whitehall-Coplay School District. You are representing our school and our community. Therefore, the following list of expectations is to be read carefully. Many of the qualities spoken about in the following statements must come from within - you must possess a desire to achieve a high level of excellence. After all, this is what this whole activity is about.

In order for the MZB to be successful...

- 1.** Please read, understand, and sign the Whitehall “Marching Zephyr Band” Agreement & Contract. **You** are responsible for following and adhering to the rules and regulations set forth within that contract.
- 2. You** are amongst the best students in this school, and therefore, we will demand that you conduct yourselves appropriately at all times, including prior, during, and after a rehearsal or performance. Unnecessary talking and interruptions will not be tolerated. If we are to be a superior organization, then we must work together towards that goal.
- 3. You** are expected to demonstrate acceptable academic achievement. Students who are failing a course will subject themselves to suspension from band activities until the grade is brought up to a satisfactory level. Also, students who have not successfully completed a music performance class (band, choir) to the minimum grade level of a “B” will not be permitted to participate in the group. In order for middle school students to participate with the high school band, the recommendation of the middle school band director is necessary.
- 4. You** must fulfill your obligation with the middle school band if you are a 7th or 8th grade instrumentalist. Any middle school student who is a member of the MZB and ceases membership in the middle school band will lose his/her status as an MZB member. In addition, high school instrumentalists in the MZB must fulfill their obligation to be enrolled in instrumental activities (the HS Symphonic Band) in order to be a member in good standing. An exception to this will be students whose schedules/course selection specifically prohibits them from scheduling band during the school day (i.e. vo-tech,

D.O.). If a student has a genuine scheduling conflict between instrumental activities/percussion class and another class, it is expected that he/she make some kind of alternative agreement between the classroom teacher and the band director which, in some way, will allow him/her to continue with symphonic band membership. Otherwise, any HS student who ceases membership at anytime during the school year in the HS symphonic band/percussion class will lose membership in good standing status, and will be declared ineligible for all activities of the MZB, including that of trips.

5. You do not have the right to question an adult (chaperone, staff member, etc...) who makes a decision. Without the assistance of these chaperones, we would not be able to go anywhere.

6. You must display pride in our group! A band that sounds good, marches well, and functions smoothly must look good as well. These elements constitute *pride*. Take pride in the way you look. Keep your uniform clean and looking sharp – this will help display the pride you have in being in an outstanding organization.

Take note...the success of the Marching Zephyr Band ALWAYS begins with YOU!!!

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance is mandatory at all band functions (i.e. practices, games, performances, etc...). If there is an emergency, notify Mr. Tanzos as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a function. You have been notified of rehearsal and performance dates well in advance – clear your calendars. All practices are mandatory. If you must miss a practice, you will be held responsible for any material covered or you will not be permitted to perform at the next function. We will not sacrifice the quality of the whole for a few!

1. In order to have the best band possible, it is important that we have perfect attendance as much as possible. Unfortunately, this may not always be the case. Thus, the following policy will be enforced concerning attendance:

A. Illness, death in the family, and like situations will be considered *excused* provided communication in the form of a signed note from a parent is given to the director.

B. Extremely urgent family matters such as weddings of the immediate family, confirmation, etc... will be considered *excused* provided communication in the form of a signed note from a parent is given to the director.

C. All parental notes are to be given to Mr. Tanzos directly.

D. Please note that you *may not* attend an event (practice or performance) if you are absent from school the day of that event. As long as you are legally absent from school, your absence from that particular band event will be considered *excused*. Communication from the parent is not needed in such an instance.

E. Absences for other school-related activities will be considered *excused* provided that:

1) *the time in conflict* between the other activity and band *is split equally*.

2) you make-up the material you missed at rehearsal *in a timely manner*.

3) your absence does not become detrimental to the group.

4) your absence does not become excessive.

5) *performances* take priority over *practices*.

F. All other absences will be considered *unexcused*. Appointments, etc...are to be scheduled around rehearsal and events.

G. Any unexcused absence will result in the student's ineligibility to participate in that weekend's events. The student will be required to attend the events of the weekend in question, but will not be able to perform with the ensemble. A

student who accumulates three unexcused absences will be dismissed from the group. Contact with the parent will be made after the second unexcused absence.

- H. "Vets" are expected to realize that attendance at band camp is essential and rehearsals CANNOT be missed during this time. "Rookies" who may not have been previously aware of this who may have vacation conflicts will be excused (provided signed documentation from a parent is given to Mr. Tanzos in advance), but will not be permitted to participate with the group until the work is made-up.
2. If you know of a conflict in the schedule, report it to Mr. Tanzos at once. Maybe there is a possibility something can be worked out.
 3. Your promptness and attentiveness is very important to the success of the group. The MZB staff considers these attributes to be critical, and therefore, they will be expected of you at all times.
 4. There will be a "debriefing" session when we return to the bandroom after a performance. No one is excused to leave until instructed to do so by the director.

PERCUSSION POLICIES

The very nature of being a percussionist requires additional responsibilities on the part of the student. These duties are outlined below:

- All percussionists are required to report 30 minutes prior to the start of rehearsal in order to unload equipment and assist with percussion set-up. For instance, if rehearsal starts at 6:00 pm, percussionists need to report by 5:30.
- All percussionists are required to stay after rehearsal to assist with loading equipment away into the designated area.
- Students will take directions as assigned from the staff member in charge during these times. This will be clearly defined to all percussionists.
- You will be held financially accountable for broken/lost equipment (outside of normal wear and tear).

FOOTBALL vs. COMPETITION BAND

The MZB will be split into a football band and a competition band. All members will participate in the football band. To a great extent, this ensemble will be especially meant as a training ensemble for those students who might not yet be ready for the intense mental and physical demands of the competitive band. From a musical and visual standpoint, we will strive to maintain adequate balance between sections of the unit.

All members will undergo an evaluation process in order to determine which students will be placed into the competition band. Members of the competitive ensemble will need to be able to handle the time demands, stress factors, and physical demands which will be placed upon them in order to maintain a high-quality competitive marching program, while at the same time maintaining good academic standing and citizenship within the middle school and high school itself.

All students, including the “rookies”, will be evaluated in the following areas. Of course, consideration will be given to the individual students’ experience level as it relates to this evaluation.

A. MUSICAL EVALUATIONS

1. Brass/Woodwinds

- a. Tone
- b. Technique
- c. Musicianship (dynamics, phrasing, expression)
- d. Fundamentals (scales, etc...)
- e. Articulation
- f. Rhythm
- g. Intonation

2. Percussion

- a. Tone
- b. Technique
- c. Musicianship (dynamics, phrasing, expression)
- d. Fundamentals
- e. Articulation
- f. Rhythm

3. Guard

- a. Technique
- b. Timing
- c. Presence

B. MARCHING...all students will be evaluated in their marching ability as follows:

1. Posture
2. Presence
3. Display of Pride
4. Timing (feet)
5. Technique
6. Knowledge/execution of commands

7. Instrument/equipment position/carry

All instrumentalists will be given musical excerpts from the show that are to be learned and memorized. Failure to do so will seriously jeopardize your chances of being placed in the competitive ensemble. Colorguard members will be given a routine of equipment work which will function in a comparative manner to that of the music which is to be learned/memorized by the instrumentalists.

Additionally, since past performance is the best indicator of future success, all returning MZB members (“vets”) will be evaluated on the following based upon their contributions to the group from the past season:

- Attendance
- Attitude
- Discipline
- Willingness to work hard
- Dedication
- Ability to follow directions
- Ability to work well in a large group setting
- Cooperation

Additional Requirements

All members of the competitive ensemble **MUST** attend and participate in the band trip to USSBA National Championships. This will require a financial commitment on the part of the students and parents. Students in the football band who are not in the competitive ensemble will be permitted to travel along with the competitive band on this trip provided they are a member in good standing of the football band.

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

*Regarding discipline: You are members of a respected group. You will therefore demonstrate the utmost respect for the directors, staff members, instructors, adults, chaperones, bus drivers, other students in our band, other students in other bands, and anyone else in which we may come into contact. **All students are expected to demonstrate the qualities of pride, dignity, and class at ALL TIMES.** You are constantly in the public view: You are watched and evaluated by your peers, school, and community. Your actions, in or out of uniform, reflect upon all of us. *Refrain from abusive language or poor vocabulary.* Follow the rules of good bandsmanship and demonstrate common courtesy. Be loyal, and never second-guess the directors and instructors. *It only takes one person to spoil the appearance and attitude of the entire group.**

1. Disrespect for any adult or fellow member **will not be tolerated** and will result in disciplinary action.
2. Regarding discipline problems and infractions of policies presented in this handbook, the following will be enforced:
 - a. first offense – verbal warning from the director, possible removal from rehearsal.
 - b. second offense – removal from rehearsal, notification of parents.
 - c. third offense – suspension from the group, conference with parents.
3. Please note that the director’s decision regarding any disciplinary infraction will be final. If the infraction in question is of a serious enough nature, **immediate dismissal** from the group will result.
4. Regarding school citizenship: suspensions from school (whether in school or out of school) will automatically be considered as a “third offense” as outlined above. Another discipline referral *of any kind from any teacher* after a suspension will result in your dismissal from the group.
5. All members must pay for lost and/or damaged equipment, uniforms, and music beyond that of normal wear and tear.
6. All students are expected to obey and adhere to all school rules while we are together as a band.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Cell phones are not to be used, seen, or heard during a rehearsal or a performance of the ensemble. This includes breaks during rehearsal or performance of the ensemble, but does not include supper or lunch breaks during lengthy rehearsals (such as those during band camp). The time frame of a rehearsal or performance will be defined as the time from which the director or staff members in charge formally organize the students, until they are dismissed by the adult in charge. This time frame will be treated exactly as if you were in school – meaning all school district policies and consequences will be adhered to. Additionally, cell phones are not to be used anytime the group is in uniform.

REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE POLICIES

1. **Be on time!** This means dealing with instrument or equipment concerns and/or any problems before the start time of practice. If practice is scheduled from 6:00-9:00, this means rehearsal begins at 6:00 and ends at 9:00 – it does not mean you arrive at 6:00, and it will also mean putting away your equipment after 9:00. This is especially important for percussionists. A famous conductor once said “To be on time is to be late. To be fifteen minutes early is to be on time.”
2. You are expected to have a positive outlook, an open mind, and the willingness to try new ideas. There may be things run differently than in the past – please keep an open mind about this.
3. Everyone is to be **silent** whenever a staff member is addressing or rehearsing the group, or part of the group – even if they are not addressing you or your section directly.
4. Play only when directed to do so by a drum major, staff member, or the director.
5. Equipment is to be in proper working condition.
6. Be sure you have all needed supplies – a pencil, drill notebook, dot book, instrument, music, equipment, uniform parts, extra reeds, valve oil, and supplies, etc...
7. *While we are practicing*, there is to be no gum, no food, and no drink. Additionally, food/drink IS NOT to be brought into classrooms at Whitehall High School – this includes the bandroom. You are, however, expected to bring water for breaks. Please store water bottles that you may bring for rehearsal in the hallway. You will be given designated “water breaks” at which beverages are to be consumed.
8. The school dress code will be enforced at all times.
9. Leave the room in a *better* condition than which it was found.
10. Load all of your equipment onto the truck as directed by the person in charge. This includes instruments, music, and guard equipment.

11. When we return to the bandroom after rehearsal/performances, it is your responsibility to see that your equipment is put away properly.
12. Warm up and line up as directed to you by the drum major(s), director, and/or staff. Your attentiveness is important here.
13. During third quarter break at football games, members are expected to finish all food and drink before returning to the stands. All students should return to their seat in the stands at the designated time.
14. Regarding competitions, there may be times when we, even as a competing unit, will be assigned “audience time”. This means you are expected to be a *respectfully attentive* audience member and learn from the performing band. This means listening and watching attentively and not talking. At the very least, you will be assigned “audience time” for the host band’s performance at every competition that we attend.
15. All members of the band must ride the bus to and from events, unless Mr. Tanzos has a note from your parents stating that your parents will be taking you home from the event. Please note that you will not be allowed to leave any function with anyone other than your parents! Students are not permitted to ride with another student’s parents, friends, etc...

UNIFORM POLICIES

1. It is important to know that when you accept this uniform, you are accepting the responsibility for its proper maintenance. Protect the uniform from abuse, as you will be charged the replacement fee for any part of the uniform if it is damaged or abused beyond that of normal wear and tear or if it is lost. You must return the uniform parts at the end of the season that you were originally issued in the beginning of the year.
2. Uniforms, when they are not in use, are to be hung NEATLY at all times! This includes when the uniforms are at home or placed in your garment bag.
3. Do not cut or permanently alter uniforms in any way.
4. Uniforms are to be professionally dry-cleaned only. **Do not attempt to clean the uniform yourself!** We will set-up a dry cleaning service available for you. Details and cost will be given to you at the appropriate time. Band and guard members are additionally responsible for having their uniforms dry-cleaned on an as-needed basis. **All members will be required to have your uniform professionally dry-cleaned at the end of the season.**

5. At all costs, keep the uniforms off the floor, the bottom of the buses, and the ground. Take all precautions to keep the uniforms clean and dry.
6. Store helmets in the boxes when they are not in use.
7. If some major damage does occur, please notify the director immediately. If the uniform is damaged beyond repair due to negligence, the MZB member in question will be billed for the replacement cost by the school district.
8. Uniforms are to remain closed during performances and while functioning as a unit. This includes being in the stands during football games and third quarter break. Any exceptions to this will be as directed by the director and/or staff members.
9. When the weather becomes cold, all members will be required to bring along their raincoats for warmth.
10. A designated t-shirt is to be worn under the uniform. You will be given specific details by the director.
11. All members will be expected to be report to performances dressed as directed by Mr. Tanzos. Possibilities include “full uniform”, “partial uniform”, and “civies.” You will be notified of which dress prior to each performance.
12. Band and guard members must provide gloves, shoes, and appropriate socks. Details of price will be announced. Percussionists do not need to provide gloves.
13. While in uniform, make-up is to be kept to a minimum (natural colors are acceptable) and jewelry is not to be worn. (This means it’s not a good idea to get pierced during band season!) If we are to look “uniform”, we must all do everything the same way.
14. While in uniform, policies regarding hair lengths will be specified to you in detail. This may vary depending if you are in guard or the band.
15. Uniform contracts will be issued to all members. They must be signed and returned before any student will officially be given a uniform.

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

STUDENT INTENT TO PARTICIPATE FORM

This is to be read and completed by parents and MZB members:

I have read the enclosed handbook and fully understand all policies, procedures, and expectations that are outlined in this document. It is understood that as a band member, I am not only making a commitment for myself, but also to other student members, staff members, adults, the school, and the Whitehall-Coplay community itself. As a band member, I will always strive to do my best, work hard to achieve a common goal, and live up to the expectations which have been set forth for me.

As parents and band members, we understand that attendance at all band functions is important to the success of the group. We have reserved the dates on our calendar for practices and performances.

It is understood that as an MZB member, I will uphold the high standards of which make the Whitehall High School “Marching Zephyr Band” an outstanding musical ensemble.

Finally, as parents and band members, we realize that failure to follow these simple procedures can result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the group.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date