

WIREGRASS RANCH HIGH SCHOOL



BAND HANDBOOK 2009-2010

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BAND HANDBOOK

Introduction

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the Wiregrass Ranch High School Band Program. We have the unique opportunity to continue building an amazing organization from the ground up. It is going to take the support from students, parents, staff, and community to make this band program successful.

This handbook has been prepared to provide music students and their parents with information to help them better understand the Wiregrass Ranch Band Program. Please read it carefully. **Both student and parent must sign and return the final page**, which is our record that you have received this and agree to follow the rules, guidelines, and policies of the band program. This handbook should be kept handy for quick reference throughout the year.

A large portion of the band program happens after school as band is a co-curricular activity. There will be after-school practices and performances that are required and graded events. Our success depends directly on the hard work and commitment of each and every student. Parents must be willing to support and encourage their student in meeting this commitment. The rewards for this effort by students and their parents will quickly become evident by the accomplishments of the group and the individuals in the program.

As with any organized activity involving a large number of people, there must be rules and guidelines to guarantee its success. Rules concerning rehearsals, performances, uniforms, equipment, and behavior are there for the protection of the students and their organization.

Finally, the program cannot exist without the support of the band booster organization. The **Wiregrass Ranch High School Band Boosters** provide financial, logistical, and moral support for the WRHS Band Program and is made up of parents just like you. You can help with fund raising, chaperoning, or serving on one of our parent support groups. Please help provide the best educational experience possible for your child and for yourself by getting involved. The WRHS band offers unique opportunities for young people to learn the value of working hard as a team toward worthy goals, in addition learning leadership, musicianship, and performance skills.

Musically,

George DeGuzman

Obligations

As a member of the Wiregrass Ranch High School band program you are expected to:

1. Maintain a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average.
2. Obey all local, state, and national laws.
3. Attend and be prepared for **ALL** after school/evening rehearsals for your particular ensemble.
4. Attend **ALL** scheduled performances for your particular ensemble.
5. Participate in **ALL** fund-raising activities.
6. Pay **ALL** fees (shoes, fair share, camp fees, etc...) or make arrangements with the band booster board.
7. Clear prior obligations prior to participating.
8. Practice your instrument or guard equipment at home frequently and strive to reach your personal goals as well as the band's goals.
9. Keep all equipment in good working order.
10. Keep the facilities neat and free of litter.
11. Treat each other with respect and dignity.
12. Have pride in your band program and facility.
13. Do your job to the best of your ability.
14. Make new friends and HAVE FUN!!!

Basic rules and guidelines:

1. Any instrument or equipment not belonging to or specifically assigned to you is strictly off limits.
2. During the regular school day the band facility is to be used for regular classes, sectional rehearsals and prearranged help/practice sessions only.
3. No gum is allowed at any rehearsal or performance.
4. No gum, food, or drink is allowed in the band area (bottled water with a cap is okay).
5. You may use the areas provided in the band room to store books and personal items (**WHILE YOU ARE IN CLASS**). Such items found that do not belong may be placed in the school lost and found or discarded.
6. Shoes and socks **MUST** be worn at all outdoor rehearsals
7. A band member must **RESPECT** his/her uniform at all times (see section on uniform etiquette)
8. There will be no hazing of rookies.
9. Be **ON TIME** (this means being early)
10. Insubordination will **NOT** be tolerated.
11. **RESPECT** other people's property.

12. Public display of affection is NOT allowed while on "band time". This is a band function, not a date.

13. A band member will not wear visible jewelry, fingernail polish, or excessive make-up while in uniform. Leave expensive jewelry at home.
14. Show respect to all directors, administrators, teachers, band staff, other band students and parents at all times, in other words, **EVERYONE**.
15. Keep language **CLEAN!** You never know who might be listening.
16. Remember, you are a **CLASS ACT**. Do not do anything that would have to be explained. Always conduct yourselves as proper ladies and gentlemen.

Heat Stress and Inclement Weather

Since we begin the school year earlier in the summer with band camps, rehearsals, and marching related activities, it is important that you be aware of the possibility of heat stress with your students.

During hot weather, the students and teachers are subject to the following:

Heat Cramps - Painful cramps involving abdominal muscles and extremities caused by intense, prolonged exercise in the heat and depletion of salt and water due to profuse sweating.

Heat Syncope - Weakness, fatigue and fainting due to loss of salt and water in sweat and exercise in the heat. Predisposes to heatstroke.

Heat Exhaustion (Water Depletion) - Excessive weight loss, reduced sweating, elevated skin and core body temperature, excessive thirst, weakness, headache and sometimes unconsciousness.

Heat Exhaustion (Salt Depletion) - Exhaustion, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, and dizziness due to profuse sweating and inadequate replacement of body salts.

Heatstroke - An acute medical emergency related to thermoregulatory failure. Associated with nausea, seizures, disorientation, and possible unconsciousness or coma. It may occur suddenly without being preceded by any other clinical signs. The individual is usually unconscious with a high body temperature and hot dry skin. However, some heatstroke victims may sweat profusely.

Student responsibilities

1. Drink water prior to, during, and after band rehearsals and outside performances (at least one to two gallons per day...more is better)
2. Inform the band director in writing, of any history or heat illnesses.
3. Establish a regiment of outside activities to acclimatize yourself to hot weather. Acclimatization is the process of becoming adjusted to heat.
4. Replace salt after practice in modest amounts. Do not take salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
5. Notify the band director if you need to step out of marching rehearsal if you begin to feel light-headed.

Inclement Weather

Florida summers bring sudden shifts in weather and thunderstorms can appear quickly. We will have a plan that students are aware of when threatening weather develops suddenly.

When inclement weather occurs during outdoor rehearsals, the students will move indoors to the closest school building; usually the band room. During away football games or band competitions, the students will follow inclement weather plans put in place by that school or facility in order to get them indoors and out of the weather.

Rehearsal and performance attendance

The marching band will generally rehearse twice a week. A detailed rehearsal calendar and schedule will be provided. Please make note of the section on **heat stress and inclement weather**.

Band practices and performances are mandatory. Any request for an exception must be submitted in writing and approved by the director **two weeks** in advanced of the conflict-ing date, except in case of emergencies. There will be a maximum of 3 excused absences that will be allowed each semester, all absences beyond that will be considered unexcused, re-gardless of reason. Special exceptions will be considered by the director. Work is not an ac-ceptable excuse for missing any band event (as long as the student is notified 2 weeks in ad-vance about the band event). Our schedule is always announced far enough in advance to avoid conflicts. Parents, please make every effort to schedule regular doctor's appointments around the band's schedule whenever possible.

- If a student is tardy twice, they will receive an absence
- Absences from performances will not be tolerated. An unexcused absence from a perform-ances will result in automatic failure from the class and possible dismissal from the pro-gram.
- Excusable absences include, but are not limited to: (must include documentation):
 - Sick from school
 - Doctor's appointment (if this is a check-up, try to schedule around the rehearsal)
 - Death in the family
 - Important family engagement (wedding, vacation/trip, etc...)
 - Religious holiday

Grading Policies

The quarterly grade will be described in a detailed syllabus but will *generally* fall along the following percentage break down. A syllabus will be given out the first day of school that will provide a list of specific assignments and point breakdowns.

60% - Participation. This includes class, rehearsals, sectionals, and performances. *Inappropriate conduct and attendance will negatively affect this portion of your grade.*

40% - All playing tests, written work, and listening projects.

Every student will be given an objective “checklist” that will be used to assess grades at the end of each quarter. Students are responsible for getting items signed off as they are completed. Mr. DeGuzman or Mr. Donataggio are the only acceptable signatures on this document.

If a student loses his/her objective sheet, they are responsible for getting a new one and providing proof that all assignments that were previously checked off were in-fact completed. New objective sheets are available on www.WRHSmusic.com

Merit Point System

The following system of awarding merit points to all members of the Wiregrass Ranch High School band program will serve to accurately and fairly assess the worthiness of each individual in the distribution of grades and awards. This system is not meant to replace any prior rule or attendance policy.

Merits:

1. Marching band, performance (1 point)
2. Concert band, performance (4 points)
3. Parade performance (5 points)
4. Band Camp (10 points)
5. Solo at solo/ensemble music performance assessment (20 points)
6. Ensemble at solo/ensemble music performance assessment (12 points)
7. Attending concerts, college or professional (1 point)
8. All-State (3 points for audition, 10 for audition, acceptance, and performance)
9. All-County (3 points for audition, 10 for audition, acceptance, and performance)
10. Tag day, each half hour (1 point)

11. Other fundraisers (1 point per fifty dollars profit)
12. Private lessons (16 points)
13. First chair, at least 90% of the year (10 points)
14. Officer corps member (30 points)
15. Color guard member (25 points)
16. Winter guard member (25 points)
17. Other situations requiring extra work will earn points at the discretion of the band director.

Loss of points

The director of bands must approve the loss of any points. Point losses will be posted and should be worked off within one week. They may be worked off at the rate of one lost point per hour. Any lost point not worked off in a grading period will lower a student's grade by one-third of a letter grade (three lost point in a grading period will lower a student's grade by one full letter). If a student has six or more lost points at the end of a marking period which have not been worked off, he/she will receive a failing grade for that marking period and/or be dismissed from the ensemble. A student who losses points during the last week of a grading period will have one week to eliminate them. *This system is not meant to replace the objective sheets. If there is a discrepancy between the Merit System or the objective sheet, the objective sheet will take priority in terms of grading.*

1. Tardiness from an after school rehearsal, unexcused (-1)
2. Absence from an after school rehearsal, unexcused (-3)
3. Absence from a sectional or ensemble rehearsal, unexcused (-2)
4. Tardiness from a public performance (-2)
5. Absence from a performance (-6)
6. Chewing gum or eating candy during a rehearsal (-1)
7. Improper conduct at a rehearsal or sectional (-1-3 points/offense)
8. Failure to properly complete assigned "job" (-1)
9. Failure to bring instrument or equipment to rehearsal, including reeds, sticks, dot books etc. (-1)

10. Failure to put your music folder or instrument in its proper storage place (-1)
11. Failure to carry out the instructions of an officer (-1-2)
12. Improper care of your band uniform (-1 point plus possible costs for repair/ replacement)
13. Incomplete uniform while in public view, including to and from school (-1)
14. Smoking at any band function (-3)
15. The use of any form or intoxicants or drugs at any band function is a very serious offense that will result in -12 points. It will also be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities for action.

Since this is the second year of the merit system, special consideration will be given to those members who are not freshmen during the 2006-2007 school year. Such considerations will be made on an individual, case by case basis.

The following goals should be observed to ensure that each student is “on track” with the merit point system. All class awards will be distributed based off of merit point totals. Merit points will roll over to the next school year.

- 9th Grade - 30 points
- 10th Grade - 75 points
- 11th Grade - 125 points
- 12th Grade - 200 points

Band Organizations

Marching band

Membership in this ensemble includes all students in the band program. It is a field and parade band made up of winds, percussion, and color guard. In addition to providing support at athletic events and scheduled community activities, the marching band generally attends several marching festivals. All members of the marching band must be enrolled in class during the regular school day. Exceptions MAY be made for extenuating circumstances (taking other non-required electives are not considered extenuating circumstances). Please contact the director for more information.

I. Activities

- Band camp - preseason rehearsals necessary to putting a quality show on the field (please take special note of the section regarding **heat stress and inclement weather**)

- Football Game performances and pep rallies

- parades

- FBA District Music Performance Assessment

- Marching contests/festivals

- Community service performances

I. Units of membership

- Winds - brass/woodwinds

- Percussion

- Color guard

- Drum Major/officer corps

I. Rehearsals

- Regular class meetings

- After school rehearsals

- Sectionals - each section is required to have at least one 30 minute sectional per week. (These may be done before or after school or whenever the section has agreed to attend)

Color guard

The purpose of the visual performance ensemble is to provide a visual complement to the music being played by the other sections of the band. During the winter and spring months, the winter guard will be an indoor competitive visual performance ensemble without the rest of the marching band present. Rules and regulations are the same for the guard as they are for the rest of the band program.

Indoor Percussion

The indoor percussion ensemble is a group that performs during the winter and spring months. Rules and regulations are the same for the indoor percussion ensemble as they are for the rest of the band. Membership in this organization is by audition.

Concert band/wind ensemble

In addition to the outdoor ensembles, the Wiregrass Ranch Band Program offers the indoor concert ensembles. The winds and percussion form large ensembles as described below:

i. Wind Ensemble: Students are placed into this ensemble, schedule permitting, based upon their scores on the first 9 weeks playing tests or by audition if after the first 9 weeks. Seating in this ensemble will be in order of audition score. Seat placement may be challenged by a member in a lower chair. Challenge appointments must be made with the director.

- Activities
 - Winter concert
 - FBA District music performance assessment
 - Solo/ensemble - all members of the wind ensemble are encouraged to perform a solo or ensemble
 - FBA State concert music performance assessment
 - Spring concert
 - Graduation performance
 - All rehearsals (regular school day and all after school rehearsals)

Band Boosters

The purpose of this organization is to advance the support interests of the Wiregrass Ranch High School band program by aiding with fund raising, purchase of equipment, aiding with trips, rehearsals, and performances. Booster meetings will be held at least once a month on a day and location agreed upon by the executive board and the director. All parents and guardians of participating students should plan on being involved with this organization.

Classroom Procedures

All students will be inside the band room before the tardy bell sounds. At three minutes after the bell, each student is expected to be in their seat with instrument, stand, music, and necessary materials (pencil, paper, etc...). **There will be silence in the rehearsal room when the conductor steps on to the podium.**

Brass players should have all necessary mutes and valve oil ready. Reed players should have at least one spare reed at their seat during rehearsal. Ideally, you should have four to five “good” reeds that you rotate from day to day. Your reeds will last longer and you will get better sound from them if you do not use the same reed all the time.

Percussionists should each have a pair of concert snare drum sticks, keyboard mallets (marimba, xylophone, and vibraphone and glock), and timpani mallets during band class. During marching band, make sure that you have all of the required equipment needed to play your assigned instrument.

Cases and book bags should be left in the instrument storage room or along the walls of the band room during rehearsal. They are unnecessary obstructions in the rehearsal area.

At the end of rehearsal, make sure you put all of your equipment away. Instruments should be put back into the instrument storage room until it is time to take them home for practice.

Percussion equipment is to be put away at the conclusion of rehearsal unless another band class uses that same equipment. At the end of the day all percussion equipment will be put away in its proper storage area and/or properly covered.

Problems of an individual nature (music missing, instrument problems, etc...) should not take class time. These issues should be dealt with either before school, after school, or just before class as a last resort.

Talking during rehearsals should be kept to a minimum. Any necessary talking should be about the music being studied and should never be a distraction to the conductor or other students.

Football Game Procedures

1) Away games

a) Report to the band room wearing your official band shirt, black shorts and black marching shoes

b) Take instruments out to the loading area.

c) Check out uniform and put on the pants portion (this is known as half uniform)

d) You will be told how to fold the jacket portion

- e) Have a seat in the band room and wait to be told (by the director) to board the busses.
- f) Arrive at the stadium and wait for the signal to get off the bus and put on your jacket
- g) Get instruments and line up in two lines by the busses where you will be inspected.
- h) When the signal is given, the band will stand and file row by row out of the seating area and down to the staging area to prepare for the half time show.
- i) At the conclusion of the performance, the band will file back into the seating area. Remain standing until everyone is at his/her seat.
- j) Once the band is seated, each member will carefully secure their instrument. The band will then be dismissed to use the restroom and concession stand during the 3rd quarter. All students must be in the stands ready to perform by the end of the 3rd quarter (buzzer). This privilege will only continue as long as it is handled with maturity and the band members can manage to be back on time.
- k) At the conclusion of the game, instruments will be packed up and loaded, the buses will be boarded, roll will be called and the band will depart the stadium.
- l) Upon arrival at WRHS, everyone will remain on the buses until the director gives the signal to unload.
- m) Place instrument in the storage room and turn in uniform (hung properly on the hanger)
- n) Locate your pre-arranged transportation home
- o) Officers may not leave until they are dismissed by the director

2) Home Games

- a) All procedures are the same except bus procedures.
- b) Once uniform is checked out, put it on (full uniform)
- c) Warm up will be directed as will all playing (no playing unless conducted)
- d) Line up and wait to be led into the stadium

Travel

i. Transportation will be provided or approved by the school. All members must travel with the band.

2. When traveling on school buses, each band member is responsible for placing instruments/equipment in the designated loading area. Smaller instruments (flutes, clarinets, trumpets, alto saxophones) may be carried on the buses.
3. When traveling on chartered buses, place equipment on the curb next to your bus.
4. All students must ride the bus they signed up for and in specific seats as assigned...changes will only be made by the director or adult chaperone in charge of each bus. The director will ride bus #1. Chaperones will be assigned to each bus. At least one officer will be assigned to each bus to check roll and report results to the director.
5. Standard rules of code of conduct for school buses are in effect for trips.
6. Upon arrival all band members will remain seated on the buses until the director gives the signal to unload.

Band Staff

Paid professionals, technical assistants, and guest artists are a vital part of the band program. Without their help, the WRHS band would not be able to achieve the standard to which we aspire. They must have the respect of all students and parents. Staff members are chosen by the director and are directly responsible to him. Students should give these staff members the same respect that would give to any member of the WRHS faculty. **Any problems should be brought to the director; do not confront the staff member directly.**

Uniform Etiquette

The uniform that is issued to each marching band member symbolizes the band program, the school itself as well as the Wiregrass Ranch High School community. As such, all members are expected to treat the uniform with the utmost care and dignity.

Parts of the uniform

- Shako with plume
- Jacket with gauntlets
- Black sequin vest
- White vest
- Suspender type pants

Uniform regulations

1. Black socks and gloves will be worn with the uniform
2. Black marching shoes will be worn
3. Black athletic shorts will be worn under the pants
4. The shako will be worn correctly or not at all.
 - a. strap on chin (unless instrument prevents it)
 - b. the bill no more than 2 finger's width from the nose
 - c. if not worn, it is to be held in the left hand with 4 fingers on the bill, thumb tucked underneath the bill... strap hanging down
 - d. When placed on the floor, the shako must be right side up.
5. There is to be NO PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION while in uniform (including half uniform)
6. The suspenders shall be worn on the shoulders at all times in public view
7. If the jacket portion is not worn, it is to be on the hanger or folded according to specifications.
8. There is to be no eating or drinking (non-water) in uniform. You may eat and drink in Half Uniform.

9. There is to be no running, horseplay, foul language, spitting, or other actions that MAY be viewed as disrespectful while in uniform (including half uniform).
10. Any action by the student that causes the uniform or part of the uniform to be damaged will result in replacement of the damaged part at the expense of the student(s) involved.

Equipment

1. In order to ensure a superior level band, it is imperative that all instruments are taken home and practiced on a regular basis. Large instruments such as tubas and percussion may be left at school. Instruments may be left in school the day of a rehearsal, performance, or if a student is staying after school to practice.
2. Always see that your instrument is in its proper place in the instrument storage area.
3. All auxiliary equipment should be kept in its proper place at all times
4. Always see that your music is in its proper place. This enables librarians to add or collect music from all folders regardless of the student's attendance at school.
5. Instruments will be used only by those who are assigned to them. All others will keep hands off. This applies in particular to the instruments owned by the band, especially the percussion instruments.
6. Students entrusted with the use of a school owned instrument will be expected to accept FULL responsibility for the care and maintenance of said instrument.
7. Any instrument that is not in perfect playing condition is a POOR instrument. Regular oiling, cleaning, and polishing is a MUST. At the close of each rehearsal, ALL instruments will be cleaned and stored properly. You will be responsible for keeping your instrument in top condition. You can expect to be penalized should you ever be without the required items that specifically apply to your instrument. RESPONSIBLE MUSICIANS DO THESE THINGS AUTOMATICALLY.
8. For various health reasons, NEVER play or touch any instrument or equipment other than your own.

Required forms

The following forms are required for student participation with the Wiregrass Ranch High School band program:

Power of Attorney (medical release)

Media Release

Travel Permission Form

Each student and parent/guardian must read this handbook and sign the subsequent handbook form. The form is not a legally binding contract, it is just a record that indicates to the director that you have read and understand the policies and procedures that are indicated within this handbook.

The director, school administration, and county officials reserve the right to change the contents of this handbook.

Please understand that band is a physical activity and as such the risk of injury is present. If the student is injured and must be transported to the hospital, it is imperative that the director has all of the information needed so that treatment may be administered right away. In the event of injury, the parents/guardians of the student will be notified immediately and will be asked to meet the student at the school or hospital.

If you lose this handbook or need additional copies of any forms please visit the official website of the Wiregrass Ranch High School Music Program at:

www.WRHSmusic.com

Remember, have fun and GO BULLS!!!

Parent/Student Signature Document

Please look this over and discuss with your parents. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email (gdeguzma@pasco.k12.fl.us) or by phone at 813.346.6000. If you have read and understand everything in this handbook, please sign this and have your parents sign as well.

Failure to submit this form (or sign it) does not alleviate your responsibilities toward the obligations and rules contained in the handbook.

Student Name (Print)_____

Student Signature_____Date:_____

Parent Signature_____Date:_____

All of this information can be accessed at any time by going to www.WRHSmusic.com