

2024-2025

Willard High School

Band Handbook



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This handbook has been prepared to provide band members and their parents/guardians with a reference source for all expectations, regulations, and procedures governing band membership. Please read the material carefully to avoid future problems or misunderstandings. This is a supplement to the Willard High School Student Handbook. All policies and expectations found in the WHS Handbook also apply.

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I. Band Program Philosophy

- Promotion of school spirit to the highest degree in the representation of Willard High School and its community, through music performance.
- Consistently set a good example of behavior and ethics.
- Promote friendship, cooperation, and team effort, knowing that this will improve the group and accomplish unified goals.
- Respect the importance of attendance at all rehearsals and performances.
- Total leadership demonstrated by instructors, drum majors, and student leaders to ensure the learning of music, drill, and choreography to promote a positive, productive spirit.
- Recognition of the importance of participation in music and life-long learning of music.
- Achievement of self-gratification and self-esteem through hard work and effort in the accomplishment of team goals.
- Total support from all areas of the music program, school, and community are important to the promotion of success to this organization.

II. Curricular Offerings

Fall Semester:

- Marching Band
- Jazz 1
- Jazz 2

Spring Semester:

- Concert 1/Percussion Class
- Concert 2/Percussion Class
- Concert 3/Percussion Class
- Jazz 1
- Jazz 2

These ensembles constitute the central core around which the entire band program is structured. Technical ability, theoretical knowledge, and aesthetic understanding are best developed through the preparation and performance of quality concert, chamber, and jazz literature chosen by the director. The staff will determine student placement into these ensembles by audition.

Daily Schedule

1st Hour	2nd Hour	3rd Hour	5th Hour	6th Hour
Marching Band (fall) Concert 1 (spring)	Concert 2 (spring)	Concert 3 (spring)	Jazz 1	Jazz 2

The band room will be open at 7:00 am each morning and immediately after school. The band room will also be available during TNT.

III. Music Policy

All students must keep their music in a three ring binder with page protectors. All students will be given ONE copy of each music selection in each of their ensembles. All music must be labeled with the student's name, and the measures must be numbered by the next rehearsal.

It is the responsibility of EACH STUDENT to have their music with them at all times. If music is shared in rehearsal, each student must have their music and pencil with them to write in comments from the director.

IV. Grading/Attendance Policy

Grades will be recorded for all persons enrolled in our band classes. Specific points are covered in the course syllabus. The following criteria will determine grades:

1. Overall Attendance/Participation and Preparation
2. Performances
3. Written or Playing Exams

Each criterion is important. Strength in one area cannot make up for weakness in another. A student must be outstanding in all areas to receive a good grade. Since the band is always expected to perform and behave in a superior manner, each member is expected to earn an A, or at the lowest, a B.

Overall Attendance Policy Points:

1. Attendance is mandatory at all scheduled rehearsals and performances. Performances and rehearsals cannot be recreated, therefore points cannot be made up if a performance is missed. Unexcused absences are unacceptable, and will result in a severe dock in grade, along with conferences with parents and/or administration.
2. If there is an emergency, illness/ injury, or important family event (wedding, funeral, etc.) that keeps a student from performing in any scheduled event, the student may have their points exempted for that event. This means they will not lose the points, but they will not gain them either. In any case, the student must communicate this absence from performance to a band

director as soon as they are aware of the conflict and then fill out the required absence request form. THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATING ABSENCES ARE VIA THE ABSENCE REQUEST FORM LOCATED ON OUR WEBSITE (willardband.org) AT A MINIMUM OF 2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE FOR FAMILY EVENTS OR OTHER FORESEEABLE CONFLICTS. THIS FORM MUST BE FILLED OUT IF YOU KNOW YOU MAY MISS A REHEARSAL OR EVENT. Directors always determine if the absence will be considered excused or unexcused, based on the situation. Failure to communicate in a timely manner about an absence will result in the absence being noted as “unexcused”.

3. Other unexcused absences include: oversleeping, not arranging appropriate transportation, WORK, or anything deemed unexcused by the directors or administration.
4. If a student participates in another activity or athletic sport that has conflicting events with the band schedule, they must communicate with both the coach/sponsor and a band director to determine the best course of action.

The attendance system is maintained in fairness to all those who are punctual and prepared for all band rehearsals and events. Any unexcused absence, tardiness, or early departure negatively influences the efficiency of the entire ensemble, thereby affecting the genuine musical experience and enjoyment of each student in this program. The attendance system is equally applicable to ALL band students.

Participation and Preparation Policy:

1. All students are expected to arrive early to any rehearsal, event, or performance to ensure that we always start on time. Late arrivals will result in a decrease in your daily participation grade.
2. All students are expected to have all necessary equipment, music, devices, and a pencil. Failure to do so will result in a decrease in your daily participation grade.
3. All students must be dressed appropriately for each band rehearsal, event, or performance to ensure the safety of all students, and preserve the image of our program. Failure to do so will result in a decrease in your daily participation grade.
4. Any student demonstrating a significant lack of effort in any rehearsal setting can be removed from rehearsal and subsequent performances.
5. Any student who suffers an injury or illness that affects the student’s ability to participate in any activity of the band (lasting over several days) must present a doctor’s note to be considered “excused” from participation. Failure to do so will result in a decrease in your daily participation grade, or exclusion from performance.

Written or Playing Exams:

These exams are used to test your progress on musical and theoretical benchmarks throughout the semester. Each ensemble member will be expected to show evidence of a satisfactory rate of musical progress and ability to play his or her assigned part. The grade will be based on improvement as well as playing ability.

V. MSHSAA Rules and Regulations

MSHSAA sets forth a set of rules and regulations that apply to all Missouri high school students in all sports and activities. These affect eligibility and participation in all MSHSAA sanctioned events, and all public schools must comply. There are many regulations, but the most important to our students include:

- No student is eligible to participate in any MSHSAA event if they are failing 2 or more classes at the last semester grade report. Credits Earned must equal 3.0 or 80%, whichever is GREATER.
- **No student is eligible to participate in any MSHSAA event if they were counted as absent from school the day prior to a weekend event. They may also not participate if they miss school on the day of an event. This can be subject to exception by approval of the activities office.**
- No student is eligible to participate in any MSHSAA sanctioned activity if they have 2 or more instances of OSS in the same year.
- To see all official rules and regulations put forth by MSHSAA, please go to:
- [MSHSAA Handbook](#) reference pages 43-44.

VI. District Policies

In addition to MSHSAA policy, our district places policies on participants in school sports and activities. The most important to our students include:

- Students are ineligible to leave class during the day for any event or activity if they do not obtain permission from the activities office, and/or if they are failing that class.
- Students are expected to maintain a minimum of 90% attendance in their classes. If a student does not meet this requirement, they will be ineligible to participate in out of class events or activities during the school day. There is no option for seat time recovery. MSHSAA sanctioned events are exempt from this policy.
- Students who have multiple disciplinary violations may be removed from the program at the discretion of administration and directors.

VII. MMEA/MSHSAA and Private Lessons

1. MMEA District Ensembles: Students who are highly skilled and well-practiced have the opportunity to audition for MMEA district honor ensembles, including concert and jazz bands. Any student who is placed in the highest ensemble, is an alternate, or is in the top 2 chairs of the lower ensemble may audition for state ensembles. The audition music is very difficult and must be practiced on a continuous basis to be successful at the audition.
2. MSHSAA Solo and Ensemble Contest: All members will have the opportunity to prepare solos or ensembles to play for a rating at the District/State contest. Every student looking to advance their individual musicianship is highly encouraged to participate.

3. MSHSAA Large Ensemble Contest: All concert bands attend this contest. Each band will perform 2-3 selections for 3 adjudicators, and will be tested on their sight-reading abilities by 1 adjudicator. This event is required for any member of a concert ensemble.
4. Private Lessons: Individual instruction by a talented musician is one of the best methods to becoming an outstanding musician. We highly encourage EVERYONE, especially those placed in our top concert band, to take weekly private lessons. Your directors, as well as many outstanding musicians around the area are available for lessons. Just ask us if you are looking for one, and we will get you to the best teacher as soon as possible!

VIII. Extra-Curricular Offerings

Many smaller ensembles meet outside of class time, and are available to all band students based on audition or instrumentation:

1. Jazz 3: This ensemble is the perfect opportunity for any student who cannot fit a jazz ensemble into their class schedule, but would like to participate! It is also ideal for students learning a second instrument and who want an opportunity to play in an ensemble. This ensemble meets after school twice a week starting in November, with various jazz festivals on Saturdays in the Spring.
2. Woodwind Choir: Any woodwind instrument in the top concert ensemble (or 2nd, if needed) is invited to join! We perform at the spring concert and State large ensemble contest. Rehearsals are twice a week.
3. Brass Choir: Brass students, by audition/request, may be involved in this ensemble that meets following the marching season. Group will perform at multiple area events, including but not limited to the Winter Concert, Spring Concert, and (potentially) MSHSAA Large Ensemble Contest.
4. Winter Guard: Any high school student is invited to audition for this indoor guard group! Dance or color guard experience is preferred, but not required. Auditions usually occur in late October or Early November, with rehearsals starting in November. All rehearsals occur in the evenings, 2-3 times a week with competitions on Saturdays in the spring semester.
5. Percussion Ensembles: Percussionists are required to participate in these various groups, with other band members invited to join if they have percussion experience. Although they do often rehearse during the concert band rehearsal times, they are also expected to rehearse before school as needed. Many special performance opportunities are part of this experience, including our concerts, large ensemble contest, solo and ensemble, Missouri Day of Percussion, and the annual Night of Percussion.

IX. Expectations

1. Self-Discipline: A quality that must come from within the individual. Each student is responsible for his or her own actions as a member of the WHS band. It is important to understand that your actions, in or outside of school, have a profound effect on the others in this program. Any student who shows an inability to work positively and effectively, or is considered a liability to others in the ensemble, may be dismissed from membership of certain ensembles or the band program in its entirety. As a school group, our band is governed by school administration policies. Any student who violates school rules while with the band will be subject to school disciplinary procedures.

2. General Guidelines:

- No disruptive behavior at any time, anywhere.
- Put all equipment away-neatly and appropriately- after a rehearsal or performance.
- Make sure your area is clean at all times! Your rehearsal chair, buses, picnic areas, lockers, rehearsal areas, etc. must be inspected for trash or forgotten items before you leave. The condition and cleanliness of our space is a reflection of our character as a group. A clean space is a productive one!
- Do not touch or disturb other students' equipment, instruments, or belongings. This policy extends to items in the director's offices. Permission must always be granted before using anything that is not yours.
- If something gets broken or begins malfunctioning, tell a director immediately.

3. Rehearsal Guidelines:

- Front sideline rules will apply at all times.
- When a director stops or a rep is complete, do not talk. Any talking -even whispering- is unacceptable and disruptive to rehearsal.
- Give all staff your attention at all times.
- Get a drink of water and use the bathroom before rehearsal begins.
- Check your equipment for issues before rehearsal begins.
- Be ON TIME. Tardiness hurts everyone in the ensemble.
- Be prepared for each rehearsal. Practice the things the director asked you to, and prove that you have fixed something since the last rehearsal.
- Always have your own music, and a functioning pencil.
- Do not disturb any other students' learning in any way.

4. Behavioral Expectations:

- Treat all other members and staff with respect.
- If you see or hear of something that is wrong, please notify the staff immediately.
- Knowledge of the use of drugs, alcohol, or participation in illegal activities will be voiced to the high school administration, and school discipline will be carried out appropriately.
- Hazing of any kind will not be tolerated. Students over the age of 17 found guilty of hazing can be charged with harassment by law, which is a felony charge that cannot be erased from your record.

The band staff reserves the right to remove any student from the band program for any amount of time- including permanently- for behavioral offenses or disciplinary reasons. This right is left to our discretion on the severity and impact the offense had on the integrity of our program, the safety and well-being of our students, and the educational progress of the group. If a student is removed permanently, they cannot participate in any band class or extracurricular band activity for the remainder of their time in our school district.

All removals will be approved and supported by the high school administration.

5. Discontinuation of Membership:

- We understand that high school band may not be for everyone and the decision to discontinue band may be made. Should a student decide to no longer participate in the band program, that decision will be permanent.

X. Care of Facilities/ Instruments

Instrument Storage:

- Each student is assigned a locker. Place all instruments, music, and belongings in this locker, close the door and LOCK IT. We are not responsible for items stolen from lockers left unlocked.
- Do not use any additional lockers without permission from the directors.
- No food or trash in the lockers, or on the ground.

School Owned Instruments:

- Any school owned instrument must be checked out to each student who uses it in that year or semester. Any repairs needed that are caused by neglect must be paid by the responsible student.
- Students are responsible for buying the appropriate reeds or mouthpieces or the instrument.
- Students are responsible for the regular care and maintenance of the instrument, including: keeping the instrument clean and polished, valves and slides oiled and functional, and swabbing out the inside of the instrument or blowing out the water after each rehearsal.
- Do not leave instruments outside or in a car.
- Instruments must be stored in its case in its designated locker after each rehearsal or performance.
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Percussion Equipment:

- Percussion instruments are often shared between all members of the section. It is the responsibility of the student using the instrument last to place the instrument or equipment back in its designated area.
- Any repairs or replacements needed that are caused by neglect must be paid by the responsible student.
- Any instrument with a wide horizontal surface (marimba, timpani) is NOT A TABLE.
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Guard Closet and Equipment:

- Place all equipment in its appropriate place in the closet every day.
- Roll tarp carts gently. Move shelving units to the side if needed.
- Any equipment that is school owned will be signed out to each student. It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of this equipment and use it appropriately. Damage to equipment due to abuse will be billed to the responsible student. All equipment must be turned in at the end of the season.
- The use of the guard closet is a privilege. Failure to keep it clean and organized will result in loss of storage privilege for the remainder of the season.

XI. Marching Uniform Wear and Care

1. **Helmet:** The helmet is to be worn on the head, with the bottom level to the ground. The clear strap should be secured under the chin, while the chin sits under your mouth. Helmets are to be stored in the helmet box when not in use.
2. **Plume:** The plume is picked up as you are getting dressed from the plume boxes by the truck. They are very fragile and expensive, so handle them with care. Hold the plume by the adapter and screw the helmet on by turning the helmet, NOT the plume. When a performance is done, remove the plume in the same fashion and place in the plume boxes.
3. **Compression Shirt:** This shirt is purchased by each individual band member every season. It must be worn at all times with the uniform, with the sleeves kept rolled down, unless instructed otherwise. This shirt should be washed at home after each performance.
4. **Weskit:** The jacket is to be worn with the zipper on the back. When the jacket is not being used, hang it neatly on the appropriate hanger. Do not let the jacket sit wadded up on the ground. The drop piece is removable, but should not be removed from the jacket unless instructed by the director. The mirror is also removable, but should remain on the jacket unless instructed otherwise. Do not wear the weskit without the compression shirt underneath. In some situations, we may instruct you to remove the Weskit. It may be draped over your arm, or folded neatly and placed on a clean surface.
5. **Bibs:** These pants are to be worn with the zipper in the front, with the straps fitting securely over your shoulder. The bottom of the pant legs should just skim the top of your shoes. You can adjust the pant length using the snaps on the inside. You must wear an appropriate pair of shorts or leggings under the bibs, and they must not be visible through the bib fabric. When they are not being worn, hang them by folding them along the pant crease and draping them on the hanger.
6. **Shoes:** Black or nude marching shoes are purchased by each individual band member, and used as long as they fit or maintain shape. They must be worn with long black socks to ensure that your skin is never visible as you move. They must be kept polished and clean. Shoes may be stored in a separate bag from the uniform.
7. **Gloves:** Black gloves are purchased by the student on an as-needed basis. There are specific gloves for brass, woodwind, and clarinets, so be sure your request is the correct type! You may see a director to buy gloves at any point. The velcro must be fastened tightly around your wrist. Store your gloves in your uniform bag or in a separate bag with your shoes.
8. **Hair and Jewelry:** All long hair must be either worn neatly up into the helmet, or in a low bun at the base of your neck. The use of multiple hair ties, pins, and hairspray may be necessary. No fly-aways or colored hair ties should be used. No visible jewelry may be worn.
9. **Guard Costumes:** Guard costumes change every year, so care may change. All guard members must wear a body tight (purchased at the beginning of the season), and do their hair and makeup in the way specified by the guard staff. The costume must be cared for in the same manner as the band uniform, and be hung in its garment bag when not in use.

All uniforms must be diligently cared for by every band member. Treat your uniform with pride, as it is the image of our program! Any damaged or lost uniform piece will be charged to the student's account. Do not attempt to wash or fix any uniform part (excluding your compression shirt). We professionally clean uniforms every year, and repair normal wear and tear. Always consult a director if you have an issue with your uniform. Use good judgment on when and where you change, and always behave like professionals when wearing any part of our uniform or Willard logo. Your behavior reflects on our program and community!

XII. Travel

Going on trips as part of the band program- whether just down the road or several states away- is a privilege that requires every student to carry out certain responsibilities. Every aspect of what we do in public is observed by everyone around us, so it is important to always act in a professional, polite manner. All WHS rules and policies apply to our off-campus performances and events.

All students are required to have ALL forms filled out and submitted via BigTeams prior to the first day of camp in June.

1. Always show proper respect and cooperation to adults.
2. Listen and follow instructions when instructions are given.
3. Always stay in the areas you are instructed to be in. Attend all planned events together.
4. Students must ride the buses to all band events unless their parents fill out the appropriate release forms.
5. Always remain seated on a bus until we instruct you to unload.
6. School dress code must always be followed.
7. Be positive and helpful if a problem arises.
8. Always double check to make sure that we leave an area cleaner than we found it, and that all personal belongings and school equipment makes it back home with us.
9. No yelling, throwing objects, or playing your instrument at any unnecessary time.
10. Always use good judgment.
11. After a performance, a student may be signed out by a parent or legal guardian. They can only be released when all loading is complete and other business is taken care of.

XIII. Fees

1. Marching Band General Fee: \$150 to all members of the marching band.
2. Fall Rent: \$50 for the marching season to use any school owned instrument.
3. Guard Fee: \$50 for the marching season to cover the cost of costumes and flags.
4. BOA Fee: \$100 this season. Covers the cost of travel, food, entry fees, and hotel.
These four fees are due no later than Friday, September 8, 2023.
5. Spring Rent: \$50 for the spring semester to use any school owned instrument.
6. Winter Guard: May vary year to year. Must be paid to be eligible to perform.

****All fees are paid to Willard High School.**

****Fees may be paid by check or cash, and can be paid online with a credit card.**

****All band fees, payments, and fundraising credits will be displayed on each student's account.**

****Please refer to Infinite Campus if you have any questions regarding what you still owe.**

Willard Band Member Contract 2024

I, _____, have read the entire Willard Band Handbook and understand all that it describes. I agree to follow all policies and procedures put forth by the Band Staff, Willard High School, and the Willard School District, including:

1. Be on time at all rehearsals, sectionals, and performances and have all necessary equipment.
2. Take proper care of both personal and school equipment.
3. Have all music/choreography prepared by specified dates.
4. Participate in ALL scheduled performances.
5. Fulfill all financial obligations: Band Fee, Rent, BOA, and Shoes (if ordered)

***** Band, Rent, Guard, and BOA fees are due Friday, September 6, 2024*****

6. Respect the chain of command and follow all instructions and directives from the staff.
7. Maintain and update the Ultimate Drill Book App and Music Portfolio (Winds and Percussion).
This includes ALL music and drill information. This will be checked periodically throughout the season and will be a major portion of your marching band grade.
8. Treat all other members with respect.

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature signifies agreement to terms.

Contact Information:

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Agreement due by Friday, August 30, 2024