

The Garfield Heights High School Band Handbook 2013-2014



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1.) Band Organizations/Course Offerings

Concert Band

- This group will have a minimum of 3 concerts a year. The band will study a large repertoire of wind literature and will train students in advanced musical skills. The Concert Band will be carefully balanced as to instrumentation. Each student will be required to audition in order to accurately seat them in the ensemble.

Jazz Band

- This is a select ensemble of limited instrumentation that performs more diverse styles of music. Instruments included are saxophones, trumpets, trombones, percussion, guitar, bass guitar, and piano. The class meet time has yet to be announced due to many scheduling conflicts which occurred last year. Students' interest and ability will determine membership in this ensemble.

Marching Band

- The Garfield Heights High School Marching Band is comprised of all students who wish to be actively involved in an organization striving for excellence and school pride. Membership in this ensemble is required if a student is enrolled in concert band. Performances include half-time shows, concerts, parades and marching festivals. Members are expected to make all rehearsals and performances their top priority.

Auxiliary (Dance Line and Flag Corp)

- Dance Line and Flag Corp is the auxiliary unit of the marching band. It was organized to visually enhance the marching band and give those students who did not start on an instrument a chance to participate with the band. Auxiliary members are selected in the spring by a panel of judges. They do not have to be band members to be eligible for tryouts. Upon selection, they must agree to abide by all rules of the band and attend all activities of the band. This is a very select group, and members must make all practices and performances their top priority.

2.) Attendance Policy

Attendance is vital to the success of any band. As a member of the band program, you occupy an important part and space in each band function. Every band member is expected to attend all major functions by his/her organization. These functions include rehearsals, concerts, adjudicated festivals and contests, scheduled football games, and parades.

If an absence is absolutely necessary, the student must contact a director ***in advance***. If an absence occurs due to an unexpected circumstance, the student must bring a written excuse to the director upon returning to the band. In both expected and unexpected absence situations, excuses are to be signed by the parent.

After turning in your written excuse form, the absence will fall into one of two categories:

Performances

1.) Excused

- a. Excused absences include personal illness (note from doctor required), severe ongoing illness (advanced notice required) or sudden death in family. Other situations may come up that could be excused and should be discussed with the director ***in advance***. The director will then decide whether or not it should be excused. Excused absences from a performance will not count for or against you in your grades, but you may be required to complete a make up assignment to earn credit for the missed performance.

2.) Unexcused

- a. If an unexcused absence occurs during a public performance, the student will receive a zero "0" for the performance grade. NO exceptions will be allowed. Missing more than one unexcused performance in the marking period means that we will need to plan a teacher/parent meeting to discuss your involvement with the GHHS bands.

Work, transportation, sporting events, etc, are NOT excused absences. Great effort should be made to schedule doctor's visits and other appointments on days that there are no performances. A parent/teacher conference may be requested for any student who accumulates two unexcused absences. Planning ahead is a key to the success of participating in band, as nearly all events are published months in advance.

3. Marching Band Attendance

As you know, full attendance to every rehearsal and performance is crucial to performing an outstanding, rewarding season. Since marching band requires a lot of after school obligations, you must bear in mind that membership to the ensemble is contingent upon your individual effort to maintain a high level of excellence during rehearsals and performances. Your attendance (or lack of) has a direct and heavy effect on everyone else in the group! The attendance policy is as follows:

Rehearsals

Tardies – Attendance will be taken by the section leaders and recorded by the band administrative assistants and/or field commander. Anyone not present at

the conclusion of attendance taking will be counted tardy. All members tardy on any given day will be responsible for staying after the conclusion of the rehearsal to assist the director, staff, and other students on clearing the field, cleaning the field, and cleaning the band room. At the discretion of the director, any student with multiple tardies will not be allowed to leave the stands during the third quarter break at the next football game. Any student who accumulates excessive tardies will not be allowed to perform at the next performance, and will lose their third quarter break at the next football game. The offending student will dress out, travel, and will be required to sit with the director or a designated parent for the duration of the event. *"To be on time is to be late, to be early is to be on time."*

Absences – Absences will be monitored by the section leaders and recorded by the band assistants. Excused absences from rehearsals included personal illness (accompanied by the parent or doctor note), sudden death in the immediate family, and Garfield Heights High School related events only. Excused absences from performances only include personal illness (accompanied by the parent or doctor note) and a sudden death in the immediate family. Unexcused absences include every other reason you can devise, such as work, transportation problems, my stomach hurts, etc. Anyone incurring an unexcused absence from rehearsal will not be allowed to perform at the next event. The offending student will dress out, travel, and will be required to sit with the director or a designated parent for the duration of the event, and will lose their third quarter break. Anyone who incurs an unexcused absence from a performance will need to have a parent/teacher meeting to discuss his or her involvement in the GHHS bands.

Withdrawal /Dismissal from Marching Band

Withdrawal from the marching band creates a hardship for the entire band. Persons who withdraw in the mid-season will forfeit all rights and privileges as band members and may be prohibited from signing up for band in the future. The directors reserve the right to dismiss any person from the band that constantly fails to meet the expectations of the Garfield Heights High School Band program, and after all other courses of action have been pursued.

4.) Grading Policy

See individual course syllabus for format and information.

5.) Rehearsal Procedures

Rehearsal time is short and every moment is used for actual rehearsal purposes. If you delay the rehearsal for as little as one minute, you have wasted a great deal of time because every other member of the band has also been forced to waste one minute.

The following guidelines are used in all fine organizations and are the foundation of our rehearsal procedure:

1. Band members should bring the following items to all rehearsals:
 - a. Instrument
 - b. All music and/or charts
 - c. Reeds, mutes, oils, cork grease, etc.
 - d. Pencil!
 - e. Other materials, as specified by the director
2. Upon arrival to the rehearsal room, all non-productive attitudes and behavior will cease. Once in the room your main focus needs to be on having a productive rehearsal. This means that loud talking will end after admittance.
3. All personal belongings are to be left in a locker or instrument case after entering the band room.
4. Band members should spend the pre-rehearsal time assembling their equipment (instrument, music, stand, etc.) necessary for rehearsal.
5. For class rehearsals, band members will have two minutes or less immediately following the tardy bell to complete their preparation for rehearsal. When the director steps on the podium, a student is considered tardy if he/she is not seated in his/her chair with the instrument, music, and stand in place.
6. When someone is on the podium, your full attention must be given to the person, nothing should be allowed to distract you. Be quiet, listen, and watch.
7. Chewing gum prevents a student from playing correctly and poses a safety risk. Chewing gum, candy, and/or the presence of any other food item will not be allowed to any part of the rehearsal room. Being caught with food or drink indicates that you do not care about the facility or for other band members. The resultant disciplinary action will be at the decision of the band director.
8. The rehearsal room must be kept clean and orderly. It should emit a sense of pride. Store your instrument and music in assigned places. The rehearsal room is not a locker room. Books and other personal belongings are not to be left in the rehearsal room or the instrument storage room.

SUPERIOR BANDS ARE THE RESULT OF SUPERIOR REHEARSALS!

6.) Extra Rehearsals and Public Performances

Due to the complex nature of a quality band program, rehearsals outside of class time are sometimes necessary. Generally, such rehearsals will be scheduled well in advance so that all conflicts can be avoided. All rehearsals are required, and will be factored as part of the grade.

Most of the performances of the band are scheduled outside of school hours and are required. At times rehearsals or last minute performances may arise. The director will announce any changes in the calendar as soon as possible, and communicate these accordingly. If there is a conflict on a sudden event, then an arrangement will be worked out by the student and the director.

7.) Code of Behavior for Marching Band

The conduct of the band members reflects directly on the individual, the band, and the school. The conduct of each band member should exemplify as the band and its members are on constant display. Each student should help reflect the keen sense of PRIDE that is to be the cornerstone of this band program.

General

- No smoking, alcohol, or use of drugs will be permitted
- Members are expected to follow all school and county behavior guidelines and rules
- Members should treat **all adults** with respect at all times
- Members should not talk when instructions are being given.
- Members should follow the instructions of the staff and chaperones.
- Members should be courteous toward each other, as well as toward other people (i.e spectators, members of other bands, etc.)
- Profanity, vulgarity, and obscenity will not be tolerated
- NO PDA! (Public display of affection)

Rehearsal

- Members should be attentive and refrain from talking
- Members should remain still and silent when called to attention.

Bus

- Members must remain seated when the bus is in motion.
- Silence must be maintained at all railroad crossings or when requested by the bus driver or band staff
- Members must keep appendages inside the bus at all times.
- When leaving a football game, all windows must be closed and uniforms stored properly. Directors and chaperones will instruct you when windows may be opened.
- Audio/video equipment is prohibited on the bus unless it is used with a personal listening device (i.e. headphones). Anyone not following the rule will have his or her equipment confiscated. A parent/guardian may retrieve these items from the main office according to school policy.
- No disorderly conduct will be tolerated.
- Members must remain on the bus until instructed to exit by the staff.
- Members should remove all personal items and trash from the bus.

Stands

- Band members, staff, and chaperones must sit as a group in the stands. All other persons are prohibited from sitting in the band set.

- Band members are placed in the band block for specific reasons. Students are prohibited from changing seating assignments.
- Members may not remove any portion of their uniform, including the hat, unless given permission to do so by the staff.
- Members may not play their instruments except when instructed to do so by a staff member or a field commander. Individual playing is prohibited and will result in the loss of a third quarter break (1st offense), sitting with a chaperone for the remainder of the game (2nd offense), and loss of ability to perform at the next halftime show (3rd and subsequent offenses).
- Following the half-time performance, members will be given time to visit the restrooms, concession stands, etc. They are expected to be back in their assigned seats, ready to play, with two minutes remaining in the third quarter. Breaks are given at the discretion of the directors; these breaks are privileges not rights!
- Non band members and parents may not bring food or drinks to band members while seated in the band block.
- Spirit is great, but cheering should be done with the cheerleaders or as a group.
- After the game, each section leader should see that his/her squad has cleaned up their seating area; this includes uniform parts, instruments, and trash items.

Travel/Trips

You are expected to conduct yourself properly at all times while traveling with the band. Please remember that you are representing not only yourself, but also your community, and your family. Conduct yourselves as young ladies and gentlemen, so that you can be treated as such. While traveling with the band you must remain with the group. All students must ride the bus to and from all band functions. The time of departure and the estimated time of return will be announced no later than the day before the trip.

Inspection

Inspection of uniforms and instruments will be held prior to each performance. The band will be called to attention precisely at the designated inspection time. Be punctual!

- Uniform clean and properly worn.
- Instrument cleaned and in good working order as stated in Equipment/Instrument section.
- All music and accessories present.

Uniforms

The GHHS band uniform should provide each member with a spirit of unity and sense of purpose and pride. You should therefore give the utmost care to the uniform and in no way become careless with it. Each band member will be issued an official GHHS band uniform. A parent volunteer will make every effort to properly size and fit each member. Should you encounter problems with your uniform, report it immediately to a chaperone/director. The time for repairs is not the hour before a performance. The loss or destruction of the uniform, or any part thereof, will be financially assessed and charged to the student.

Each student is responsible for providing his/her own black shoes, black socks, clean gloves, and clean spats. Shoes, gloves, and spats will be sold through the band at the start of the marching season.

Uniform Regulation

1. Uniforms are to be properly hung after each use.
2. Uniforms may only be worn to official band performances.
3. Members should wear the uniform with PRIDE. When wearing the uniform:
 - a. Always have it buttoned up and zipped up
 - b. No wrinkles
 - c. Gloves and shoes should be clean
 - d. Band shirt must be worn under the uniform
4. No items will be attached to the uniform when being representing the GHHS band.
5. Hair should be neat, well groomed, and kept out of the face.
6. Jewelry is limited to a watch, a ring, and simple stud earrings. No other visible jewelry is allowed.
7. In situations where the band is traveling and the uniform is not being worn, you are to properly hang and cover the uniform in your garment bag.
8. If you are not in full uniform, you may not be allowed to perform.

8.) Equipment/Instruments

- Each member is responsible for the maintenance and care for his/her instrument.
- All School-owned band equipment must be checked out through the band directors. Once issued, school owned instruments become the responsibility of the student for proper care, maintenance, and protection from damage. Students using school-owned instruments will be responsible for and charged for any damages beyond normal wear and tear, or the amount provided through the equipment usage fee.
- The rehearsal room and instrument storage areas are not for your personal storage. Use your school locker for personal items. Items found in violation of this be sent to the GHHS lost and found.

9.) Auditions

Auditions will be held prior to or at the beginning of each school year. Students will be placed according to these auditions; however, changes may be made at any time after the original assignments are made at the discretion of the director. Students will be assigned a part in a band that may not reflect their audition results to the scores received by the persons around them. For example, we will not rank players from 1st to last, based on auditions results. Parts are assigned for various reasons, and only a first chair, or co-first chair players will be announced. "Challenges" for the next higher-ranking chair is allowed by any interested student on designated days. For solo parts, any player in the section may audition, regardless of part.

10.) Band and Sports

You should be able to participate in band and sports. The policy we follow is that if there is a conflict of a practice for one and a performance for the other, the performance takes precedence (scrimmages do not count as performance). If there is a conflict of practice times you should attend half of each or a comparable schedule agreed on by all concerned. If there is a conflict a performance and a game you will need to weigh the importance and make your choice. The directors' must be notified in advance. **All problems can be solved if you talk to the director and the coach early!**

11.) Individual Practice

It is responsibility of each band member to practice his/her individual music outside of band rehearsal time. Practice time should be spent on music, scales, and etudes assigned by the directors or private instructor. Practicing assures that the student is strengthening fundamental skills and learning assigned music. Furthermore, the individual improvement will directly affect the overall improvement, abilities, and success of the entire band. Students are strongly encouraged to take lessons with a qualified private instructor. You will increase your rate of improvement and success on your instrument by notable margin. To obtain a private instructor at your own cost, see the directors.

It is my philosophy of the program to follow the phrase once uttered by a very wise man. Reflect upon the statement;

"You don't come to band to learn your part, you come to learn everyone else's part"

12.) Student Leadership

Garfield Heights High School members have an excellent opportunity to develop and expand their leadership abilities. Band officers have many important

responsibilities ranging from welcoming visiting bands to aiding in maintaining order and discipline.

Section Leader

These positions will be filled based on playing and leadership abilities. These are also the only leadership positions that will exist in marching and concert ensembles. The duties and responsibilities are:

- In charge of uniformity in each section
- Responsibility for requesting and conducting section rehearsals when appropriate
- Assist in maintaining order
- Is a member of the Officer's Council, which will meet with the Director on regular basis.
- Inspecting all section members prior to each performance.
- Making sure his/her section area of the rehearsal is kept clean and orderly.

Administrative Assistant

This position will be filled based on organization, band enthusiasm and leadership abilities. The duties and responsibilities are:

- Daily attendance
- Recording all Officer meetings
- Assisting the directors in clerical work
- Is a member of the officers Council

Field Commander

The field commander(s) will be chosen through an audition procedure in the spring of every year. Students that audition must have completed at least one year in marching band, have an exemplary academic record, possess band enthusiasm, and leadership abilities. The duties and responsibilities are:

- Conduct the band at all rehearsals and performances
- Maintain band discipline
- Assist the director and section leaders in section rehearsals
- Represent the band at all functions

13.) Band Booster Association

This organization is a combination of all the different parts of the band program at Garfield Heights High School. Parents are urged to become a member in order to aid as a chaperone or help plan fundraisers. Regardless of the position you would like, your help and ideas are needed to help out all facets of the band program. The meeting schedule is published in the band calendar provided at the beginning of

each semester and is also available online at the band website. Please see Booster Constitution and bylaws for further descriptions, via the website.

14.) Awards Systems and Criteria

The Garfield Heights High School Band Awards Program

In recognition of student achievement, The Garfield Heights High School Band presents the following singular awards annually:

THE JOHN PHILIP SOUSA AWARD – is presented to a student by the director of bands on the basis of the student’s contributions to the band over the course of that student’s participation in the program in terms of musicianship, leadership, loyalty and dedication. Presented at the awards banquet.

THE LOUIS ARMSTRONG AWARDS – is presented to student(s) that stepped outside of the box and challenged themselves to be a true jazz musician. These students made the most of their creative and musical skills.

Cut across the line

To students and parents:

After reading through the whole handbook please keep the handbook and sign the contract below:

I, _____, have read through the whole handbook and agree with the rules and regulations established. I promise to commit my best efforts to helping this band program strive for higher successes. I also promise challenge myself to be the best that I can be. I understand that if I break my agreement with the band, which I am making now, I will have submitted myself to any consequences as they are listed in the handbook.

Band Member Signature _____

Parent Signature _____