

**Williamsport High School**  
**Blue Band**



**Handbook**  
**Updated 2021**

Greetings Blue Band Students and Parents!

Welcome to the 71<sup>st</sup> season of the Blue Band! We would like to take this opportunity to once again welcome the freshmen and their families to the Blue Band Family. We would also like to welcome back our veteran students and parents to another exciting year. We are looking forward to making music together through our many ensemble programs including marching band, concert band, wind ensemble, jazz band, percussion ensemble, and our other small ensemble groups.

Everybody involved understands that this is a huge time commitment, and if we are going to make this commitment, let's work hard while we are here. Our hard work will lead us to success. Together, we will continue to be *The Pride of Williamsport!*

It is our goal to teach as many dedicated musicians as possible. If you know of anybody who would like to join our ranks and would be a positive contributor, please let us know.

**Parents, if you are interested in helping chaperone, work the concession stand, help with equipment, tow the trailer, or volunteer in any other manner, please speak with one of our band booster officers. There are many things, large and small, that you can do to help make our students' experience an amazing one.**

Communication is very important to a successful program. We work hard to keep everyone informed by email and via our website [www.whsblueband.org](http://www.whsblueband.org) Please check it for updated information frequently.

We are always available to speak with you or to answer questions. Please feel free to call the band office at 301-766-8434 or email Mrs. Bond at [bondlau@wcps.k12.md.us](mailto:bondlau@wcps.k12.md.us). We look forward to a wonderful season.

Sincerely,

The Blue Band Director, The Blue Band Staff, and The Blue Band Boosters

# Expectations

All Students are expected to follow the rules and regulations of Blue Band, Williamsport High School and WCPS at all times. It is up to you to make our band successful. Your positive attitude, punctuality, attentiveness, and commitment are essential to our band program.

The Marching Band is a school sponsored co-curricular activity. All policies, procedures, and rules that are in effect during the school day also apply during marching band activities. Please see the WCPS handbook for more details. You are a representation of the Blue Band! You are expected to be respectful with your words, actions, and deeds at all times.

## Participation and Attendance

In order to have a successful WHS Blue Band, all members must be committed to the organization. Attendance at all assigned rehearsals, activities, and performances is required. If you believe you are unable to fulfill this requirement, you may need to reconsider your priorities or participation in the WHS Blue Band. It takes the full commitment of every member of our organization to have a successful program. That being said, the Blue Band is ALWAYS flexible with other WHS activities and athletics. Please talk to the Band Director as soon as possible if you have any questions or are participating in an activity which may conflict with the Blue Band Schedule.

### ELIGIBILITY AND ACADEMICS

You must be academically eligible in order to participate in the Blue Band. Please stay on top of your grades and contact the Band Director if you are struggling. Students who are declared academically ineligible will participate in daily activities but will be unable to participate in competitions, concerts, or other activities occurring outside of the school day until they become academically eligible. Please see the WCPS guidelines for more details.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is the most important aspect of any organization. Your time and effort is expected and essential to the success of our program. Schedules are given out well in advance of the upcoming season. Give this schedule to your parents and employers so that there are **no** conflicts during the season. If you plan to be on a sports team, you must talk to the director about conflicts with practices and games. All members are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. The director reserves the right to make necessary changes in times as needed throughout the season.

- Unexcused absences/skipping rehearsals will result in the loss of the right to perform and a lowered rehearsal grade.
- A conference will be held after 2 unexcused absences from rehearsal or 1 unexcused absence from a performance.

- If a student is UNLAWFULLY ABSENT FROM SCHOOL on the day of a rehearsal/performance, or the Friday before a rehearsal/performance on a weekend, the student cannot attend the rehearsal/performance. (See the WCPS Handbook for details.) Students will be responsible for completing an alternative assignment within 2 school days of the missed performance. Please see the band director for details.
- An UNEXCUSED TARDY TO SCHOOL on the day of a rehearsal/performance, or the Friday before a rehearsal/performance on a weekend, will result in an inability to attend the rehearsal/performance. (See the WCPS Handbook for details.)

IF YOU MUST MISS A PERFORMANCE OR REHEARSAL: A note from a parent/guardian is required at least **TWO WEEKS in advance**. Emergencies and illnesses require a note from home immediately upon your return to school (within 2 days). Students will be responsible for completing an alternative assignment within 2 school days of the missed performance. Please see the band director for details. **Your absence impacts every other member of this band.**

#### **REHEARSALS:**

Rehearsals are held throughout the season, (see the calendar for exact dates and times.) Additional rehearsal time may be scheduled at the discretion of the director, but ample notice will be given.

Remember: To be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is unacceptable!

#### **PERFORMANCES:**

Students are required to attend all performances. The success of the Blue Band requires 100% from every member of the band. Performances are a part of the band grade.

#### **BEING PREPARED:**

All students are expected to have all materials necessary for a successful rehearsal or performance. Failure to bring required materials will result in a lowered grade. Remember, the success of the ensemble depends on the commitment of every member of the Blue Band!

## **Uniform Wear and Care**

Please treat your uniform with pride and respect. Each marching band member is issued a uniform and is responsible for that uniform. If any uniform or uniform part is damaged, destroyed, lost, or misused it must be replaced at the student's expense. Anything that is not part of the assigned uniform is not to be worn on the uniform. When you are in uniform, you should be prepared to pass a complete inspection if you are asked. If any member of the Blue Band should appear at a performance without the proper uniform, he/she will not be permitted to perform and will receive an unexcused absence for that event.

- As always, appropriate behavior is expected at all band events, especially when in uniform.
- **IF** the director gives permission for the marching uniform jackets to be removed, they **MUST** be folded correctly and placed carefully on the stands.
- Shakos must be carried by the hat, not the strap.

- Shako, when placed on the ground, must NEVER be placed with the top of the hat on the ground. Place it as you wear it.
- Shako will always travel in the appropriate shako case.
- Plumes will be handed out before a performance, and will be collected after the performance. Please handle them with care.
- The marching uniforms **will not** travel home with you unless special permission is granted (i.e. for senior pictures).
- All uniforms should be folded correctly and returned to their original location at the end of each performance.
- **While wearing the marching uniform, the ONLY items that may be consumed are:**
  - Water
  - Sprite/7UP/Sierra Mist
  - Plain burger/hot dog
  - Plain Pretzel
  - Plain Popcorn (NO BUTTER)
- The following items may **NEVER** be eaten while in marching uniform:
  - Any condiments
  - Any chocolate or candy products
  - Anything that can stain any part of your uniform.
  - If in doubt, don't eat it.
- Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated in uniform. **Be professional.**
- When we are at competitions and you are not in uniform, students will wear the designated Blue Band Gear as explained by the director.

## Traveling and Bus Rules

Students must travel to and from all band events on the band busses. This is the policy of WCPS. Proper and safe behavior is expected at all times while traveling.

Electronics are permitted at a reasonable level, **but may not be taken off of the bus**, except for cell phones. Students are not to use headphones or electronic devices once off the bus. Cell phone use should be limited as much as possible and should only be used during breaks. When in uniform, cell phones should be turned off and put away. The use of cell phones must follow WCPS policy. Students may be asked by chaperones or bus drivers to turn off electronic equipment at any time. Refrain from playing instruments on the bus (this includes drumming).

As always, please follow the rules of the director and the bus driver. Abide by chaperone requests who will enforce director and bus driver rules as needed.

All school rules will be strictly enforced. An infraction of these rules will be dealt with by the band department and school administration.

1. Follow band rules and expectations at all times.
2. Chaperones will check each bus before loading and relay any problems to the director or driver.

3. Chaperones will load before students and be located throughout the bus. The front seats are reserved for directors and staff.
4. Students must ride on the same bus for the duration of the trip.
5. Students are not to put anything on or under the busses until instructed.
6. Assigned busses will be set prior to the first trip.
7. Roll must be taken before the bus moves and after every stop where anyone gets off.
8. The bus driver must be treated with respect. Different drivers have different standards- whatever they say goes.
9. Nothing is to ever protrude out of the bus window (heads, arms, instruments, etc.) nor should any item ever be thrown or dropped out of a window.
10. Chaperones may reassign seats if they deem it necessary. Students may also be assigned to a different bus at the director's discretion.
11. To avoid problems, school bus windows stay up as we enter or leave another school campus.
12. All students are to keep the bus clean at all times. At the end of a trip, each bus will be inspected. Students are not dismissed until the bus is cleaned to the bus drivers' satisfaction.
13. Public displays of affection between students are not allowed on any bus at any time.
14. During travel at dark, same gender seating will be enforced.
15. Be courteous and thank the drivers and chaperones when we return.
16. Students are not permitted to change out of uniform unless instructed by the band director. No exceptions!

## Etiquette

Please remember to be professional, dignified, and respectful. Use manners, treat people with respect, and show your gratitude for favors done for you. **Follow the Golden Rule.** Please be considerate of those around you. Also, public displays of affection (PDA) are NOT APPROPRIATE at any time. This includes, but not limited to performances, rehearsals, in the stands, or on the band bus.

The band will always travel as a group. This means that when we are moving to or from one location, we will be marching as a group OR walking in relaxed lines of two. The Blue Band will look and act as one unit not a group of individuals.

The band director reserves the right to dismiss and send home any student who disobeys the rules and whose general conduct and attitude towards the trip and its participants is determined to be detrimental to the rest of the group. The band director also reserves the right to suspend any student who cannot follow the rules and guidelines of the rest of the group. The band director reserves the right to suspend any student who cannot follow the rules and guidelines promoting reasonable and acceptable behavior as described. Students who are suspended will be given alternative assignments in place of practices and performances in which they are suspended. A zero will be placed in the grade book for any alternative assignment not completed within the parameters given for the assignment. At the time of a suspension, a parent conference will be called. If a student continues to be ineligible, a recommendation will be made for the student to take another class. A student must be conduct eligible and academically eligible to participate fully in band.

## Other Details

At every football game, you will be given a break during the third quarter. After we perform our halftime show, you will be on break for a portion of the second half of the game. Please use this time to get some refreshments (see uniform wear and care section), use the restroom, and relax. However, you must be back in the bleachers at the specified time, usually with 2:00 remaining on the time clock at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. This time will be at the director's discretion. I will make every effort to ensure everybody gets food and rest. The band needs to be ready to play when the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter begins. Please note that this is a privilege, and can be taken away at the director's discretion. In addition, **NO ONE WILL BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE BEFORE THE GAME HAS CONCLUDED.** We will proudly support our school & athletic programs.

After the football game concludes and the football team enters the locker room, we will block up and march back to the band room. **Once changed, Juniors, Sophomores, & Freshmen will come to help clean the stadium.**

Cleaning assignments:	Seniors – None
	Juniors – Band room/Outside the Band room
	Sophomores – Around the Concession Stand / Stairs
	Freshmen – All Bleacher Areas & walkways

Once your class' area is cleaned and you have signed out with the appropriate chaperone, you are free to leave. It is our privilege to host the concession stand, and we must keep the stadium clean.

If you have any questions regarding Blue Band Policy, please contact the Band Director.

## Fees

While much of the funding for our program comes through fundraising and concessions, we do require students to pay fees to help cover the costs of uniforms, transportation, equipment, staff, music, drill, and other necessary items required to run the program for all ensembles. Each year in May, students will be asked to make a deposit to hold their "spot" in the marching program which allows us to begin writing drill, finalize music, and write routines. Invoices will be created for each student detailing the fees and will be due the first full day of band camp. The deposit and fees are non-refundable. For specific questions regarding fees or if there is a financial issue, please contact Mrs. Bond.





# GRADES

Grades will be based on the following:

Homework- 10%  
Performances- 35%  
Tests- 20%  
Participation- 25%  
Quizzes- 10%

Students will be tested on the music rehearsed in class each marking period. Students may have periodic quizzes on this music and should practice regularly. Students should check out their rehearsal plan for specific details on quizzes as well as information on the board. Students will also be graded on their homework, which will be given each class period. This homework is usually to practice the music covered in class that day and students should always notate this in their planner so that they do not forget. For students to succeed, they need to practice regularly. No instrument should be left in the band room overnight. Students will receive a weekly grade (which is an average of daily grades) based on participation in class activities, having all materials for class, and attendance of performances (please give prior notification of any performances that will be missed in writing see the performance section for more details).

Extra credit is always encouraged and will be averaged into the participation grade. See the Band Director for details.

## CLASSROOM RULES AND PROCEDURES:

1. Follow the WCPS and WHS Policy
2. Be prepared to start the rehearsal on time with all materials
3. Remain seated until the teacher dismisses you
4. Raise your hand before answering or asking a question
5. Store all materials neatly in their proper place
6. Do not bring food, drinks, or gum into the band room
7. Be respectful of others and of things

## Consequences for Breaking Expectations:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Student/Teacher Conference
3. Parent Phone Call/Notification
4. Lunch Detention
5. After School Detention
6. Guidance/Administrative Referral

Students who cannot follow directions and continually disrupt class may be removed from the band.

# WHS Blue Band Contract

## Student's Agreement

*I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to abide by all of the rules set forth in the Handbook. I am dedicated to this organization and agree to be a POSITIVE participant. I understand my obligations to this group, my fellow band members, my parents, Williamsport High School, and most importantly, myself. I will make every effort to be at every rehearsal and performance in a timely manner. I will treat others with dignity and respect, and am ready to have a great time while surpassing all of our goals.*

## Parent's Agreement

*I/we, the parent(s)/guardian(s) \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the rules set forth in the Williamsport High School Blue Band Handbook. I have the handbook and understand that my child will be held responsible for his/her actions. I am willing to support this organization and my child's involvement in it. I understand that each student is relied upon by every other student and will make an effort to encourage my child's attendance.*

## Director's Agreement

*I, the Director of the Blue Band, promise to make every student's band experience worthwhile. I will advocate a safe, fun, social, and educational environment for every student. I will treat each student with the dignity and respect they deserve. I will keep the parents informed of all pertinent information. I will be available for pre-arranged conferences with any parent or student. I will not tolerate any student being treated unfairly or with disrespect. I will ensure student safety on all of our trips. I also will make every effort to release students on time. I will act as a guide, helping these students progress individually and as a unit.*

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_