

# **The Bearcat Bands**



**Wheeler High School  
Union Township Middle School**

**2011 - 2012**

**Band Handbook**

# BEARCAT BANDS



Union Township School Corporation

John VanPatten, Director

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Dear 2011-2012 Bearcat Band Member

Welcome to another year of school! We have a lot of fun and exciting things planned this year and I hope you are ready to get started. I am really looking forward to accomplishing a lot this year, and I hope you are too.

Please take a few minutes to read over the handbook. Familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of the program (yes, even you too, high schoolers). Keep this handbook to refer back to throughout the year. A lot of what is in here is not really anything you need to know on a daily basis, but items you may need to be aware of throughout the year. If you would prefer not to keep a paper version, you can download a .pdf version from the "Documents" page on our website. The URL is at the bottom of this page.

As an ever-evolving teacher, I endeavor to make improvements on policies and procedures from year to year. Being in my fourth year there are things I have figured out and things I am still learning. There are bound to be changes in here from last year, so please read carefully and note those changes.

If you are new to this program (either as a new student or a beginning 6th grade band student) we would like to welcome you! In the past few years this program has undergone a lot of changes and improvements, and we have established somewhat of an expectation of excellence. All I ask is that everyone try their very best in everything they do and together we can achieve greatness. You have a very large group of students that have a common interest with you, so do not hesitate to lean on them for support. Everyone in the program values everyone else, and relies on everyone else to do their part. Help each other out, give each other the encouragement they need, and we will do great things together.

Please look through this handbook in detail and fill out all the forms in the back that you may need to fill out at this time. I will be collecting them and putting them on file during the first week or two of school. As always, if you need anything at any time, please don't hesitate to contact me. Let's have a great year together!!

Yours In Music,

John VanPatten  
Director of Bands  
Union Township School Corporation  
(219) 759-2561, ext. 2244

## Policy Statement

All policies stated in this handbook are in addition to those found in the WHS and UTMS student handbooks. These are simply guidelines for the smooth and efficient operation of the Bearcat Band Program. Please read through this at the beginning of the year and hold on to it for reference throughout the year. A copy can be found on our website under “Documents”.

### WHS/UTMS Band Policies

#### Accounts

Students are going to be responsible for paying for certain items and fees associated with being in band. Things like reeds, books, entrance fees (ISSMA for example) will be kept track of. Failure to pay for these items will result in a debt slip being issued by the school. If you need to stay up to date on your balance please ask and I will be more than happy to let you know.

#### Attendance

All band related events listed on the calendar (and ones that may be added later) are **required** events. That means that your grade will be adversely effected if you choose not to participate in them. (Conflicts with other events will be addressed later in the handbook) As soon as you learn of a conflict, you are required to fill out an “Excused Absence Form”. This form **MUST** be turned into me **NO LATER** than **ONE WEEK** before the event you are going to miss. If you do not turn this in, you will be counted unexcused and will receive a zero for that event. If you make satisfactory arrangements with me, I will allow you to make up 75% of the points through some sort of volunteer work (whatever may need to be done at the time).

Events like playing in the Pit Orchestra for the Musical are considered volunteer activities. I cannot penalize your grade for failing to participate in a volunteer activity. It is understood at the time you volunteer that you will be at all rehearsals and performances. If there will be significant conflicts, then please do not volunteer.

#### Awards

Here are the awards the band department presents:

**John Philip Sousa Award** - Outstanding High School Senior; Chosen by Mr. VanPatten

**Patrick Gilmore Award** - Outstanding High School Junior; Chosen by Mr. VanPatten

**Marching Award** - Outstanding High School Junior or Senior from the Marching Band;  
Chosen by Mr. VanPatten

**Rookie of the Year** - Outstanding High School Freshmen/New Member; Chosen by  
Students

**Most Improved Member** - One for High School, one for each Middle School Band; Chosen  
by students

**Outstanding Member** - One for each Middle School Band; chosen by Mr. VanPatten

**Director’s Award** - Outstanding Eighth Grade Student; Chosen by Mr. VanPatten

**High School Letters/Chevrons** - Each year you spend in band you will be recognized by a certificate and a chevron at the last concert. Once you complete two full years in the band program you will be eligible for a letter. You will fill out an application and, if your service to the band department warrants it, you will be given a letter.

### **Communication**

I fully believe that good communication is the key to the success of any program. I will do my best to constantly keep parents, students, and the community up to date with information. Please do not hesitate to contact me at anytime with any questions or concerns. You can see your grade online at anytime via Harmony. You can also visit the Band program's website via the WHS Home Page. Most everything that is sent home will come with an attached slip that will need to be signed by parents and returned one or two days after it is sent home. This will also be graded as an assignment. If I do not receive anything I will contact you either by email or by phone.

### **Concert Dress**

How a group looks will effect how the group performs. That is why I believe in having uniform concert dress at all concerts. For all concerts and all performing groups (marching band is the exception), all students will wear "white on top and black on bottom"; that is, a white shirt of some kind (no logos or designs; no t-shirts) with a black bottom (pants, not jeans, or a skirt of appropriate length), black socks and black shoes (no tennis shoes, no flip flops, must be all black). Jazz band will dress in all black, as will all pit orchestras. I reserve the right to not allow you to perform on any performance of any kind if I deem your dress to be inappropriate concert attire.

### **Discipline**

I have found that band students tend to be the "cream of the crop". However, we do have rules in place to ensure the proper conduct of students. All school rules apply while in the band room at anytime, and all school disciplinary procedures will be followed.

### **Equipment**

The equipment that is in the band room is all very expensive, and very hard to repair or replace. It is of the utmost importance that all students respect the equipment that we use on a daily or yearly basis as we will be unable to just "get a new one". If any student is caught disrespecting the equipment in anyway, disciplinary actions will be taken to the fullest extent possible.

### **Event Conflicts**

I am very pleased that band students tend to be active in more than one organization (outside clubs, sports, etc.) I fully support and encourage this! However, if you are going to do both band and other activities you must be willing to make concessions. As a general rule, "Concerts overrule practices, and games overrule rehearsals." In all other circumstances, I will talk with the student and the other supervisor/coach. Arrangements will be made on a **CASE BY CASE BASIS**. Precedents will not be made. I am glad that my students have varied interests, but you cannot do too many things at once. Please keep an open line of communication with me regarding potential conflicts.

**Fundraising**

The music and fine arts departments participate in many different fundraisers throughout the year. We do not get a lot of money from the school, so it is our job to raise funds for our specific needs. The money raised through these sales go directly to serve the needs of the students. If you do not sell anything or do not participate in fundraisers, you will not have the things you need. The results are directly related to the amount of effort you put into the fundraisers.

**Instrument Requirements**

Everyone in the band program, from 6th grade through 12th grade, is required to play an instrument. That requires having the following:

All Students - Music, Pencil

Flute - cleaning cloth, cork grease

Oboe/Clarinet/Saxophone - at least 3 working reeds, cleaning cloth, cork grease

Trumpet/French Horn/Trombone/Baritone/Tuba - valve oil/slide oil, cleaning supplies

Percussion - drum sticks (your own pair); mallets will be provided in school only

**Lockers**

Lockers will be provided for students to store their instruments and music in. Anything else must be kept in your school locker. Students are not allowed to share lockers or give their combinations out. **PLEASE** keep your lock with your locker. This is the only way I can keep the combinations organized. If you deliberately damage a locker you will be charged to replace it, which can get costly. Any student seen climbing in any locker will be dealt with severely.

**Music Storage**

All concert music (every ensemble except marching band and pep band) will be kept at school. At the beginning of the year all students will be required to provide their own 1" 3-ring binder, as well as a pencil that will be kept in the folders at all times. Students will receive only copies of all music and you must have your music with you at every rehearsal. If you lose music, it is your responsibility to let me know so that I can copy it for you.

**Repairs**

No musician ever goes without a repair to their instrument. Damage happens, it's a fact of life. There are some things that I can repair here, but there are some things that just have to be fixed at the repair shop. If damage occurs that I cannot fix, the student is required to take their instrument to Quinlan and Fabish to get it fixed. Whenever you take an instrument in to get fixed they will give you a loaner instrument to play until it is fixed. This will be the student's responsibility. If there are financial problems they will be dealt with on an individual basis.

**Resource and Lunch Periods (WHS Only)**

Due to the new middle school schedule this year, WHS students will unfortunately be prohibited from eating lunch in the band room, or from being in the band room during resource. Exceptions will be granted for students wishing to practice during their resource period. You will only be allowed in if you have a pass from your resource teacher

### **Student Aides (“Band Aides”, WHS only)**

I love to have students aide for me. If you have time for a study hall in your schedule, I think your time would be better spent as an aide. Most of the time I will not have anything for you to do, so it will be like a study hall. However, if I do have something that needs to be done I expect you to do it. Aides can be canceled and put back into study hall if need be.

### **Supplies**

I try to keep a full stock of all necessary supplies (reeds, valve oil, cleaning supplies, etc.) If there is something you need that I don't have then I can order it from Brian Fine, our Quinlan and Fabish representative. He makes weekly stops here on a fairly regular basis. If you do need something ordered it will be delivered here on his next stop, usually the next week.

### **Technology**

If you know me, then you know I love to use technology. As with the other equipment, though, it is very expensive to replace and almost impossible to repair. I know that students also love using technology, so if you wish to continue using it, you must respect it as if it were your own, because if you break anything it will become your responsibility to replace it. A lot of what we use is my own personal equipment, so please respect it.

### **Transportation Policy**

We will take several trips throughout the year. These trips are planned far in advance so that we can arrange for school transportation. All students will travel with the band at all times. You will depart school with the band, and you will return to school with the band. All other arrangements must be made on an individual basis with Mr. VanPatten and the office **at least 10 school days before the event**. No exceptions will be permitted the day of the event.

### **Marching Band Uniforms (WHS and Pit Only)**

Participation in the marching band and pit requires that you use our uniforms. We will be wearing them for all marching band performances, so it is your responsibility to keep them organized and clean. Any damage to a uniform will be charged to you, and you will be required to pay for any replacements.

While in uniform there is a certain conduct that I expect from you.

1. We will wear all parts of our uniform at all times during football games. I **never** want to see jackets undone or pants unstrapped during the 3rd quarter. If the weather warrants it, I will make the decision to take our jackets off, not you.
2. I will tell you when you can take your hats off. If we do take them off, place them in a safe spot and keep track of them so you know which one is yours.
3. If we are carrying our hats, they will be carried in the left hand with the bill of the hat in the palm and the eagle facing outward.
4. While in uniform you are required to conduct yourself in a manner that is befitting of the uniform. This means no cursing, no spitting, and no cell phones (especially during games).

## **Grading**

### **High School Grading Scale:**

Performances - 30%

Playing Tests - 25%

Class Participation (5 points daily) - 25%

Assignments - 10%

Final - 10%

### **Middle School Grading Scale:**

Performances - 35%

Practice Records - 15%

Objective Sheets - 15%

Playing Tests - 15%

Weekly Assignments - 10%

Class Participation (5 points daily) - 10 %

Again, you can see your grade at any time on Harmony. I will try to update them on a weekly basis. Please stay up to date with your grade. If you or your parents ever have any questions about your grades, please contact me.

## **Band Binders (UTMS Only)**

This year, all middle school band students will be required to provide your own **BLACK** 1-inch 3-ring binder. You will also need 5 tabbed dividers for the following sections:

- 1.** Handouts - parent letters, information, this handbook, etc.
- 2.** Class Records - Practice Records, Objective Sheets, Scale Grid
- 3.** Weekly Assignments - Assignment Sheets, Weekly Theory Sheets, any other assigned work
- 4.** Exercises - Daily Studies, Scales, other exercises
- 5.** Concert Music

Your method book will be 3-hole punched and will be kept behind your concert music.

You must also keep a pencil in here at all times. Not having a pencil in class will cost you one participation point. If you keep forgetting a pencil, you will be issued a detention.

## **Wheeler High School/Union Township Middle School Performing Ensembles**

### WHS Marching Band - The Bearcat Band and Guard

Open to: All High School Students; must sign up for 1st trimester HS band

Plays at: All home football games; Valparaiso Popcorn Festival; Purdue Band Day; Fall Concert, ISSMA Festival Marching Band Competition

Rehearsal Schedule: Rehearsals are during 3rd hour band class; 2 week Band Camp is required before school begins in August

### WHS Pep Band

Open to: All High School Students and 7th/8th Grade Students

Plays at: All home basketball games, both boys and girls

Rehearsal Schedule: Rehearsals will be conducted before each game; Call time is 90 minutes before tip off

### WHS Concert Band

Open to: All High School Students (8th grade students may be invited if necessary)

Plays at: Christmas Concert, Winter Concert, ISSMA Concert Band Contest, Spring Concert

Rehearsal Schedule: 1st hour band class 2nd and 3rd Trimester; optional after school rehearsals may be called if need be

### WHS Jazz Ensemble

Open to: All High School Students

Instrumentation: Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Bari Saxophone, Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Trombone, Piano, Bass, Drums, Guitar, Vibes, Aux. Percussion

Plays At: Fall Concert, Christmas Concert, Winter Concert, ISSMA Jazz Festival, Spring Concert, other area Jazz Festivals

Rehearsal Schedule: Tuesday-Thursday, 1st Lunch/Resource

### UTMS Bands

Open to: 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students

Plays at: Fall Concert, Christmas Concert, ISSMA Concert Band Contest, Spring Concert

Rehearsal Schedule: Most rehearsals are during school; after school rehearsals will be called when combining 7th and 8th grade bands

### UTMS Percussion Ensemble

Open to: 7th and 8th grade students

Plays at: Home football games and ISSMA Marching Band Competition (marching band pit), Christmas Concert, ISSMA Solo and Ensemble, Spring Concert

Rehearsal Schedule: Mondays 3:00-4:30

### UTMS Jazz Ensemble

Open to: 7th-8th grade students

Instrumentation: All instruments welcome

Plays at: Christmas Concert, ISSMA Jazz Festival, Spring Concert

Rehearsal Schedule: Tuesday and Thursday 3:00-4:00





**Band Student Information Sheet**  
Due Friday, August 26th. Please print neatly!

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: 6<sup>th</sup>    7<sup>th</sup>    8<sup>th</sup>    Freshmen    Sophomore    Junior    Senior

Instrument: \_\_\_\_\_ Brand: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please List any Extracurricular Activities outside of band that you are/plan to be involved in (all year):

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Method of Contact:  Email                       Phone                       Mailing

Check here if you have regular internet access from home

We have received and read the WHS Band Handbook and understand all policies and procedures. We understand that our son or daughter will be held to them during their participation in the Bearcat Band Program.

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

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Band Room Rules**

These are a few short, simple rules that we need to live by on a daily basis. While the handbook is simply for you to keep as a reference, these are rules that you need to know by heart.

- 1) There is to be no talking while Mr. VanPatten is on the podium. If you have a question, raise your hand.
  
- 2) While Mr. VanPatten's baton is in the air, your instrument should be up and in playing position. This includes percussion.
  
- 3) For all rehearsals you must have the following three items:
  - 1) Your instrument
  - 2) Your binder
  - 3) A pencil
  
- 4) When coming into class take the following steps:
  - 1) Come into the classroom quietly and look at the rehearsal order on the board.
  - 2) Go to your locker and get your instrument.
  - 3) Go to the storage rack and get your binder.
  - 4) Sit down in your seat and practice on your own. Attendance and other daily items will be taken care of at this time.
  
- 5) All students are required, at all times, to maintain a positive attitude and to **HAVE FUN!! THAT'S AN ORDER!!! :o)**

### Order of Consequences

1. Warning - One participation point will be taken away.
2. 2nd Warning - Two participation points will be taken away.
3. All participation points will be taken away.
4. Detention.
5. Office referral and parent conference.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Union Township School Corporation**  
Instrument Rental Agreement

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Rental Term \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument \_\_\_\_\_ Serial Number \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument Number \_\_\_\_\_ Brand \_\_\_\_\_

Replacement Value \$ \_\_\_\_\_ . \_\_\_\_\_

Condition of Instrument (to be inspected by Mr. VanPatten before rental is issued)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Accessories that are to be borrowed with the instrument

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

In accordance with the Union Township School Corporation Policy, the person who is borrowing the instrument is completely responsible for the care and safe return of the school-owned instrument. Union Township School Corporation will not cover the cost of replacement if the instrument is completely destroyed, lost, or stolen. Any damage to the instrument will be fixed at the cost of the person who borrowed the instrument. This includes all accessories that go along with the instrument such as the case, mouthpiece, neckstrap, ligature, etc.

I have read and understand the terms of the agreement. I understand that Union Township School Corporation will not cover the cost of the replacement or repair for the instrument that I am borrowing

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Date \_\_\_\_\_