TITAN THUNDER MARCHING BAND

Handbook of guideline and procedures.

2025-2026

PHILOSOPHY OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Every aspect of music is important and will be emphasized at various stages in a student's development. The core of the instrumental programs is the symphonic concert band. From this ensemble, groups such as the marching band, jazz ensemble, pep bands and various chamber groups are derived. The goal for each ensemble is to improve tone, intonation, blend, balance, rhythm, style and interpretation as elements of musical performance in an attempt to form young musicians into expressive artists. Music offers a unique opportunity to challenge each student cognitively, affectively, and physically. It provides for emotional expression, intrinsic worth and has a positive impact on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Marching Band Conduct Guide

The West Mifflin Area High School Band represents West Mifflin Area School District and the West Mifflin and Whitaker communities. The band will present itself in a manner that reflects the integrity of the school and community. The band will be held to the highest standards of decorum and discipline so as to foster self respect and to attain the respect of the community and school. Students will be held to all conduct guidelines as they appear in the student handbook. For the integrity of the program and the safety and consideration of all participants, the following guidelines will be enforced.

Auditions/Chair Placements

The Band Director, as well as advisors for any auxiliary units (e.g. color guard, starlettes, drumline, etc.) reserve the right to hold auditions at any point during the school year. These auditions may be used to determine chair placements, assign parts, and/or assess the appropriateness os student roles within the ensemble. Auditions are conducted to ensure fairness, maintain musical standards, and support the overall success and balance of the group.

Auditions are typically held in the spring of the preceding school year to accurately assign students to parts for the beginning of the next school year, including—but not limited to—drum major, commanding officer, captain, section leader, and music assignments.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals prepare the band for performances. Rehearsing after school is a necessary part of any successful band program. Attendance is mandatory and subject to the Attendance Policy.

Attendance at four of the six pre-band camp summer rehearsals (June & July) is **mandatory**. Family vacations and school sports will be considered excused absences at the discretion of the band director. Any absences must be approved ahead of time.

Attendance at band camp is **mandatory**. [Always the last 2 full weeks before school starts]. If you cannot attend (other than medical or death in the family) **you cannot participate** in the marching band. All occurrences of absence (excused or unexcused) could result in alternate status for the show taught during that time period. Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the director and determinations will be made at the director's discretion. Students cannot perform in shows learned during their absence (during the entire season or at the discretion of the band director).

100% effort, teamwork and cooperation is expected at all rehearsals.
Arrive early (with all equipment) and be prepared to start on time. Apparel must meet school dress code. Wear shoes appropriate for marching. ALL MEMBERS MUST WEAR SHOES. NO OPEN TOED SANDALS PERMITTED. This is a huge safety concern.

Performances

Performances give the band the opportunity to entertain the public and represent the school and community.

Marching band members, including auxiliary, will have assigned seats in the bleachers. This will enhance the overall balance of the ensemble.

PDA's (public displays of affection) will not be tolerated at any band function.
Band members are to be respectful to all fans (home or away). If a fan provokes or intimidates you, do not take matters into your own hands. If you have a problem, see a chaperone or the director.
The band will play together in the bleachers. Individual playing will not be tolerated. The band is at games to support the team and fans. Be energetic and watch the game. *Be prepared to play at any time!*

Band rain jackets will be worn over uniforms as the temperature or weather requires. The band director will determine when the jackets are necessary. During cold weather, auxiliary units (silks and starlettes) may wear school-colored warm-ups or letterman jackets with the sponsor or director's permission.

At football games, certain band members will have the third quarter off at the director's discretion in order to visit the opposing band. Place instruments in the bleachers after halftime. Report back to the bleachers before the end of the third quarter. Band members who report to the bleachers late will remain in the bleachers during the third quarter at the next designated game.

Students must NEVER have food around the uniforms. Stains are difficult, if not impossible, to remove. Drink clear liquids such as water while in uniform.

Students are to report to the high school early for all band events. Once a departure time is set, it will be strictly followed. The bus will leave on time. If you are not on the bus, with all equipment, you will be counted as absent and subject to the Attendance Policy. The report time is the "step-off" time for the run through, not the time that you walk in the door. Any student not in line for "step-off" will receive an 'F' grade for that performance and may be asked to sit out at the director's discretion.

Uniforms will remain zipped and worn properly in public. Sloppy bands get sloppy reputations! Hats, gloves, and jackets will be removed after we are seated in the bleachers at the discretion of the band director. Any student missing a piece of equipment or uniform will receive an 'F' grade for the performance and may be asked to sit out at the discretion of the sponsor or director. (Auxiliary should see the "constitution")

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

STUDENTS MUST RIDE TO ALL PERFORMANCES ON THE BUSES PROVIDED.

Students may return from a performance with their parent OR their parent's designee. The parent's designee must be at least 21 years old. The director/sponsor must have the written request signed by the parent before the bus leaves for the performance. Parents must pick up their child and sign them out. The director/sponsor must see the parent or designee take the student.

Bus Guidelines

Students will be given a permanent bus assignment before the first performance. The director reserves the right to move students on to another bus as necessary.

No boom boxes, radios or other electronic devices with external speakers will be allowed on the bus. Devices with headphones are allowed **but are the responsibility of the student**.

PDA's will not be tolerated. The director or chaperones will move students apart if they feel there is a problem.

Food and drink will not be permitted on the bus while the band is in uniform.

Do not spray perfume, hairspray or body spray or any other spray while on the bus.
ALL HIGH SCHOOL BUS GUIDELINES APPLY
Keep moving to a minimum. Do not stand for a prolonged period of time.

(Bus Guidelines cont.)

Keep hands, head and feet inside the bus at all times.
Do not throw anything out of the windows.
Students will be considerate to the bus driver and always follow his/her instructions. Leave the bus as clean as or cleaner than it was when you first got on.

UNIFORMS

Band uniforms will be provided by the school district. Students are responsible for any damage other than normal wear and tear. Payment not made in full will be turned into the office as an obligation (see school handbook). Uniform cleaning and general maintenance will be paid for by the school district. Uniform managers and boosters will distribute uniforms before performances and collect them after performances. (See posted guidelines for hanging your uniform)

Students will dress at the school for performances. The band director may change this policy depending on the distance and time requirements of the trip involved.

Students are not to wear jeans under the uniforms!!! This causes undue stress on the seams of the pants. Students should wear light shorts under the uniform pants. Thermals should be worn if the temperature is going to be cold.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO COLOR OR DYE HAIR WITH ANY TEMPORARY HAIR DYE. This destroys hats and discolors uniforms.

Part of the uniform is black socks, black Drill Max shoes and white gloves for the musicians. Auxiliaries must have all of their respectable gear as well (see auxiliary constitution). Students are responsible for having their complete uniform.

Students who are not dressed to the above standards will not be permitted to perform. Image is everything.

Care and maintenance is YOUR responsibility. Please wipe out the hat after each performance. Do not zip garment bag with wet uniform in it. Take shoes, socks and gloves home with you. Equipment left out in the band room or school storage areas is not safe from theft or loss and is not the responsibility of the directors or the school.

Each Auxiliary & Band member is responsible for the care, cleaning, repair and maintenance of all uniform pieces. When turning in your uniform at the end of the season it must be clean, all pieces accounted for and in good condition. If special work needs to be done on your uniform, please inform your instructor, the band director or a band parent immediately.

Appearance

While in uniform you are representing West Mifflin Area High School and surrounding communities. Our ultimate goal is for every member to be identical in appearance and performance. No Jewelry, including bracelets, necklaces and rings may be worn. Only one small post earring in the lobe allowed. No visible piercing with hardware. No nail polish unless all are wearing the same. Hair pulled back in neat ponytail (no hanging pieces) with matching hair ornaments unless all agree to wear the same style. Appropriate make-up for band performance must be worn. When you arrive at the school for a performance or bus ride to the game/parade/band festival you should be dressed and ready to perform.

Accessories

All accessories should be similar.

- ♬ Tote bags – to carry equipment.
- ♬ Warm-ups – cold weather parade/performance cover-ups
- ♬ Ear bands, hair ornaments, etc…

Fundraisers

Fundraisers help the band and auxiliaries purchase the necessary equipment to put on a colorful and entertaining performance. All auxiliary members are to participate in all band fundraisers. Auxiliaries may have their own fundraisers for accessories need with proper permission from the band director.

Fundraisers are the responsibility of the band parent organization or individual auxiliary sponsors. They are not affiliated with the school (apart from scheduling) and are not the responsibility of the school district.

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DISCIPLINE POLICY

To keep an orderly education environment, the following discipline policy will be implemented.

Rules

1. No talking while rehearsal is in progress.
2. Raise your hand and be recognized by the teacher before speaking.
3. Have proper materials in class (i..e. pencil, music, instrument, mouthpieces, reeds).
4. No food or drink in the band room, except for water.
5. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
6. Always RESPECT yourself, your fellow students and the instructor.
7. Rehearse with the goal of always performing better than the last time.

Consequences*

1st Offense	Verbal Warning
2nd Offense	Phone Call Home/Email.
3rd Offense	Suspension from next performance and parent call.
4th Offense	Dismissal from band until meeting with parent(s) and principal
5th Offense	Dismissal from band for one full semester. Re-scheduling of band is at the discretion of the band director.
All offenses	Loss of participation points

***SEVERE DISCIPLINE CLAUSE – The director reserves the right to skip steps depending on the severity of the offense (as per school guidelines).**

If a student blatantly and/or maliciously causes a serious classroom disruption during any rehearsal or performance including at games or to and from on the bus, the severe disciplinary clause will take effect and the student will immediately be taken to the principal's office and will serve the maximum offense consequence for the particular offense.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

All performances and rehearsals are required for participation in the marching band.

The attendance policy will be as follows:

- 1 unexcused rehearsal—Suspension from performing the next halftime show. Students must attend the game in full uniform but stand on the side lines as the band performs the show. Students will participate fully in the stands.

- 2 unexcused rehearsals—same as 1 unexcused rehearsal plus suspension from the next field trip (regardless of which trip it may be, big trip not included).

- 1 unexcused performance—suspension from the next field trip (regardless of which trip it may be, big trip not included). 'F' grade for the nine week grading period.

- 2 unexcused performances—expulsion from the band program. 'F' for entire year.

The band director must receive an excuse, in writing, before the absence will be excused. ALL ABSENCES WILL REMAIN UNEXCUSED UNTIL A VALID EXCUSE IS GIVEN TO THE DIRECTOR.

Examples of excused absences:
- Medical (with doctor's excuse)
- Death in the family
- School related conflict (with director's consent and prior knowledge).

Examples of unexcused absences:
- Work
- Shopping
- Forgetting about rehearsal
- Missing the band bus for an event
- My boyfriend/girlfriend is in town
- Haircut or Styling
- Non-School sponsored events, etc
- School sponsored event without prior approval

ANYTHING FALLING OUTSIDE OF THESE PARAMETERS WILL BE EXCUSED AT THE BAND DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION

NECESSARY EQUIPMENT FOR MARCHING BAND

Marching Shoes--@ $69.00 We will order at band camp or students may elect to purchase from a graduated senior.

Band Booster Membership Fee--@ $50.00 Includes all meals for away games and festivals, a student band tee-shirt, gloves, reeds/oil and student trip shirt. It also helps pay for senior flowers and gifts.

Marching Auxiliary units may need to purchase uniforms, warm-ups, equipment or other outfits as needed. The Band Boosters may help fund these units.

Marching Auxiliary Units

Marching auxiliary units include the Silk and Starlette units. These units are members of the Marching Band. Auxiliary members have the same privileges and responsibilities as any band member. Auxiliary units will have extra rehearsals (coordinated with the instructor) throughout the summer and during the school year. For all other policies regarding attendance, etc., please refer to the auxiliary constitution.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is a necessary part of any band program and all students are expected to take part in fundraising events. A percentage of the proceeds from these events will be distributed into the following areas:

1. Student trip account
2. Band Booster account
3. Band activity account

Student trip account money is to be used for the "Big trip". If a student raises more money than the trip costs, the remaining funds will remain in the students account for the following trip. If a student becomes ineligible to go on the trip or graduates with extra money, the money may be transferred to a designated account (specific student, scholarship, or general fund). After the school year closes all extra money that is not designated from graduates will be placed in the general fund. The Band Boosters will be responsible for keeping track of these accounts.

The Band Booster account is used at the discretion of the Band Booster Organization. See the Band Booster by-laws to read an explanation of their activities. Proceeds from all Booster events will be credited into this account. The Booster treasurer and assistant treasurer will be responsible for keeping track of these accounts.

The band activity account is used for supplies and/or repairs that are not part of the normal band budget. Only one fundraising event per year will be used to supplement this account. The band director along with student leaders will manage this account.

Concession Stand/Annual Band Festival

In August, the Boosters organize the concession stand at the Titan Stadium. All band parents are asked to work shifts during the events that we are responsible for (football games, band festivals, special events). People working the concession stands and fundraisers will be credited toward their band account assessment (see band parent by-laws). When possible, students participating in the concession stand will be credited the same. You are more likely to get the shift that you want if you call the boosters and schedule your shift early. In August, the Boosters will begin scheduling shifts at the band parent meetings which fall on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. All events take the cooperation of all band students and parents to be a success.

Lettering in Band (Revised 2021)

Your commitment, dedication and hard work are not unnoticed and Letter Patches recognize exceptional individuals who have accomplished the requirements listed below. Letterman Jackets can be purchased through the Athletic Department. Even if you do not buy a varsity athlete jacket, letters and pins make great mementos.

Schedule for Letters: After 2 Years: Letters are earned.

After 3 Years: Bar pins are earned.
After 4 Years: "Band" Pins are earned.
(Lettering cont.)

1. Letter/Bar Requirements:

A. Two Full Years of Marching Band

I. Must have band on your schedule (except Aux) II. Must receive a B or higher in your band class.

III. Must have attended band camp both years.

IV. Must not have more than 2 unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances. V. Must not have any discipline infractions again him/her.

2. Must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA
3. Must complete the Application each year. The application is due on the first school day in May and will be available in the HS Band Office.

The Big Trip

The purpose of this trip is to give the students an opportunity to perform at a national event (i.e. Disney World) and to reward the students for their hard work. Destinations will be decided one year before the trip occurs. The band director, in cooperation with the Boosters, will determine the destination, lodging arrangements and itinerary.

Each student will be responsible for paying for his or her trip, however, fundraising opportunities will be made available. Student accounts will be set up to keep track of each student's fundraising. The director and Boosters will be responsible for communicating and tracking these accounts and funds will be kept in the Band Booster account. After an estimate of the total trip expense is determined, a payment schedule will be made. Students must have the required amounts in their trip account on each due date or make up the difference. If a student does not raise funds or pay for their trip on time, that student will not be eligible to go on the trip.

Students must be a member of either the marching band during the school year of the trip and are required to perform in all performances. Mandatory after-school rehearsals to prepare for the trip may be necessary to improve the quality of performance.

The band director will make guidelines for the trip and have them approved by the principal. These guidelines are to ensure the safety of all students participating on the band trip and will be enforced.

Chaperones (band parent officers) and instructors will be invited on the trip. The band director will make a payment schedule for chaperones & instructors.

All students are subject to the attendance policy as it relates to "big trips". The band director will make the final determination as to which students are eligible to participate.

STUDENT HANDBOOK POLICY CONFIRMATION**

RETURN TO MR. MONROE MAY 17, 2024

I, _____, have read and understand the 2024-2025 Titan Marching Band Handbook. I (student name) understand and will abide with the policies in the handbook.

Students School ID#:_____

Student's Signature: _____

Student's Email Address*: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Parent's Email Address*: _____

Date: _____

*Please keep address, phone, email address, and instrument serial number current with the director at all times.

Please also fill out and turn in the attached medical form. This form **must remain current throughout the school year and will be reviewed before any trip(s).