

Baldwin Highlander Marching Band



Student Handbook

“Performing and Serving Together with Excellence!”

Greetings,

As director of the Baldwin Highlander Marching Band, it's with great pleasure that I welcome you to marching band season! We have an exciting year planned with an exhilarating show, a number of unique performances, and countless opportunities to build memories that will last a life-time. In my time as the director of the band program at Baldwin High School a number of things have become apparent to me. We have a tremendous group of students in the band with nearly limitless talent, a great work ethic, and true enthusiasm for music. We also have a world class staff that's prepared to do whatever it takes to allow our band to succeed. Finally, we are blessed with a school district and parent group that are dedicated to supporting music education. The Highlander Marching Band is set up for success, and I'm so glad you have chosen to be a part of our effort to take the band here at Baldwin to new heights of excellence!

The primary goal of the Instrumental Music Program of Baldwin High School is to create life-long learners and lovers of music. To equip students with musical tools and knowledge that will allow them to perform with excellence during their time at BHS and throughout their lives. But the BHS Instrumental Music Program is about much more than just music. We endeavor to use music as a vehicle to give our students rich, transformative life experiences. To build a level of pride, discipline, respect and commitment that will set them apart as they embark on their futures. To serve our school and community while creating powerful works of art. To build friendships and relational skills that will last for a lifetime. The Baldwin Highlander Marching Band has been changing people's lives for over 75 years and we look forward to working together with you to continue our band's strong tradition of performing and serving with excellence.

To our freshmen and new members: Welcome! You are about to embark on a journey that will change your life. Though much hard work lies ahead for all of us, the experiences you have as you become a part of the distinguished history of the Highlander Band will stay with you forever. Please make sure you check out the "New Member Info" page in our handbook and contact me with any questions you might have leading up to the start of our season.

This handbook contains valuable information about our organization. Please take the time to read it thoroughly and make note of both the calendar of events and the attached required forms that must be filled out and returned. Should you have any questions, please feel free to call me or email me at any time. We're looking forward to having you join the Highlander Band family...truly, your life will never be the same!

Sincerely,

Gregory Steele
Director of Instrumental Music
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WHO WE ARE

OUR VISION

To create a community of life-long learners and lovers of music

OUR MISSION

To perform and serve together with excellence

OUR VALUES

Pride, Discipline, Respect and Commitment

OUR BELIEFS

- Music is an inherent part of human existence...music should be studied for music's sake.
- All students are first and foremost unique human beings with individual abilities and needs.
- All students are capable of experiencing and creating music in a meaningful way.
- All students are capable of positively impacting our ensemble, our community, and our world.
- Supporting our school and community is an essential function of the Baldwin Highlander Instrumental Music Program.



NEW MEMBER INFORMATION – Frequently Asked Questions

How do I join the Highlander Marching Band?

Simply come to the first day of New Member Camp! For guard members, we hold auditions each May for the following season.

Where do I go on my first day?

Entering the BHS campus from route 51, you should go left at the first “Y”, then make the next two right turns. Use the entrance that is in between our two band trailers. Our student leaders should be waiting there to greet you! The band room is straight through three sets of double doors. On occasion, due to activities in the auditorium, we rehearse in the choir room. To get to the choir room, walk down past the larger of our two trailers. The choir room entrance is the bottom floor, on the north side of the building, closest to route 51.

What should I bring?

Bring your instrument, a pencil, tennis shoes and socks. Comfortable, BWSB dress-code appropriate clothes should be worn. We will be outside marching, weather permitting, at every rehearsal so plan ahead and bring a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, and be sure to hydrate. Tennis shoes only...no sandals! The form packet that comes with this handbook should be turned in during mini-camp...please place them in the “Band Director’s Box” outside the office.

When does the band rehearse?

We hold a Mini-Camp in the evening shortly after school lets out. These rehearsals are from 5-9 each night for a week and are when we begin to work on our music and marching fundamentals and start to learn our parade and show music. During the rest of June we rehearse on Tuesday mornings in preparation for our July 4th Parade performance. After the parade, we take much of July off before having a couple of morning rehearsals before Band Camp. Band Camp is the first two full weeks of August. Our ten days of Band Camp are perhaps our most important rehearsals of the year. We rehearse from 8 AM to 1 PM each weekday for two weeks and learn much of the drill (formations on the field) and music that we will perform throughout the fall. Once the school year starts, we rehearse on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 5 to 8.

Are all rehearsals and performances mandatory? What if I have a vacation?

In short, yes. Attendance is an extremely important factor in our group’s success. However, it is understood that it is not always possible to schedule vacations around the band schedule. Please consult our attendance policy in this handbook and contact Mr. Steele with any questions.

How do I get a uniform? Do I have to pay for it?

Each member of the Highlander Band is assigned a formal uniform that is worn at nearly all performances. This includes a jacket, pants, helmet and gauntlets for instrumentalists and two separate complete uniforms for guard members (one for football games and one for competitions). All formal uniforms are stored at school and should not be taken home; students will be given time to change into uniform when they arrive at school for any “formal uniform” performance. Please see the uniform guidelines for instruction on how to wear and care for these uniforms. Students will also be given a Baldwin Band polo shirt, as well as shorts and a belt for use at our July 4th Parade, Kennywood, and our Community Day Performances. This “summer uniform” is to be kept at home; unless otherwise noted, students should arrive at our summer performances already dressed for performance. The shorts and belt are band property and must be returned upon graduation; the polo shirt is the student’s to keep. Students must purchase their own marching shoes to be worn with both formal and summer uniforms. At the beginning of each year each student is provided with a set of white gloves (For football games), black gloves (for competitions), tall black socks (for use with the formal uniforms) and short black socks (for use with our summer uniforms). They will also be given a “generic” white Baldwin Band shirt to be worn under our formal uniforms at all performances.

Am I required to take a band class to be in band? Am I required to take part in the spring trip?

No. Any student may take band as an extracurricular activity. And although any marching band student has the opportunity to fundraise and participate in the spring trip, participation is not required.

What costs are involved with joining band?

See the estimated costs section of this handbook. We ask every band member to donate or fund-raise a “fair share” to assist in covering the general operating costs of the Music Patrons. There are also costs for new members including purchasing marching shoes. Uniforms, including our summer uniforms and a show shirt, are provided to each member by BWSD and the Music Patrons.

How can my parents get involved?

All parents should consider joining the Baldwin Highlander Music Patrons, our parent support group. Further, please fill out our volunteer interest form so we can connect you with the areas that you are best equipped to help in. Please note that any individual who will have contact with students as part of their volunteer work must submit a volunteer application through the Baldwin-Whitehall School District.

What if I play a sport? Can I still do marching band?

We are willing to work with almost any sport’s schedule (even football!) and most coaches are open to working with us to make things work. Although you will be very busy while trying to balance two very time consuming activities with school work, most who have done so in the past have found it to be very rewarding. Contact Mr. Steele to discuss your particular situation.

I still have questions. How can I find out more? And how do I get updated info throughout the year?

Please contact Mr. Steele with any additional questions. Our website (<http://hsband.bwmusic.net/>) has a wealth of great information and a constantly updated schedule. Submit your contact info through our “Communication” page to be added to our email and phone lists. We release a “Baldwin Bugle” newsletter after almost every rehearsal...make sure your child brings one home every time! Finally, follow the band on Twitter @Baldwin_Band or set up a RSS news feed from our webpage news page for last-minute changes and updates.

HIGHLANDER MARCHING BAND ATTENDANCE POLICY

Included with this packet is the first draft of this year's calendar. All performance and rehearsal dates should be considered mandatory. Additional mandatory performances may be announced throughout the calendar year. **Please follow through on the commitment you have made to your fellow band members. Empty drill spots hurt everyone.**

All rehearsals and performances are required. As with school, illness and death in the family are excused absences. **Please submit all absences (even emergencies after the fact) to the online absence form at <http://hsband.bwmusic.net/absence.html>.**

Absences due to vacation, weddings, or other major family commitments are not automatically excused. However, reasonable exceptions will be made at the discretion of the band director. BHS Summer Gym is an excused absence if the student is enrolled in a music course. Students who miss morning rehearsals will be asked to attend a "catch up session" after each summer gym session. Please submit potential conflicts with rehearsals to the online absence page (see above) as soon as possible and at least two weeks prior to the absence.

Students must be present for at least half of a school day in order to be eligible for rehearsal/performance. Students may still attend if their absence is excused (college visit, doctor's appointment, funeral, etc.) Missing school on a Friday does not prevent a student from attending rehearsals and/or performances on a Saturday.

Work is never an excused absence. Please give a copy of the band schedule to your employer and share with them the commitment you have made to participate in band this year. We understand that employers at times ignore band schedules...please communicate your situation with Mr. Steele in person and **understand that absences related to work will still result in being held out of the weekend's performances.** Additionally, homework in other courses is not an acceptable excuse for missing rehearsal. Please plan ahead with your school work to ensure your attendance at rehearsal.

Students with **unexcused** absences may be removed from the organization based on the following point schedule.

Absence from rehearsal (except band camp)	1 point
Absence from band camp	2 points
Absence from performances	3 points

When a student reaches 6 points in any season, he/she may be automatically, without question, removed from the band.

All excuses for any and all absences should be submitted to the online absence form at <http://hsband.bwmusic.net/absence.html>.

AUTOMATIC CONSEQUENCES –

- Any weekly absences still unexcused at 5:00 PM on Friday will result in a suspension from weekend performances. This includes missing for work.
- Any students absent from our Thursday rehearsal for **any** reason may only perform with director approval.
- Any student found to have submitted misleading information on the online absence form will automatically be suspended for weekend performances. Please communicate honestly and clearly with Mr. Steele regarding absences. Plan ahead!
- If suspended from a performance, students are still expected to attend the event and sit in the stands, in uniform, with the band. Attending an event out of uniform or sitting in the crowd away from the band is not acceptable and will result in further consequences. This policy also applies when students are unable to perform due to illness...please stay home and rest if you are too sick to perform!

INELIGIBILITY

Policy 122 – Extracurricular Activities

In order to be eligible for extracurricular activities, a student must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the principal as full time curriculum. A student shall be placed on academic probation if they fail to maintain a 2.0 overall grade point average and passing grades in English, mathematics, social studies, and science (if scheduled). A student on academic probation shall have their academic progress monitored by the principal or designee on a weekly basis and shall remain on academic probation for the remainder of the season for the activity in which the student is participating.

A student will be declared academically ineligible for extracurricular activities if they fail to maintain a minimum of passing grades in at least four full-credit subjects, or the equivalent, as of each Friday during the grading period. Additionally, any student on academic probation that is not making adequate progress as determined by the principal or designee shall also be declared ineligible as of each Friday during the grading period.

Procedure:

- On Friday of each week students with an academic eligibility issue will receive notification from the band director. Those that have been placed on probation will be asked to complete a probation reflection and form a plan for improving their grades. Those that have been ruled ineligible will be ineligible for performances from Sunday until the following Saturday.
- Those that are on probation must submit their probation forms no later than Tuesday of the following week.
- Students who fail to follow their probationary action plan or whose grades fail to improve in a reasonable time will be ruled ineligible for the following week. Students will remain ineligible until acceptable progress is shown with progress being monitored on a weekly basis.

Examples:

- A student is failing English but passing Social Studies, Science, Band, and Math. This student would be placed on probation and would need to create a plan to improve their grade in English. If they make acceptable progress and submit weekly probation forms, they will remain eligible.
- A student is failing English and Science. Their other classes are Band, Math, and Social Studies, as well as two study halls. This student would be ineligible because they are not passing four full-year classes or the equivalent. Half-year courses DO count towards the four class standard as long as they meet every day.
- A student is failing English, Math, and Science. They are passing Band, Social Studies, Spanish, and Piano. This student is technically still eligible and placed on probation. However, pending the reasons behind their academic issues, this student could be made ineligible at any time by the director and/or administration in order to focus on improving their grades.

Ineligible students may not participate in any band performances but may still participate in rehearsals.

Please be sure to consult our Social Probation Procedure for information on how absenteeism and tardiness can affect your participation in band.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND SOCIAL PROBATION

The BHS Social Probation Procedure exists to hold students accountable for their attendance. Absenteeism and tardiness are serious issues that can have an extremely negative effect on a student's education and, as such, are treated very seriously.

When a student has accumulated 10 or more absences from school (including days tardy), the student will be placed on social probation. This includes all absences (excused or unexcused) except for those that are accompanied by a doctor's note. All excuses must be submitted within three school days in order to be accepted.

In addition to other restrictions, students who are placed on social probation are not permitted to attend ensemble performances of any kind. This includes our annual trip; no refund of trip funds paid is guaranteed. Students are permitted to attend practices and rehearsals.

In order to be removed from social probation, the student must meet with an administrator to review their attendance, academics and disciplinary record to determine if social probation will be revoked. Attendance must remain infraction free for 30 school days in order for consideration to be made for social probation to be removed.

OUR FOUR BAND EXPECTATIONS

1. Early is on time; on time is late. Please allow 10-15 minutes before our scheduled rehearsal start time to prepare for rehearsal. Simply arriving at the start time is not considered on time. Be ready and make sure you are at every minute of every rehearsal!
2. No talking during rehearsal...know when it is appropriate to talk out and when it causes harm. Rehearsing well will be the single biggest factor in our success as an ensemble this year!
3. Listen and follow directions. Commands such as "band ten hut" and "set" must be followed immediately at all times. You will never be asked to do something without reason. Defiance will not be tolerated!
4. Be respectful of each other, our staff, our chaperones, our ensemble, and our school. Simple things make a difference: say please and thank you; don't seek attention in negative ways; represent yourself, our ensemble, our school, and our community well at all times.

Remember: Pride, Discipline, Respect and Commitment! These values, and a desire to always make ourselves and our group better, should drive all we do

Violations of any of the above expectations will result in consequences. These can include a verbal warning, a 20 minute afterschool band detention, a performance suspension, and/or referral to the office. Our philosophy is that consequences do not exist to be a punishment; they exist to assist in motivation and learning proper behavior. Therefore, all attempts will be made to customize consequences to each specific situation with each particular student. Chronic violation of our expectations can result in removal from the band.

PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES

1. Students should wear their uniforms properly at all times and behave properly while in uniform. We represent our school and community at all times.

2. By default, the band will move as one unit.
3. Parents and students who are not with the band (non-band students and non-chaperone parents) should not be permitted to sit with the band at games or competitions. Please alert the director of any potential situations.
4. No electronic devices, homework, or outside food should be with students in the stands. Trips to the concession stand are not permitted. Approved snacks for the whole ensemble are permitted. Exceptions can be made by the director on an individual basis.
5. Students should be in their seats and attentive at all times while in the stands and should sit with their sections.
6. Coats, gloves, etc. are permitted in the stands but cannot be worn for performance.
7. When given free time in a venue, students should stay in groups of three or more.
8. All BWSO rules apply at all times.

BUS GUIDELINES

1. No co-ed seating is permitted; students should remain in their assigned seats at all times.
2. Students should not sleep in the aisles. This is a safety issue.
3. All electronic devices should have headphones. No music or other noise that might affect others will be permitted.
4. All Baldwin bus policies apply.
5. Students should remain seated on the bus at all times. Unless instructed otherwise, wait for an OK from the director or staff before leaving the bus.

FUNDRAISING

The Baldwin Highlander Music Patrons support the band in a number of ways. Financially, the Patrons generate funds that provide our students with meals on competition days, t-shirts, yearly awards, additional staff, and adjudicators, among other things. They play a tremendous role in making our program the vibrant band program that it is. To assist the Patrons with raising these funds, the first \$70 fundraised by each student is assigned to the general fund. **Each student is asked to fundraise at least \$70 or make a contribution of \$70 to the Music Patrons.**

COSTS

The Highlander Band Program is fortunate to have most of its financial needs met by the Baldwin-Whitehall School District. However, to address the other financial needs of our group, we ask each member to provide the following. The fundraising “fair share”, mentioned below, funds the many benefits each student receives through the Baldwin Highlander Music Patrons.

For instrumentalists: "Fair Share" - \$70
Marching Shoes - \$25
Black and White marching gloves (1 pair provided each year)
Black socks (one pair short, one pair tall provided each year)
A "generic" white shirt to be worn under uniform
Some students may be asked to provide their own instruments – others are provided.

For colorguard: "Fair Share" - \$70
Guard Shoes - \$35
Black Under Armor
Make-up
Tights
Hair Scrunchy
Earrings
Other uniform accessories as needed

MUSIC PATRONS

Our Music Patrons meet on the second Tuesday of each month (except December) in the North Cafeteria at Baldwin High School. **Each band member is asked to fundraise or donate a yearly "fair share" of \$70 to support this organization that provides so much for our students.** Come join us and find out how you can support the band!

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

The Highlander Marching Band has a number of defined student leadership positions:

1. Drum Majors – The drum majors are the chief musical leaders of the band. They conduct each performance from the field and assist in leading marching rehearsals, stretching routines, music rehearsals, sectionals, and other tasks.

2. Section Leaders – Each wind section of the band has a designated section leader. This role is primarily organizational with the section leader holding responsibility for keeping their section informed and prepared at each rehearsal and performance.
3. Seniors – As a senior member of the band, our 12th graders are expected to share their knowledge and experience with the underclassmen in our group.
4. Everyone Else! – Everyone in our ensemble needs to take responsibility for leading our group towards our shared goals!

The chain of command for our ensemble is as follows:

Director -> Staff -> Drum Major -> Section Leaders -> Seniors -> Other upperclassmen -> Freshmen

Questions should be directed FIRST to the next step up the chain. During a rehearsal, only the director, staff and drum majors should make corrections...raise your hand with questions during rehearsal so we can stay focused on the goals of the rehearsal. Mutual respect among all band members is key to our success!

MUSIC COURSES AND ENSEMBLES

In addition to the Highlander Marching Band, The Baldwin-Whitehall School District also offers a number of additional music courses and ensembles.

Curricular Music Courses – Meet each day throughout the school year

- Symphonic Band – Our band course for brass and woodwind players
- Concert Band – Percussion – Our band course for percussionists
- Stage Band – An auditioned jazz group with traditional instrumentation
- Orchestra – Our group for traditional orchestral stringed instruments
- Guitar – An introduction to the guitar, geared towards beginners
- Piano I & II – An introduction to the piano, geared towards beginners
- Highlander Choir – Our curricular choral group

Extracurricular Ensembles – Meet afterschool

- Wind Ensemble – An auditioned groups for winds and percussion
- Indoor Drumline – A marching percussion ensemble that meets in the winter and spring
- Indoor Guard – A visual ensemble that meets in the winter and spring
- Pit Orchestra – An ensemble to provide accompaniment to our Spring Musical
- Pep Band – An impromptu group of musicians who provide entertainment at select basketball games
- Spring Musical Cast/Crew – A Broadway-style musical
- Baldwinaires – An auditioned choral group

SCHEDULING INFORMATION – New Members

Students coming into ninth grade have the following requirements:

- English
- Math
- Social Studies
- Science (Biology or Honors Biology which comes with a lab)
- Media/Tech Apps. (half credit)

PE (half credit)

Lunch

Two periods of electives if no lab with biology

Students can use their lunch as another class period if permission is granted from a parent/guardian. Some students choose to take a world language which limits them to one elective period.

The two most common scheduling scenarios for 9th graders:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Biology | 1. Honors Bio. |
| 2. English | 2. Lab/PE |
| 3. Civics | 3. Civics |
| 4. Math | 4. Math |
| 5. Lunch or Elective | 5. Lunch or Elective |
| 6. PE/Tech Media | 6. Tech Media/Elective (half year) |
| 7. Elective or Language | 7. English |
| 8. Elective | 8. Elective |

Depending on scheduling availability, sometimes a lab can be scheduled during the same period as an elective; the student would go to their lab one or two days per week and attend the elective during the other days. As PE must only be taken twice in four years, students may also choose to forgo taking PE during their 9th grade year with the understanding that it must be taken in the future. Summer gym is also an option.

In short, it is possible to take a music elective and still have room in your schedule for other elective options, contingent on your situation regarding labs, a world language, and/or taking a class during lunch. It is also possible to take more than one music elective.

PRIVATE LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Although we believe the instruction students receive in the Highlander Band Program to be of the highest quality, we also believe that individual study with an expert instructor on a student's particular instrument is needed in order for each student to truly maximize their musical potential. A list of recommended lesson instructors can be obtained from Mr. Steele. Please consider giving your child the gift of private music lessons on their instrument.

OPTIONAL PMEA EVENTS

The Pennsylvania Music Educators Association hosts numerous optional honors events each year for students in grades 9-12. Most fall into one of two categories: festivals that are selected by audition and festivals that are chosen by a “paper audition”. Dates and locations are listed below. You must be available to attend all required rehearsals and performances in order to participate in any of the events below. See Mr. Steele with any questions.

Auditioned Festivals – these festivals require the preparation of a specific piece. Audition music is available from Volkwein’s Music in Robinson. A small fee, usually \$5 is assessed to all who audition. These festivals are available to students in grades 9-12...auditions usually take place in the fall.

- Honors String Orchestra
- Honors Band
- Honors Jazz

“Paper” Auditioned Festivals – these festivals require you to fill out an application, available in the “Documents” section of our website (hsband.bwmusic.net), which must be submitted to Mr. Steele no later than September 15. Senior High District Band and Senior High District Orchestra audition into Region Band/Orchestra, which then feeds the PA All-state Ensembles. Both Senior and Junior High District Orchestra accept both strings and winds; however, wind players who wish to participate in Senior High District Orchestra are selected based on their placement at Honors Band.

- District 1 West Senior High Band (grades 10-12)
- District 1 West Junior High Band (grade 9 only)
- District 1 Senior High Orchestra (grades 10-12)
- District 1 Junior High Orchestra (grade 9 only)

Visit <http://district1.pmea.net> for information on festival dates and audition materials.

UNIFORM INFORMATION

Our band uniforms are to be worn with pride. Each band member is responsible for caring for the uniform in such a way that it will be in good condition for the student who will wear it next. Please note that all uniforms will be stored at the high school. No uniform or part will be taken home at any time without prior approval. Uniforms will be sent for cleaning directly from the school.

All uniform fittings will take place during regularly scheduled rehearsals.

1. No trousers, pants, jeans, shorts, etc. are to be worn under the uniform trousers at any time. Wearing other items under the trousers will break down the fibers in the fabric and shorten life span.
2. Only a white T-shirt (provided by the music patrons) may be worn under the uniform jacket. No sweatshirts, sweaters, or other coats of any kind. In the case of extremely cold weather, Under Armor shirts and pants may be worn under the uniform.
3. A pair of white gloves, a pair of black gloves, a pair of short black socks (worn with the summer uniform), and a pair of long black socks (worn with the Class A uniform) are provided to each member annually. Replacement socks and gloves may be purchased from the music patrons. All band and auxiliary members are required to purchase marching shoes. Auxiliary members will be given a list of additional auxiliary items (tights, etc.). All items are to be cleaned and polished weekly. No shoes are to be placed in garment bags at any time. These items must be taken home after each performance.
4. All students will pick up their uniform before each performance in the uniform storage room. At the conclusion of each performance, uniforms (including hats and plumes) will be returned to the storage area and properly stored. Please allow extra time before and after each performance.
5. Unless specifically designated, there will be no eating or drinking in uniform at any time.
6. All students will be instructed when and where to put on/take off uniforms. No student will be permitted to dress or undress on the bus at any time. Specific instructions will be given prior to each performance.
7. While in either uniform, students are not permitted to wear jewelry of any kind, including earrings and wristbands. Students with long hair should have it pulled up for performances.
8. A rain coat will be provided for each student when they are needed. After a performance when the rain coat is used, it is to be hung on a hanger and placed where instructed.

Replacement Costs

Uniforms are property of the Baldwin-Whitehall School District and are paid for by the taxpayers. If a band member damages any part, it is the parents' responsibility to pay for the item. If damage occurs, the band member will receive a bill from the high school office. The band member's report card and/or diploma will be withheld until the charges listed below have been paid to the school district. Please review with your child the care and use instructions provided and make sure they understand proper uniform care.

Jackets - \$250

Pants - \$105

Hats - \$50

Zipper replacement - \$35

Plumes - \$25

Gauntlets/pair - \$45

Garment Bags - \$15

Raincoats - \$40

Flags - \$30-60

Socks - \$2

Gloves - \$3

Auxiliary football uniform - \$140

Auxiliary competition uniform - \$140

Summer uniform shirt - \$26

Summer uniform shorts - \$20

Summer uniform belt - \$6