

NORTH HILLS MARCHING BAND



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2017-2018 SEASON

WWW.NHIPA.ORG

FORWARD

The North Hills Marching Band Student Handbook creates a structure for all events and activities in conjunction with the high school marching band. The North Hills Marching Band Student Handbook is an extension of the North Hills High School Student Handbook and is meant to provide valuable information about the marching band. Parents and students should be familiar with the handbook and consult it as a primary source of regulations and procedures of the North Hills Marching Band.

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BAND HISTORY

The North Hills Marching Band has a history of nearly 70 years. Known throughout Western Pennsylvania as “Thee Band of Pride, Tradition and Excellence,” the present structure was created when the communities of Ross and West View combined to create the North Hills School District in 1953. The first director of the marching band was Mr. James Caruso (1946-1960). Mr. Warren Mercer succeeded him, serving from 1961 through 1989. Succeeding Mr. Mercer was Ms. Areta Kalogeras who served as Director for nineteen years (1989-2008). Succeeding Ms. Kalogeras was Mr. David Matthews who served as the director for three years. Currently, the band is under the direction of Mr. Len Lavelle, an instrumental music teacher at the North Hills Senior High School.

The North Hills has a long and accomplished reputation in the Pittsburgh area and is generally recognized as one of the top high school band programs in the country. The marching band has performed for many prestigious events and earned numerous awards, trophies and recognition throughout its history.

ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The marching band is an extracurricular activity for music students in grades 8-12 of the North Hills School District. The marching band allows students who play musical instruments an opportunity to learn a wide variety of music, participate in many public performances, and serve the North Hills community. A requisite of instrumentalist participation in the marching band is that the student be enrolled in an ensemble music class during the school day. Members of the Flagline and Majorettes provide a visual enhancement aspect of the musical performances. Tech Crew/Librarian members execute the non-performance responsibilities of the band.

The marching band currently performs at all North Hills varsity football games, the North Hills Band Festival, several other area band festivals, community parades and events, the Pittsburgh Veteran’s Day Parade, and the Kennywood’s Fall Fantasy Parade. In addition, the North Hills Marching Band has been invited to perform outside of the Pittsburgh area in parades and events including the Presidential Inaugural Parade, Chicago St. Patrick’s Day Parade, New York City St. Patrick’s Day Parade, Washington D.C Cherry Blossom Parade, nationally televised NCAA Basketball games and Main Street of Walt Disney World and first place at adjudication festivals throughout the country.

The North Hills Marching Band is a traditional, “Big Ten” style marching band. Trademark features of the group are its precision marching, high march step and commitment to high-level musical performance.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Student attendance at rehearsals and performances is essential to maintain the unity in the group and high standards in performance. Therefore, students are needed to attend all scheduled rehearsals and performances. Punctuality is also an important aspect of being a responsible band member. Keep in mind that “If you are on time, you are late.”

Rookie Nights and Summer Band Attendance (June and July) - Included as excused absences during the summer band practices are family vacations, camps, etc. Sport schedules can also be accommodated through communicating with the directors. Optional activities should be scheduled around rehearsals. The band director should be notified in advance of an absence for it to be considered excused.

Pre-Band Camp and Band Camp Attendance - Attendance at Pre-Band Camp and Band Camp activities is mandatory for all students. Please make summer arrangements around these activities. Pre-Band Camp and Band Camp are scheduled a year in advance each season.

Rookie Scheduling - All efforts are made to accommodate rookies as they become aware of the marching band schedule. Please contact Mr. Lavelle to discuss any conflicts so that we can reach a solution together.

Excused Absence – During the school season, if you have a conflict with a scheduled rehearsal or event, an excused absence may be granted with prior request to the director. Examples may include WPIAL events, other school events and once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. Again, sport schedules can also be accommodated through communicating with the directors. Please discuss these with the directors as soon as they arise, preferable before the season begins.

Unexcused Absence – Anything not included above can be considered an unexcused absence. Work is not considered an excused absence. Students that work should inform their employer of their obligation to the band and in most cases the employer will be happy to work around the band schedule. Other examples of unexcused absences include rock concerts, attending sporting events, etc. Tardiness may be considered 1/2 an unexcused absence.

Consequences - Students that have an unexcused absence from a scheduled practice or performance may be ineligible to participate in the next scheduled performance. Students will be expected to attend the event in full uniform and perform with the band in the stands but not in the field activities. Students with two or more unexcused absences may be dismissed from the group at the director’s discretion.

Illness

In case of student illness or emergency, the director should be contacted as soon as possible of the student’s whereabouts.

Cooperation - It is our desire for our students to have a positive school and band experience. Our directors are here to support our students. Please talk with us about conflicts as soon as they arise so that we may come to the best resolution.

If there is something we can do to help, please ask!

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Marching Band members are expected to treat other band members, directors, parents, and any other persons or property they may come in contact as a member of the group, with respect.

Band members are expected to follow all North Hills School District policies. These policies can be found in the North Hills School District Student Handbook. Examples of possible infractions include: inappropriate behavior, harassment, improper interpersonal behavior, destruction of school property, fighting and/or use of profanity. Such infractions may be referred to the district level with the house principal.

It is a **privilege** to be a part of Thee Band of Pride Tradition and Excellence. **Students may be removed from participation in the marching band, at the director's discretion, for any repeated occurrence of the examples above, repeated breaking of the performance policy, or any serious infraction of the school behavior code.**

PERFORMANCE POLICY

Students should report to block band, in uniform, prior to the designated meeting time for a performance. (Block band is a term that refers the formation that band members report to for roll call and inspection.) Students should be ready to step off for performance or to board buses for an event in block band.

Students may be asked to sit out a performance after inspection for any of the following reasons:

1. Wearing the uniform in an inappropriate manner
2. The uniform looks unkempt, stained, or wrinkled due to poor care
3. Shoes are not properly cleaned and polished
4. Long hair is not tucked into the band hat
5. Failure to remove all visible jewelry
6. Inability to satisfactorily perform aspects of the drill, music, or routine
7. Cannot stay in step for extended periods of time
8. Do not have their instrument or another item needed to perform
9. Are chewing gum
10. Failure to complete and return medical forms and information
11. Are unprepared due to extended absence
12. Absence from a practice prior to a performance
13. Behavior infractions of any type

TRAVEL/TRANSPORTATION

Students are expected to travel with the band to and from all activities.

In the event it is necessary for a parent to drive a student to or from a band activity (where group transportation is provided) the following policy will apply:

1. Prior written notification must be received and approved by the director.
2. Students will only be permitted to leave with parents or an adult authorized by the parents. Parents must meet the student at the band buses and a director **MUST** see the parents and student leave together.

UNIFORMS

These are the essential **summer uniform** items you should have:

1. Summer Band polo shirt (worn tucked in)
2. Black pants (twill/cotton style; no jeans or stretch pants)
3. Black socks
4. Black belt
5. Clean and polished white marching bucks.
A damp sponge can be used for cleaning. White shoe polish can be used to keep shoes in good condition. Mr. Clean Magic Erasers work well for removing scuffs.

These are the essential **winter uniform** items you should have:

1. Band jacket and pants, white socks and white gloves
2. Polished white marching bucks
A damp sponge can be used for cleaning. White shoe polish can be used to keep shoes in good condition. Mr. Clean Magic Erasers work well for removing scuffs.
3. Band T-shirt
4. Raincoat and raincoat bag
5. Hat, Hat box or clear plastic bag or cover
6. Garment Bag

HAT

The hat is to be worn for as follows:

1. Long hair is neatly arranged so that it fits up inside the hat
2. The brim of the hat is level with the eyebrows
3. The chin strap should rest on the chin or under the chin

The hat is to be cared for as follows:

1. Store your hat in the provided box
2. Please put your name inside your hat on a piece of tape.
3. You should take a dry white cloth and wipe your hat off, inside and outside, after every performance.

COAT AND PANTS

The coat is to be worn as follows:

1. Every coat should have a sweat collar snapped inside the jacket neck. The neck collar should be hooked shut.
2. If your coat fits properly your sleeves should touch the wrist area of your gloves when your instrument is up and you should have room to breathe. You should not be able to see the side adjustment zippers on your pants if your coat fits properly.
3. You should always wear a band shirt or plain white t-shirt, sweatshirt, or long sleeve underwear shirt under your jacket. Sleeveless shirts, tank tops and colored t-shirts are not permitted. Sleeveless shirts allow under the arm stains to occur on the jacket.

The pants are to be worn as follows:

1. The pants will fit high up on the chest. They should be adjusted so that the bottom of the pants touches the tops of the shoes, about 2 inches from the ground. The pants should not drag on the ground.
2. Please hem your to meet the requirements above using thread. Do not use hemming tape or adhesive. NEVER CUT UNIFORMS TO MAKE ALTERATIONS.
3. The sides adjust with zippers and the length can be adjusted with the suspenders. A SAFETY PIN SHOULD BE USE TO KEEP BUCKELS IN PLACE – THEY WILL SLIP DOWN.
4. Shorts, long underwear or sweatpants may be worn under the pants, but they should not be visible at all when you move, stand still or mark time. JEANS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO BE WORN UNDER THE UNIFORM.

The coat and pants are to be cared for as follows:

1. The uniform should be hung up after every performance.
2. It is often a good idea to turn the uniform inside out and let it air out before you put it in the garment bag.
3. When uniforms get wet hang them to dry as soon as possible.
4. UNIFORMS ARE DRY-CLEAN ONLY. It is suggested that they are cleaned after every two performances or after getting wet.
5. The sweat collar can be washed in mild detergent and drip-dried.
6. A plastic or a good wooden hanger for your uniform.
7. If your uniform is in need of repairs or mending bring that to the attention of the uniform chairman. Uniform buttons are available but should be attached with button thread, which is much stronger than traditional thread.

UNIFORM ACCESSORIES

The gloves are to be worn as follows:

1. All sections wear white gloves except for the percussion section. White gloves may be purchased for \$3.00 a pair at any band practice.
2. Woodwinds must cut the fingers out at the knuckle
3. Gloves should be cleaned before performances: machine wash in cold water. We suggest line drying to avoid shrinking.
4. It is recommended that students carry an extra pair of gloves

Shoes and socks are to be worn and cared for as follows:

1. Students must provide themselves with white marching bucks. A shoe order day is scheduled every year for your convenience.
2. Shoes must be cleaned before every performance.
3. Students wear plain white socks with the winter uniform and plain black socks with the summer uniform.

Raincoat, garment bag and headband information:

1. Students will be issued a raincoat and garment bag.
2. Students may wear a solid red, white or black headband at cold weather games.
3. The garment bag is for proper storage of your uniform and is not to be used outside of marching band activities. Please do not put adhesive tape on your garment bag.
4. The raincoat can be wiped down with a damp cloth and hung to dry. When the raincoat gets wet hang it up immediately to prevent mold.
5. Please put your name on a piece of tape on your raincoat bag.
6. Keep your raincoat in your garment bag during marching season so you do not forget it.
7. During the offseason store your raincoat open.

MISCELLANEOUS UNIFORM INFORMATION

1. You are not permitted to eat or drink in uniform other than refreshments and snacks that are provided.
2. Do not bring valuables to performances.
3. Makeup should be understated or not worn when in uniform.
4. Nail polish must be removed for performances.
5. Students are not permitted to change out of uniform on the bus. Only the jacket may be removed and hung up.
6. Only wear your uniforms at official band functions.

LOST/DAMAGED UNIFORMS

Students are assigned a uniform at the beginning of the season. They are expected to return the uniform in the same condition that they received it. Any damaged piece of uniform beyond reasonable wear will be replaced at the student's expense.

UNIFORM COMMITTEE

For assistance or additional questions please contact one of the uniform committee chairs.

PRACTICE ATTIRE/EQUIPMENT

1. Dress for the weather, both warm and cold
2. Wear socks and tennis shoes (No sandals, flip-flops, or boots)
3. Use sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat
4. Bring a water bottle

NUTRITION

Marching Band is a physical activity. It is essential for their success that students are nourished and hydrated properly before rehearsals and performances.

GLOSSARY OF EVENTS

GET ACQUAINTED NIGHT - The purpose of “Get Acquainted Night” is to provide an overview of the opportunities for our students as they progress through the band program.

ROOKIE NIGHTS - The purpose of “Rookie Nights” are to provide an opportunity for new members to get oriented to the band program, marching fundamentals, and music repertoire. Rookie Nights are held during the weeks prior to the start of summer band practice.

SUMMER BAND - The purpose of the Summer Band Program is to begin learning the fundamentals of marching, the musical selections, and the drills and formations used in the pre-game and halftime performances. This is a four-week program. The band rehearses Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 6-9 PM at the Middle School.

PRE-BAND CAMP AND BAND CAMP- Pre-Band Camp and Band Camp are MANDATORY for all students. Pre-Band Camp is held at North Hills. Band Camp is held at Camp Kon-O-Kwee in Zeligople. The Band Camp experience is a very valuable experience for the students. It not only affords them the opportunity to perfect and polish their marching routines and music, but also to develop an “esprit de corps.”

BAND FESTIVAL – The North Hills Marching Band has hosted its own band festival for over 50 years. It is a great point of pride for our community and our largest fundraiser of the year. All families are asked to volunteer for the success of the event.

STADIUM REVIEW - A concert performance of all the pieces from the season. This is when our annual CD is made.

MARCHING BAND BANQUET – An evening, usually in January, to recognize our students and their successes from the season.

BAND-O-RAMA – The Music In Our Schools Month Concert featuring all of our hilltop bands.

TOUR – The culminating experience each season for our marching band, as we travel to perform and/or compete together around the country.

MEDICAL

Marching Band is a physical activity. All students must have a completed medical history/emergency medical release form on file. Students that have any medical conditions that would restrict their ability to safely participate in all aspects of the band program will be required to have a physical and provide a doctor's release before they can be included in a rehearsal or performance.

There are three forms we should be aware of, which are all available at www.nhipa.org

Medical Form (PMEA) – to be filled out and kept on file with the band

Permission to Administer Medication Form – to be completed for ANY medication that is needed by our students while traveling with the band beyond the NHSD Standing Order. (even OTC). This form requires a doctor's signature and will also be kept on file with the band.

Overnight Field Trip Form – to be completed to allow students to travel overnight with the band. This form will be passed out as opportunities arise.

DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION

Any policies not covered by this guide will be determined at the band director's discretion.

SUPPORT

Our band program is one band. We are here to support each other in any way that we can. By supporting each other we continue to create an experience for each other that second to none. We would like to support the band in any way possible. We can only help if you communicate with us what we can do to support you. We are looking for a great year together!!!

MARCHING BAND STAFF

Mr. Len Lavelle	(412) 318-1402 ext. 3049	lavelle@nhsd.net
Mr. Chris Ballentine	(412) 318-1402 ext. 4549	ballentinec@nhsd.net
Mr. Anthony Thomas		thomasa@nhsd.net
Ms. Maura Rushlander		rushlanderm@nhsd.net
Mrs. Amanda Butler		butlera@nhsd.net
Mrs. Katie Wisniewski		wisniewskik@nhsd.net
Mrs. Jessica Webster - Elementary Band Director		websterj@nhsd.net
Mr. Chris Rodack - MS Band Director		rodackc@nhsd.net
Mr. Jeff Lucas - Elementary Band Director		lucasj@nhsd.net
Mr. Phil Webster - Drumline Instructor		

COMMUNICATION

- For more information on the organization and events held throughout the year, please frequent our website: www.nhipa.org
- When registering for Marching Band, you register for our two weekly newsletters: “This Week in the NHIPA” and the “NHIPA Weekly Fundraising Update”
- The “Remind” app will also be used for some sections and events

STUDENT/PARENT STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Students must have a completed student contract on file that confirms they have read and understand our handbook. Please return the following page by June 23rd along with your \$25 band camp deposit.

STUDENT/PARENT STATEMENT **OF COMMITMENT**

We want our time in the marching band to be positive and meaningful. The first step in accomplishing this is working together.

I understand, as a member of the North Hills Marching Band, that:

- I am expected to follow the guidelines and rules as explained in the North Hills Marching Band Student Handbook
- infractions of policies may result in suspension from participation in events or removal from group
- at all times during participation in the band, members represent the North Hills School District, and are also subject to the rules and consequences outlined in the North Hills Middle School and High School Handbooks.

I have read and understood the policies contained within the North Marching Band Student Handbook. My signature indicates my commitment and compliance to the policies described above.

(Parent Signature)

(Student Signature)