



# **BAND HANDBOOK**

2008-2009

**How to thrive in band!**

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## WELCOME WCA MUSIC BOOSTERS!!!!

Every band and choir student's parent is a MUSIC BOOSTER. We know that you will encourage your child's progress, and as a MUSIC BOOSTER you now have the **honor** of being a part of the entire WCA music program.

The Music Boosters Organization is the backbone of the WCA music program. With your support and prayer there is no limit to what the music students at Westlake will learn and accomplish. Your prayer covering is essential to the spiritual vitality of the music program and WCA.

The Music Boosters includes a group of volunteer parents who comprise an *advisory panel* to assist the band and choir directors in the organization of fundraising, fitting and maintenance of uniforms, chaperoning trips, and (hopefully in the future) the hosting of music festivals and contests. Additional roles of the advisory panel include helping to review policies of the band and choir, activities for the year, providing administrative support, (e.g., memos, activity information sheets for students/parents, *Music Notes* newsletter publication, etc.), and contacting all the music program parents via phone, when necessary. The advisory panel member volunteer roles are established through Music Booster meetings held approximately once per month in the evening at WCA. If you would like to participate on the advisory panel, ***please see the band director or choir director.***

The Music Boosters and advisory panel are asked to maintain a positive attitude toward the music lessons, curriculum, music directors, and the musical programs. The entire faculty realizes that your child has been blessed with God-given talents and it is their desire to help nurture and expand these talents to your child's fullest potential.

## BAND DESCRIPTIONS

### **BEGINNING BAND**

Beginning Band is for student in their first year of playing a band instrument. Students typically receive one 30 to 45 minute group lesson and one full band rehearsal per week, as part of the band program.

**Concert:** Spring Beginning Band Concert.

### **INTERMEDIATE BAND**

Intermediate Band is for students having successfully demonstrated skills above the Beginning Band level. Students typically receive one 30 to 45 minute group lesson and one full band rehearsal per week, as part of the band program.

**Concerts:** Christmas and Spring.

**Performances:** Solo and ensemble contest, at band director's recommendation.

### **CONCERT BAND**

Concert Band is for students having acquired the skills necessary to play music of an upper junior high to lower high school level, as determined by the Band Director. Students through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will typically receive one group lesson per week and the full band will rehearse three (3) times per week, as part of the band program.

Concert Band may participate in any or all of the following: performing for school programs, competing at contests, marching in parades, and/or music ministry by performing at area churches.

**Concerts:** Christmas, Spring, and some holiday all-school chapels.

## GENERAL POLICIES

Band is a performance-based, graded, curriculum class. **Attendance is not just essential; it is mandatory.** Remember, if your child is signed up for several different activities (i.e., extracurricular school activities, community sports programs, youth church activities), plus the normal school course-work, the director cannot excuse lack of practicing because of these types of events. Also being a parent, the director knows that all of these things are excellent, but that there are only so many days per week and so many hours in a day. Please help your child(ren) with their choice of activities by *not allowing* them to over schedule themselves.

You have made a large financial investment in the rental or purchase of a musical instrument. The only way to get the steady, consistent progress is to *practice!!!*

### **GRADES**

Grades are based on **attendance**, **practice record**, actual **performance** of the lesson assigned, and **attitude**.

#### **♫ Attendance**

Also, see additional guidelines under the “ATTENDANCE POLICY” section later in the Handbook, page 8.

Particularly for Concert Band students, attendance points are deducted from the band grade for absences and unexcused tardiness. These deductions are calculated based on the number of days in the quarter, divided by 100. **Attendance** counts full points; tardiness counts at one-half point. **Tardiness** is based on the student being in their seat; with the instrument tuned, warmed-up and ready to begin playing at the designated start time for band class period. “Cutting” band will not be tolerated, as it undermines the morale of the entire band and will be dealt with on an individual basis.

**♪ Practice Record**

Students through 8<sup>th</sup> grade must turn in a completed practice record weekly. For Beginning Band students, a practice record sheet is typically available in the band lesson book. Concert Band students, below high school level, must supply their own practice sheets. See sample suitable for photocopying in back of this handbook, page 13. Parents must sign the record in ink and grades will be given at the weekly lesson. Students not having a practice record two weeks in a row, or lacking a parent’s signature will receive a “Zero” and not receive a lesson.

PARENTS: Please do not “STRETCH the TRUTH” for your child. If there are unavoidable circumstances such as family gatherings, illness, exam weeks, special church function, etc., please send a note explaining the circumstances with your child on the day of the lesson.

**♪ Lesson Practice**

Students practicing two (2) times or less per week will receive an “F” for the week and may not receive a lesson. Students who persist in not practicing may be dropped from the program after a conference with the parent. Students playing multiple instruments will have adjusted practice time, as set by the band director.

*Advanced students* receiving lessons outside the school or high school students not taking private lessons are on the honor system and do not turn in a practice record. However, their grades are based on *attendance, performance* of the assigned music, and *attitude* -- all of which are equally weighted.

**BAND GRADING SCALE**

<b>Practice Record</b> 30 minutes or more per day		<b>CONCERT BAND</b> 33% of Grade Equally Weighted <b>Attendance</b> <b>Performance</b> <b>Attitude</b>
<b>BEGINNING and INTERMEDIATE BAND</b> 75% of Grade		
<u>Days Per Week</u>	<u>Grade</u>	
5	A	
4	B	
3	C	
2	D	
1 or less	F	

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

♪ **Concerts:** Attendance at concerts is mandatory except for extreme illness, death in the family, or engagements of long standing where the band director has been given advance notice in writing -- six (6) weeks in advance for programs listed on the school calendar, ten (10) days or more for programs not listed on the school calendar.

Band students must be seated in time for the warm-up and tuning session before the performance. Students not arriving in time to be warmed up and tuned with their respective band *will not be allowed to perform*. Parents anticipating a problem getting their child to the performance area on time need to notify the band director so that transportation arrangements can be made in advance.

♪ **Rehearsals Two Weeks Prior to Concerts:** depending upon the readiness of each band, the band director will sometimes schedule an additional practice or two, especially for Beginning Band. Students missing rehearsals the week before, or the week of a concert may not be permitted to perform. Students who have been extremely ill or have had a death in the family may be allowed to perform after their readiness to perform has been evaluated by the director. Although it may be difficult, vacation times should not be scheduled during concert times, if a student expects to be in the school band program.

(NOTE: The director **DOES NOT** conduct band rehearsals on a performance day.)

♪ **Class and Lesson Attendance:** Attendance at rehearsals is mandatory. Concert Band students who arrive after 7:50 a.m. must go to the school office for a tardy pass. Full-time secondary WCA students who are late to Concert Band rehearsal will receive a one-half point slip. The slip needs to be signed by a parent and returned to the office the next day of school. Any band student coming to school “not feeling well” will **NOT** be excused from band and returned to study hall or class without a note from the parent. Students “not feeling well” who do not have a note will be sent to the school office with the recommendation that they be sent home.



♪ **Chronic Health Problems:** Students having chronic problems with sinuses and ear infections should check with their physicians as to decongestants that can help prevent problems while playing. Students with active ear infections who are on antibiotics should take the medication prescribed for several days before resuming playing. Pain in the ears while playing indicates clogged sinuses and/or an ear infection. If the pain persists, a physician should be consulted.

## **PERFORMANCE DRESS CODE**

### ♪ **Informal Band Performances:**

(For performances on less formal occasions, i.e., special chapels, traveling on field trips, etc. The director will notify students in advance when the casual uniform is to be worn.) The required clothing is available from Land's End.

**Kahaki uniform slacks or Kahaki uniform skirts**

**Colbalt blue uniform polo shirts with WCA school logo**

### ♪ **Band Concerts and Contests**

**Black dress slacks or black ankle-length skirts**

(should have the appearance of going with the all-wool band jacket)

**White oxford shirt** (Land's End uniform works well) with button-up to collar suitable for clip-on bow tie or cross over women's tie. (No v-neck or round collared shirts.)

**PLEASE HAVE ALL SHIRTS WELL PRESSED!!**

**Shoes -- BLACK dress or tennis shoes; NO white soles.** No high top shoes.

**Black socks** -- Boys

**Black socks or Black nylons** – Girls

**Ties** -- may need to be purchased from the band director

Bow tie -- Boys

Cross tie -- Girls

## **HAIRSTYLES**

Hairstyles should conform to the rules set forth in the Westlake Christian Academy Student Handbook.

It is important that the band director see the student's eyes while they play. Since most of the direction given to the students while they perform is nonverbal, it is important that there is eye-to-eye contact.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Fundraising is our primary way of financing the purchase of large instruments, music stands, cabinets, or trips that the bands may take. Parents and students are strongly requested to participate in fundraising efforts or there may need to be additional fees assessed, particularly when the fundraiser is to be used for travel. Families requesting financial aid assistance have a responsibility to participate in music program fundraisers.

## **LOSS OR DAMAGE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Band uniforms, school-owned instruments, sheet music, concert band folders, and any other school-owned music equipment used by the students are the responsibility of the student using the equipment. Students losing or damaging equipment and/or music beyond normal wear and tear are responsible for replacement or repair at their own expense.

## PROGRAM FEE, SUPPLIES, AND RENTAL EXPENSES

### **BAND PROGRAM FEE**

The band program fee is determined each year by the WCA Board of Trustees and is due on the fifteenth of the month. In general, the band program fee covers lessons (individual or group) as the band director's schedule permits; band music library; school-owned instrument acquisition and maintenance; music stands; uniform purchase, maintenance and cleaning; and administration of the band program. Please write out a *separate check* made payable to W.C.A. marked "**BAND PROGRAM FEE**" and include the slip provided, so your payment is recorded properly. Place the check and slip in an envelope, also marked "**BAND PROGRAM FEE**", and turn it in to the school office. Unduly late payment may result in removal from the program until the fee is paid. If there is a financial problem, which prevents you from paying the fees, please contact the school office.

### **SUPPLY EXPENSE**

Musical instruments require various supplies either for maintenance or the actual playing of the instrument. All students receiving lessons generally require one or two lesson books per year. Students will be required to pay for supplies and books, as they receive them from the band director. You may pay by check made payable to WCA or cash sent in an envelope marked "**BAND SUPPLIES**" turned in directly to the band director.

## **INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE**

Musical instruments are intricate machines, which require maintenance from time to time. Woodwind instruments, with their complex mechanisms and pads require more maintenance and adjustments than brass instruments.

Students renting instruments from area music stores will be sent to that same store for maintenance. For students renting from the school-selected instrument supplier, the band director will typically arrange for maintenance. However, there may be instances where the parent will be responsible to drop off and pick up the instrument from the supplier.

The band director maintains school-owned instruments. Rent is paid to the school at a price set by the band department with administrative approval. The rental fee covers normal maintenance of the instrument. Excessive wear or damage to any school instrument caused either by neglect or accident is the responsibility of the parent, at the price determined by the company repairing or replacing the instrument.

## **INSURANCE**

School-owned instruments and equipment that do not leave the building are insured under the school's insurance policy.

Privately owned and school-owned instruments that leave the building with the students must be insured under the parent's homeowner's policy. If your child's instrument is valued over \$300.00, it would be a good idea to check your insurance policy to see how much coverage is offered for musical instruments.

Students "forgetting" their instruments at school over night and during weekends and holidays need to remember that their instruments are not covered by school insurance against damage, theft, or fire. An instrument left at school also indicates the student was not able to practice and band grades will be affected. It is important that students take their instruments **HOME** at night.

# WEEKLY PRACTICE RECORD

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Day	Minutes of Practice*	Reason Practice did not take Place
	Monday		
	Tuesday		
	Wednesday		
	Thursday		
	Friday		
	Saturday		
	Sunday		

\* As noted on the Band Grading Scale, page 7, practice should be a **minimum of 30 minutes** per day, **five** days per week.

Students playing multiple instruments may have adjusted practice time, as set by the band director.

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# WCA BAND HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

## STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I agree to support the rules and guidelines presented in the WCA Band Handbook AND agree to the following rules:

- Attend all scheduled practices
- Attend all concerts
- Maintain my appearance, as outlined in the WCA Student and Band Handbooks
- Arrive at concert in time to be warmed up and tuned
- Wear the appropriate clothing per the Performance Dress Code outlined in the Band Handbook
- Will take care of equipment and/or music or will be responsible for repair or replacement

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*\*\*\*\*

## PARENT AGREEMENT:

I have received and agree to support the WCA Band Handbook with my student. By signing this agreement, I accept ALL the rules and guidelines contained in the WCA Band Handbook, most specifically the following:

- **Student attendance at concerts is mandatory.** If my child cannot participate in a concert, agree to submit *advance notice in writing* to Mrs. Kurtz according to the following:
  - For a program listed on the school calendar, six (6) weeks.
  - For programs not listed on the school calendar, ten (10) days or more.
- Notify the band director so that transportation arrangements can be made in advance, if there's a problem anticipated getting my child to the performance area on time,
- Sign the weekly practice sheet to be turned in at the weekly lesson, when my child completes his/her practice, as appropriate for grade/band level per the Band Handbook.
- Understand because band is a performance-based, graded; curriculum class that grades are based on *attendance, performance* of the assigned music, and student's *attitude*.
- Support the Administration and Director by ensuring that my child maintains his/her appearance, as outlined in the WCA Student and Band Handbooks.
- Provide the appropriate apparel per Performance Dress Code.
- Pay fees for band, music books and instrument supplies in a timely and consistent manner.
- Maintain the appropriate insurance coverage for school and privately owned instruments.

Please share any special information about your child that will help us to better meet his/her needs. This information will be kept confidential. (Feel free to use the reverse of this page.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I am interested in participating on the volunteer Music Boosters Advisory Panel.