



# Mt. Spokane Wildcat Band and Color Guard Handbook

How we function as a group!

## WELCOME

As a student or parent/guardian of the Mt. Spokane High School Band and Color Guard program, you will be involved in one of the most EXCITING and entertaining performing arts programs in the state of Washington! The pursuit and achievement of excellence does not happen accidentally; It takes the combined efforts of our students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community. You must have the motivation, desire, and willingness to put in the time and energy necessary to continue our tradition of excellence. Band and Color Guard are groups that we like to consider our “school families” in which strong friendships and lasting relationships develop.

We ask that you follow instructions, understand and follow the policies and rules set forth, and above all, do your best and HAVE FUN! Having the “right kind” of fun is imperative. The rewards of discipline and hard work will pay off in so many other aspects of your life!

The information below is important to your success and the success of the organization. Even though it may seem to be “common sense,” don’t take anything for granted. If you have questions, just ask. Additionally, the material contained in the handbook is not meant to be memorized. Refer to the information on occasion and when you have questions.

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

As directors of this comprehensive band program, we believe it is important for the parents of our students to understand the importance of their role. The following expectations for parents and/or guardians have been created in hopes of assisting with this understanding and as a means of protecting the success and integrity of our ensembles.

## PARENT CODE

### General Program Expectations

All students, instructors, coaches, administrators, and parents recognize that the primary focus of the band program is the act of music education, participation and the enjoyment thereof, and that the Mead School District seeks to develop not only the physical, but also the psychological, emotional, and social well-being of its student performers for whom *participation is a privilege*.

It is expected that every individual connected with the Mt. Spokane Band and Color Guard program will adhere to codes of performance standards, sportsmanship, and ethical conduct, develop and maintain pride and loyalty in the

school system, demonstrate courtesy to chaperones, other bands, and focus primarily on team rather than individual successes. Students and parents that display acts of disruption to the process will be subject to the consequences listed below.

### **Expectations**

1. As parents/guardians, we will encourage our student(s) to participate following all student guidelines and expectations set forth by the directors in the Mt. Spokane HS Band Handbook and Mt. Spokane HS Student Handbook (available online).
2. As parents/guardians, we will assist in our students' achievement of the commitment they have made to each activity they choose to participate in (concert ensembles, jazz ensembles, marching band, basketball pep band, winter guard, indoor percussion, etc). This includes attendance at, and completion of, all scheduled rehearsals and events set forth by the directors and instructors.
3. As parents/guardians, we will attempt to participate as active members of our support system. This could include volunteering to: become officers of the "Bandstand", provide supervision, chaperone events, assist in fundraisers, drive equipment, sew flags and/or uniforms, repair equipment, design props, etc.

### **Consequences of Parent Expectation Violations**

1. As parents/guardians, we realize that a lack of encouragement or ability to follow expectations will have a significant effect on the students' achievement of individual and group objectives. Such actions may cause future participation to be suspended or terminated with possible effects on the students' grade.
2. In regards to the inability to achieve attendance and completion of all scheduled events; we, as parents/guardians, realize that students who do not achieve attendance and completion of all scheduled events will have a SEVERE adverse effect on the group's ability to achieve its objectives and quality performances. Students will most likely be suspended or terminated from participation indefinitely and may have their grade affected as a result. Future participation and roles within the program may be limited due to the lack of reliability of the parent and student performer.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **General Program Expectations**

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### **Expectations**

1. Students are not permitted to possess, consume, transmit, sell, and/or use non-prescribed or illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. Non-alcoholic beer, tobacco-less chewing products, etc., will be treated the same as real alcohol or tobacco products.

2. Students are prohibited from use of obscene or vulgar language.
3. Students will not steal or use another's property without permission.
4. Students engaging in any willful or overt act that will embarrass or detract from the team will jeopardize further participation in any/all components of the program.
5. Students are expected to adhere to the attendance policies set forth by the directors.
6. Student performers are subject to the provisions of this code continuously (during the school year) until they complete their eligibility as graduating seniors.
7. A student is expected to travel to and from contests or performances with the group when transportation is provided. Only on the personal request by a parent/guardian of a participant and with the approval of the principal/designee will this be set aside.
8. School owned equipment checked out by a participant in any activity is his/her responsibility. The loss or misuse of this equipment will be the financial obligation of the participant. Participants may not join any new activity until this issue has been resolved.

### **Consequences of Student Performer Expectation Violations**

1. Violation of this policy during the course of the school year or season may result in discipline, suspension, or expulsion from participation in contests or curricular subjects, AND/OR loss of awards, recognition for the season and possibly the year.
2. For either an in-season or out-of-season violation of this policy pertaining to substance use or abuse, the student will be required to participate in a district designated chemical/tobacco use education program prior to participating in future events. A parent/guardian or another district approved adult must participate with the student in at least the initial session of the education program.
3. A second violation of this policy (either an in-season or out-of-season violation) will result in suspension from participation in contests, awards and recognition for one calendar year from the date of determination of a violation.
4. A third violation of this policy (either an in-season or out-of-season violation) will result in permanent ineligibility for competition and/or participation.

Note: Compliance with this contract begins with the first practice or first day of class and concludes with the last event or school day.

### **CITIZENSHIP**

It could be said that the most important component of the band world is that piece that has nothing to do with music, but rather the development of the individual as a person and contributing member of a group, team, and society. With that in mind, we have adopted the citizenship standards set forth by our district that we believe to be extremely important and valuable.

1. Students who wish to participate in the Mt. Spokane Band classes and activities are visible representatives of their group, school and community. They are expected to maintain high standards of conduct in school

and during all school related travel and events. They are expected to assume the responsibilities of a positive role model. Conduct that detracts from those expectations, such as chemical use, criminal behavior, or unsportsmanlike behavior, may result in suspension or termination of participation.

2. Sportsmanship and integrity are solid expectations of co-curricular participants. Display of unsportsmanlike conduct may result in suspension or termination of participation.
3. Harassment, discrimination or hazing (initiation) will not be tolerated. This includes all such behavior that occurs on the basis of gender, race, ability, religion, or position, or for any other reason. Violations of these expectations will result in suspension and, if applicable, referral to law enforcement officials.
4. Students who are suspended from school may not practice or compete during the period of suspension. Serious classroom discipline problems may result in suspension or termination of participation.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Our classroom discipline policy while in class and during school-sponsored events outside of class will follow the discipline policy outlined in the Mead High School Student Handbook. This document can be found online at [mtspokanehs.mead354.org](http://mtspokanehs.mead354.org) – Our School>Parent & Student Information.

We are hopeful that you are part of the band program because of your interest in creating music and being a part of a team. It will be our goal each day to have “Pin drop” rehearsals. We have 2 “rules” that will help drive us to create wonderful music, individual and team related experiences each day.

- Always do your best.
- Never prevent anyone else from doing their best.

Conversation, use of devices, reading books, doing homework and other behaviors distracting from the rehearsal should exist only in guidance and with organization from the teacher. Even when you aren't being worked with you can learn a lot and gain new respect.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Plagiarism is the use of another person's work (this could be anyone's words, products or ideas) for personal advantage, without proper acknowledgement of the original work. Most often the phrase is used to denote deliberate intent of passing it off as one's own work.

There will be a wide variety of assessments and forms of earning credit and grades in our classes. These may include recorded assignments, written assignments, projects, tests and more. Please take pride in the work that you put forth as your own.

Students found to be plagiarizing another's work, copying/cheating will be subject to a zero on that piece of work, a referral to the administration and progression through the school's progressive discipline policy.

## **ATTENDANCE and TARDINESS - Plan Ahead and Communicate**

Attendance and punctuality are vital keys to the success of any 'team' related activity. It is understood that perfect attendance for an entire school year is not probable (it may be possible though!). With perfect attendance serving as a basic principle of successful operation, the following attendance policy will be used. It is meant to serve as protection for the integrity and quality of the group and its committed members as well as a tool for learning to plan, coordinate, and develop time management skills.

Whether your absence may be considered excused or unexcused, please be courteous to those in the group by communicating your absence to the directors whenever possible. This will allow them time to plan accordingly.

### **Attendance of Practices and Performances**

Student performers are expected to attend all practices, meetings, concerts, performances and contests as outlined by the directors. Failure to do so may result in loss of points, discipline from the directors or instructors and may lead to suspension or termination from the group, activity, or program.

Students that are absent from the rehearsal/practice immediately preceding a performance will likely be ineligible from that performance. This decision will be at the discretion of the director and will be made with the overall impact on the group in mind.

Students that are absent from a performance may be suspended, removed from the group or have part assignments altered. If students are able to verify the absence as excused due to illness and/or family emergency will remain in good standing.

### **Attendance of Classes**

#### **Excerpt from MSHS Student Handbook.....**

## **STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students on suspension or who are absent from school for one or more classes the day of a school activity, and who are involved in a co-curricular activity in which they are scheduled to take part, will not be allowed to participate in that activity. Exceptions will be made for verified doctor or dental appointments or other cases pre-arranged through a building administrator. This policy affects all co-curricular practices and activities and students involved in them, i.e. sports, drama, music, debate, cheerleading, etc. Any activity involving in-school time or out-of-school time requires school attendance that day. Students must be passing in at least five full-time subjects in order to be eligible for participation in interscholastic contests. In addition, an athlete must achieve either a 2.0 GPA or be earning at least a "C" in four (4) full-time subjects the previous grading period in order to be eligible to participate in athletics. To participate in co-curricular activities, students must be a member of the ASB and pay the ASB fee.

Any student performers who are absent from school for one or more periods on the day of a contest/practice must obtain prior permission from the school principal or designee before he/she is eligible to take part in the contest or

practice. This protects both the performer and the director/instructor. A student who is too ill to attend school is probably not physically ready for competition and/or performance. If his/her absence was for some other reason, the principal or designee will determine the propriety of the absence. This standard is generally for the “extra-curricular” portion of the band program. Students in “co-curricular” events should make every attempt to attend events in an effort to earn credit/points towards their grade. “Co-curricular” items include concerts, basketball games, Lilac Parade and any other activity in which the student receives credit towards a grade.

Students that display a pattern of being absent from class may be subject to part reassignment and/or removal from the group.

### **Additional Zero Hour Attendance Information**

#### **Excerpt from MSHS Student Handbook.....**

Zero hour courses are offered to supplement the courses offered 1st thru 6th periods. Students in a zero hour course are expected to:

1. Take at least five other classes during the day and remain on campus until at least the end of fifth period.
2. Follow all attendance procedures from the beginning of zero hour until the end of the school day. This includes checking in with attendance when late & checking out when leaving early.
3. Understand that taking a zero hour class is a privilege. As such, students enrolled in a zero hour class need to be responsible for maintaining good attendance and completing work. Students will be dropped with an F on the 11th absence.

### **Tardy Policy**

The MSHS policy regarding tardiness of a student will be followed.

#### **Excerpt from MSHS Student Handbook.....**

It is expected that students will be to class on time. Habitual tardiness creates a disruption to the educational process in the classroom. Notes from home do not excuse tardies. Tardiness to class of more than ten minutes is treated as an absence as students miss essential instruction and objectives. Teachers will record tardies. Tardiness will be dealt with by teachers according to the following procedure.

1. Step One - Tardies 1 through 3 per semester. Teacher will handle the situation individually with the student. Teacher will initiate, no later than the third tardy, some disciplinary action.
2. Step Two - 4th and following tardies each semester. Teacher will refer to the administration to follow the same procedures as trancies.

### **Band Tardy Policy**

1. Tardies 1 and 2 - student will be recorded as tardy and 5 daily participation points will be lost. Note: This discipline may include discussion with the student for discovery of disciplinary strategies to correct the tardiness.

2. Tardy 3 - Enforcement of step 1. A single page essay will be assigned articulating the source of the inability to be in class on time and how this impacts our team (single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font)
3. Tardy 4 - Enforcement of steps 1 and 2. Referral to administration.
4. Tardy 5 and beyond. Enforcement of step 3. Student's role/responsibility within a group may be changed including part reassignment and possible group reassignment. If tardy behavior continues, student may face removal from the program.

## **School Suspension**

Students on suspension, either "in-school" or "out-of-school" suspension, may not participate in practices or performances during the period of the suspension.

## **Excused Absences**

Using the standard set forth by the Mead School District, the following reasons for absences will be considered excused. A signed note from the parent or guardian must be given to the directors and make up assignments will be permitted.

1. Family Emergency
2. Illness

## **School Related Conflicts**

If you choose to participate in Band and another school activity (sports, cheer, dance, etc.) you may encounter some conflicts with schedules. Please bring conflicts to the attention of both activity advisors ASAP so a reasonable resolution can be reached. In many cases, an individual's contribution to the group and the competitive significance of the event will aid in the resolution. Additional factors include the specific activity; Performance vs. Practice, etc

NOTE: Excused absences do require make up in almost all situations. Points lost due to excused absences will be recorded into the grading system once turned in and scored.

## **Unexcused Absences**

All absences not related to Family Emergency or Illness may be categorized as unexcused. Points lost due to unexcused absences cannot be made up. If you have a question regarding an absence and whether or not it can be made up, please plan ahead and communicate with the directors.

## **Recommendations for avoiding absences**

1. Schedule work, doctor, and dentist appointments with your band schedule in hand.
2. Sit down with all schedules early in the year, including sports, family and the calendar. Work out all conflicts now!
3. Discuss ALL conflicts with all parties involved as soon as they are noticed. Many students are nervous to discuss conflicts because they feel they are letting people down. You let people down only when you don't plan ahead and handle the conflicts early.

4. Consider all commitments as IMPORTANT. It is great to be involved in many things, but be careful not to sacrifice your commitment to one activity for another. If you find yourself doing that, you should reconsider your activity level.
5. Family is your most important commitment. Most of the time it is the most flexible—especially with advance notice. Schedule family activities with your commitments in mind.

Even the most responsible students find themselves in a predicament where a scheduling conflict can't be avoided. When you find yourself in this situation, follow these guidelines:

1. See the director right away to discuss the conflict.
2. Assess the relative importance of each activity. Performances are more important than rehearsals just as in sports games are more important than practices.
3. Consider compromises. It is better to “give and take” with both conflicted activities. Is it possible you do part of EACH activity rather than missing one to go to another? Also, it shows responsibility toward your commitments to compromise.
4. Realize that working commitments are NOT considered excusable. These can be avoided by making sure to give your employer a list of your marching conflicts. However, if your employer schedules you to work during a band commitment, let us help you discuss the problem with you and them. There has never been a case where this process has not worked out for all parties involved.
5. Realize that missing rehearsals and/or events to do homework is not considered excusable.

## EARNING INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Students involved in the Mt. Spokane High School Band and Color Guard programs work very hard at what they do. As recognition of these efforts that take place outside the school day, students are able to achieve the following awards:

- **Freshman Award** - This award is given to 9th grade students that have successfully completed 1 year in the program and have participated in marching band. Successful completion includes attendance at all scheduled rehearsals and performances.
- **Participation Award** - This award is given to students that have successfully completed 1 or 2 years in the program and have not participated in marching band in one or both those years. Successful completion includes attendance at all scheduled rehearsals and performances.
- **1st Year Letter Award** - This award is given to students that have successfully completed 2 years in the program and have participated in marching band both of those years. This award is also given to those students that have successfully completed 3 years in the program and have not participated in marching in one or more of those years. Successful completion includes attendance at all scheduled rehearsals and performances.
- **2nd Year Letter Award** - This award is given to students that have successfully completed 3 years in the program and have participated in marching band all of those years. This award is also given to those students that have successfully completed 4 years in the program and have not participated in marching in

one or more of those years. Successful completion includes attendance at all scheduled rehearsals and performances.

- **3rd Year Letter Award** - This award is only given to students that have successfully completed 4 years in the program and have participated in marching band all of those years. Successful completion includes attendance at all scheduled rehearsals and performances.
- **Senior Blanket** - Senior blankets are awarded to those students that have successfully completed 4 years within the program.
- **Louis Armstrong Jazz Award** - This award is given to a student for his/her outstanding jazz musicianship and positive contributions to the jazz program.
- **Woody Herman Jazz Award** - This award is given to a student for his/her outstanding jazz musicianship and positive contributions to the jazz program.
- **Rod Ekholm Memorial Award** - This award is given to a student in recognition of their outstanding contributions to Mead Bands.
- **Patrick S. Gilmore Award** - This award is given to a concert band student for his/her outstanding musicianship and positive contributions to the concert band programs (Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble)
- **John Philip Sousa Award** - This award is given to a concert band student for his/her outstanding musicianship and positive contributions to the concert band programs (Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble)

Awards are earned by school year and will be handed out near the end of each year at concerts or recitals as designated by the schedule or directors. Those students that do not complete a school year will not be considered for awards in that year. That year of incompletion will also likely not be considered as experience towards future awards.

## **USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS**

School equipment and materials will be used by our programs when available and will be checked out to students by the directors and/or instructors.

Students are responsible for equipment and materials checked out to them. Lost or damaged equipment will result in a charge for replacement.

Students using school equipment may have a maintenance fee.

Failure to turn in equipment or materials or pay for lost or damaged equipment may result in the withholding of awards, school activities, diplomas, and/or possible suspension from participation.

## **TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION POLICIES**

The Mt. Spokane Band will make accommodations for transportation for student performers to and from events. All student performers are expected to use the provided transportation to and from all events. In the event that the Mt.

Spokane Band cannot provide transportation OR the student has special circumstances that prohibit them from using the provided transportation, the student will travel under the following conditions:

1. An Alternative Travel Form, signed by a school administrator, and is on file with the band directors allowing the student performer to ride with his or her parent/guardian, another adult, or on their own. Under no circumstance will a student performer be granted permission to travel with another student.

Directors may excuse a student performer from final return travel from practices or contests on the provided transportation given both of the following conditions are met:

1. The student and adult responsible for the final travel accommodations have made personal contact with the directors just prior to departure.
2. A signed note from the parent/guardian releasing the student to the adult responsible for the final travel accommodations has been given to the directors.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES will students be excused prior to the completion of rehearsals and events.

"Completion" means all duties such as truck loading and clean up are finished.

### **Behavioral Expectations While Traveling**

Participants on school related trips are subject to all school district rules and policies while on that trip. Overnight stays will be subject to strict rules and expectations with serious consequences for violations. Any violation of travel rules/expectations may result in suspension from the activity and additional consequences for violation of general school rules (e.g. chemical use on a school bus).

### **Expectations**

1. Represent his/her school well with high levels of musicianship & adult-like behavior.
2. Students must be in groups of a minimum of three at all times.
3. Follow rules: If in doubt, don't "just do it" - ASK first. If your teachers and/or parents were standing next to you, would you still do it? What does your gut feeling tell you?
4. Be alert to changes in schedules.
5. Stay with assigned rooms, bus, bus seats unless given permission by the director to change.
6. Speak respectfully to all adult leaders & fellow travelers.
7. Follow policies set by the professional bus driver.
8. Enter buses by giving your last name to the individual taking attendance.
9. Students may not be on buses without adult supervision. Exceptions may be for "on-and-off" trips to load or grab items left behind.
10. Stay in bus seats at all stops until released by the directors or the head bus chaperone.
11. Be at assigned locations, on time & stay with a group at all times. Required number of students in a group will be stated for each particular situation with the usual minimum being 3 students.
12. Only bring a "personal audio" device with headphones if choosing to listen to music.

13. Be in room at designated time at night, stay in room & turn lights out 30 minutes later. (lights out + sleep time)
14. Do not smoke, drink alcohol, take illegal drugs. Prescription AND non-prescription medication may only be taken following the school policy, which requires a school permission form (get one from the office) filled out by a doctor.
15. Refrain from “emotional activity” also known as PDA (public displays of affection). Please understand that any violation of this policy will result in disciplinary actions at the discretion of the directors.
16. Clean up after yourself on the bus and in other areas used near you such as hotel rooms and gyms.
17. Spend your money wisely, considering the needs of the entire trip. (meals that the student pays for, etc).
18. Be responsible for your instrument, uniform in bag, & personal belongings throughout the trip, ALL with labels.

### **Hotel Guidelines**

1. Students will ONLY be in the room that was assigned to them. Boys will NEVER be in a girls room and girls will NEVER be in a boys room.
2. Outgoing phone calls, pay TV movies, & other incidental charges will not be accessible to the room. Please do not access them if they are accidentally available. No room-to-room or cell phone calls after lights out are permitted.
3. Any charges to the room will be the responsibility of those in the room and they will need to be explained to the directors.
4. Please keep in mind that we are among many paying customers in the hotel.

### **Consequences from Travel and Hotel Guideline Violations**

First Offense: Warning from a director and possible call home to parent/guardian.

Second Offense: Call home to parent/guardian. Additionally, the student is assigned to a chaperone for the remainder of the trip with possible exclusion from activities.

Third Offense: Student is sent home at the expense of the parent/guardian. Parents may have the option of coming to get the student.

FOR MAJOR OFFENSES:

THE FIRST STEP MAY BE SKIPPED AS DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE DIRECTORS

### **DISCIPLINE**

#### **Suspension Process**

Students may be suspended from participation for violations of rules as outlined in this document. In the event of a suspension from the band program or a band program activity, the following steps will be used:

1. Student(s) will be notified by the director AND/OR
2. A phone call will be made and/or a suspension letter will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

## **Appeals Process**

### **Step 1 – Appeal to the Principal**

Any student or parent/guardian who wishes to contest the reasons for the suspension from band activities must notify the building principal or his/her designee within three (3) business days of the date of notification of suspension. Failure to do so will render the suspension decision final.

### **Step 2 – Appeal to the Superintendent**

Any student or parent/guardian aggrieved by the decision of the principal may appeal to the Superintendent of the Mead School District. Appellant must notify the Superintendent or designee within three (3) business days of the date of the principal's decision. Failure to do so will render the suspension decision final.

### **Step 3 – Appeal to the Board of Directors**

Any student or parent/guardian aggrieved by the decision of the Superintendent may appeal to the Board of Directors of the Mead School District. Such appeal must be made within three (3) business days of the date of the Superintendent's decision. Failure to do so will render the Superintendent's decision final.

### **Step 4 – Appeal to the State**

Any student or parent/guardian aggrieved by the decision of the Board of Directors may appeal to the Superior Court of the State of Washington.