

THE BOCA CIEGA HIGH SCHOOL



MIGHTY PIRATE BAND AND COLOR GUARD

BAND HANDBOOK

2022-2023

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Band Students and Parents:

Welcome to one of the most exciting experiences in which you can be a part – the band! Now, more than ever, we have information to justify why we participate in this demanding, yet rewarding activity. Experts have concluded that the study of music helps with spatial reasoning, test taking, and overall quality of life. Factor in social skills, emotional development, leadership training, group interaction, aesthetic perception, music-making, and the discipline of being in a band program, and I don't know why anyone would not want to be involved in a successful band program like the one at our school. The ultimate goal is a lifelong understanding and appreciation for high quality music and music making!

Everyone should read the information in the handbook, even veterans. Some of the information has changed, so make sure you're informed. For those new to the program, this is the "band bible", which keeps us running smoothly and efficiently. Most questions can be answered by consulting *the handbook*, and policies will be adjusted from year to year as the need arises to clarify issues within the program. It is my hope that the information contained in this handbook will both *inform* and *inspire!* The advocacy article "How Parents Can Help" is designed to give guidance to parents; read it carefully to gain important insights. Students need to know we think that what they do is important. You will quickly find that band is truly a family in and of itself.

This handbook is designed to answer any questions you might have concerning the band program. Please read all of the information and sign the perforated form in the back of the book. I am honored to be your band director and be at Boca Ciega High School. I am looking forward to a great year!

Musically,

Joe Sipiora

Director of Bands

The Boca Ciega High School

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"If better is possible, then good is not enough!"

Band Policy

In order to assist band members and parents in understanding areas of responsibility, a statement of band policy is herein set forth. Becoming familiar with this policy will enable each individual to make the most of this great opportunity to be a member of the high school band program, becoming a better musician, and becoming a better person:

We firmly believe each student should improve through regular practice. When the student has lost the will to improve him/herself, or to make a better contribution to the band, he or she is wasting the time and effort of fellow band members and the community by continuing in the program. The happiest band student is one who improves through regular habits of practice and daily progress. He or she must not only know right from wrong but must be able to stand for principles and develop a high sense of purpose toward which he or she is willing to work. Responsibility is the focus behind any level of achievement within this program. We intend to conduct ourselves in a manner that will facilitate the learning of all students.

Our mission:

To create a respectful learning environment, in which students develop integrity, identity, independence, and character; through studying, creating, and performing great literature at a high level.

Objectives of the Band Program

- To teach music by its actual performance
- To develop performance skills on the various wind and percussion instruments
- To provide for the musical needs of our school and community
- To develop discrimination with regard to the selection of music
- To acquaint students with music theory/history and how history and compositions relate to student's lives and musical experiences
- To provide students with the opportunity for worthy use of their time, a means for self-expression, and a healthy social experience
- To develop the ability to function as a responsible member of a group, enhance interaction, and develop *esprit de corps*
- To foster leadership skills within each student

Goals of the Band Program

1. Have FUN!
2. Learn something new every day.
3. Develop a love and appreciation for everything that we do.

Did you know?

- Students in band (performing ensembles) test 17% higher in math standardized tests, and 16% higher in reading standardized tests than students who are not in band (performing ensembles)
- 99% of students who are in band for 4 years graduate HS
- 93% of the students who are in band and graduate, attend a four year university
- 86% of the students who are in band, graduate, and attend a four year university, do so for FREE
- 96% of the students who are in band, graduate and attend a four year university for free go on to become: doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, politicians, etc.

Band Curriculum

Concert Band

The Concert Band is the entire winds and percussion. The Concert Band will have performances outside of the normal Winter and Spring Concerts. As part of school spirit, it is required that all members of the band perform at all Home football games, this is called Pep Band (dates and times are on the band website). Only members of the marching band will perform during half time. It is expected that students support their community and school for the betterment of Boca Ciega High School. The football games are performances and required, they are also a grade. If a student cannot make it with an excused absence an alternative assignment will be given to make up the grade.

Marching Band

The marching season takes place during the summer and the first 12 weeks of the school year. All students enrolled in the band program are expected; but not required, to participate in the marching band. The marching band performs in all home games, two to three away games, two to three competitive events, and Marching Band M.P.A.

The rehearsal schedule for the marching band is:

Tuesday 3:00pm-5pm: Full Band

Thursday 3:00pm-6pm: Full band

Marching band is a demanding part of being in band. But it is fun! And the experience is well worth it.

Jazz Ensemble

The Jazz Ensemble is the one of the premiere performance ensembles at The Boca Ciega H.S. Students are required to audition and participate in the marching band. Students will focus on the syntax and structure of the jazz language. They perform at school and community events as well as District and State M.P.A. events, solo ensemble, and one competitive jazz event each year. This ensemble is held after school on Thursdays from 3-5pm. Members are expected to come to rehearsal on time and have practiced the required material. Failure to attend rehearsals and performances will result in removal from the program.

Color Guard

The Color Guard is the visual part of the program. Students are required to audition and attend all summer camps and enroll in the Eurhythmics Class. Auditions are held in May, and callbacks are held in late July. Failure to attend rehearsals and performances will result in removal from the program.

Percussion Ensemble

All percussionists in the band program are enrolled in the percussion ensemble class. Students learn basic fundamentals on all percussion instruments and explore many styles and genres.

Students must participate in marching band, all-county, all-state, solo & ensemble, and District and State

Concert Band Camp

One day of intensive training with a nationally recognized conductor. It will be held at Boca Ciega H.S. late January or early February. Dates and times are TBA. This event is mandatory for all members of the band program – with the exception of the color guard.

Tardiness to All Band Groups/Ensembles

Students will lose one letter grade for being tardy to rehearsal. If a student has missed more than half of a rehearsal they will lose two letter grades.

Sitting Half Time Performance

During marching season, students will sit during half time of football games for the following reasons:

- Failure to pass-off music by the allotted deadline
- An unexcused missed rehearsal that week
- More than one unexcused tardy per week
- Any infraction of disrespect

Attendance Policy

The only *excusable* absences are prearranged school conflicts, and those that would be excused by the school for regular attendance records, e.g., illnesses, a death in the family, or a religious holiday. Individual needs will be addressed as they occur. Doctor's appointments and work schedules are not excusable absences for band-related events. This system is subject to modification by the director.

Performance no shows! The student will receive a 0 for the performance grade.

If a student has 25% or more unexcused absences in a quarter or semester, they will be up for review to not perform at any performance after the 25% is reached. The student will still be required to attend the performance, with their grade starting at a C. This also applies to groups that are not graded.

For all absences, the student and the parent must follow the following procedure:

- The director must be notified two weeks in advance
- For illness, a parental note or doctor's excuse must be submitted
- Although cleared by the school office, absences from a band activity that same day must be cleared with the director as well – please email Mr. Sipiora
- In extreme cases, a phone message may be left on the band answering machine with a follow-up personal call, or an email to the director.

- Follow-up is the sole responsibility of the student

Conflicts with band (for Concert Band, Percussion Ensemble, Jazz Band, and Marching Band)

Resolving conflicts between band and other activities or events is the responsibility of the student. Rehearsal and performance schedules are given out in advance (August) so that arrangements can be made. Students should not become involved with activities that may directly conflict with band activities. When outside activities create hardships concerning band, unless it is a situation that should only happen once, the student will need to consult with the director for possible alternatives. Students should have a calendar and be aware of all band dates well ahead of schedule. It is the policy of the band director to assist students when conflicts occur within the scope of the band policy. Students are reminded that band is a very demanding activity and that involvement in outside activities should be limited to those compatible with the band schedule. All conflicts with performances must be resolved in favor of band participation. Work is not an excuse for missing any band activity.

Grading Policy

Grades are assigned for the band class, rehearsals, and performances, which are co-curricular.

Rehearsal Production =10 points each This includes after school rehearsals on the schedule. Every day, students must have their instruments at every rehearsal, and show maximum effort to earn the best grade.

Playing tests and Quizzes= 20-50 points each

Performances= 200 points each

Other assignments= 20 points each

It is the student's responsibility to turn in all assignments, prepare for auditions, and make scheduled events. Playing assignments for the school will be short and must be submitted via email – or recorded in the director's iPad or computer during the school day.

Binder = 15% of the total grade. Students are responsible for including all handouts and notes in the schoolwide binder system that is in place this year. This will be checked regularly throughout each quarter

The minimum expectation is 100% Hold yourself accountable!

Duties of the Band Member

- Be on time to all rehearsals and performances.
- Upon entering the rehearsal setting, get your instrument, and go directly to your seat.
- When the director or staff member steps on the podium or asks for your attention, all talking should cease.
- Come to the rehearsal with a good attitude.
- There should be no excess playing (e.g., horsing around on the instrument), only good, solid material.
- Make a real effort to improve on a daily basis, and establish a good practice routine.
- At the end of the rehearsal, put all materials in their proper place.
- Maintain a strong academic standing in all course subject areas (minimum of 2.0 required)
- Become responsible for and assume responsibility for your own actions. Admit when

you're wrong.

- Have proper respect for yourself, those in authority, and your peers.
- Read and play music with insight – have musical expectations.

The importance of Attitude

The greatest single factor that will determine the success of any individual or organization is **attitude**. The kind of person you are is an individual choice, and how you feel about something is one of the few independent choices that you have in life. It takes intense dedication to reach goals. Students should learn to discipline themselves to practice fundamentals daily. The right attitude must be present along with sincerity, concentration, and dedication as the basic foundations. Such an attitude makes an artistic performance inevitable and is the difference between a great organization and a mediocre one. The band can do much for you. Make the most of it in every rehearsal and performance.

The importance of discipline

Because of the nature of the organization, band discipline must be strict! Band students and parents must believe in the ideals, principles, and philosophy of the organization. Each member must always be aware of good behavior and think for himself/herself. Any misconduct casts a bad light on the school, community, and band program. Any member who discredits the organization by his or her conduct or actions in band, in another class, or on a trip shall be subject to dismissal from the band program or may lose a privilege within the program. This decision will be at the director's discretion.

Parents Responsibility to the Band

It is the responsibility of every parent and guardian to see that the policies outlined in the handbook are followed and that the form in the back is signed and returned. This states that you understand the policies set within and that any questions are to be directed to the band director by making an appointment. Each parent is responsible for the attendance of his or her child at all band functions. It is the responsibility of each parent to see that the child practices his or her instrument at home.

The hands of the director(s) are tied without the help of the parents.

“Superior Results require Superior Efforts”

How parents can help

When a band question arises, it is important that you get factual information before discussing it with others. We do more harm to ourselves, the band family, when we talk about things that contain one or more falsehoods presented as facts. If questions arise, it is important to remember this axiom: if it is a performance issue or anything dealing with the band proper, contact the band director. If it is a fund-raising related question, or any parent-related issue, contact the band parent president.

Habits of successful band parents:

- Show an interest in the musical study of your child.
- Arrange a regular time for your child to practice.
- Find a quiet place where he or she can practice without interruption.

- Listen to performances of practice materials when asked to do so.
- Help the student keep a daily record of practicing.
- Come up with a reward system for practicing.
- Keep the instrument in good repair, and keep three reeds in the case; get a metronome and tuner!
- Be extra careful with school-owned instruments. Repair costs are high!
- Teach your child to be prepared and on time to each rehearsal or lesson.
- Provide private instruction.
- Make faithful attendance at all band activities important.
- Buy your child a personal planner for marking important dates.
- Keep the handbook in a safe place and refer to it often.
- Notify the teacher if the student is to be absent for rehearsals or lessons.
- Double-check to make sure students have their instruments.
- If the student is absent, make sure that his/her folder gets home if he/she shares with somebody.
- Visit rehearsals occasionally.
- Read all communications.
- Attend meetings, concerts, games, and contests.
- Chaperone an event.
- Turn in paperwork on time.
- Turn in fundraising money on time.
- Purchase the right uniform parts for your child.
- Volunteer at one or more events.
- Read this handbook!

Students' Responsibility to the Band

As members of this organization you have a great deal of responsibility. These expectations coordinate with the privileges, rewards, and duties of the band program.

To Ourselves

You have the primary responsibility of developing your own abilities. The benefits of a good instrument and private instruction can never be overestimated. What you put into it is what you will get out of it. The director is always available for your guidance and encouragement – just ask!

To the School

The school district provides us with the resources for rehearsals, performances, and equipment. The band parents also provide us with a support network, both financially and philosophically. We have the responsibility to provide the best possible services to our community.

To Music

Music has always been a part of our culture. We must take what we have and use it for the betterment of that culture. No one expects you to be virtuoso musicians, only to do the very best you can. The great composer Gustav Mahler once said that only 10% of a piece of music is on the page. If that is the case, we as musicians have the duty of creating and producing the other 90%. The joy of music is not in everything that is apparent. It must be discovered and created!

To Each Other

We must always do what is best for the welfare of the group. There can be no selfish acts solely for the benefit of the individual. Respect each other. If there are conflicts, find a way to resolve them. Never insult another band member's integrity. The word "band" implies that we are banded together without divisions

No Excuses

Any excuse for non-performance, however invalid, softens the character. It is a sedative against one's own conscience. When a man/woman uses an excuse, he attempts to convince both himself and others that unsatisfactory performance is somehow acceptable. He/she is – perhaps unconsciously – attempting to divert attention from performance; the only thing that counts is his/her own want for sympathy. The user is dishonest with him/herself as well as with others. No matter how good or how valid, the excuse never changes performance.

The world measures success in terms of performance alone. No man/woman is remembered in history for what he/she would have accomplished. History never asks how hard it was to do the job, nor considers the obstacles that had to be overcome. It never measures the handicaps. It only counts only one thing – **performance**. No man/woman ever performed a worthwhile task without consciously ignoring many a plausible excuse.

To use an excuse is habit. We cannot have both the performance habit and the excuse habit. We all have a supply of excuses. The more we use them the lower become our standards, the poorer our performance. The better we perform, the less plausible our excuses become. Next time you want to defend your sub-par performance, say instead (at least to yourself):

No Excuses!

Notice the startling effect this will have on your own self-respect. You will have recognized your failure. You will have been honest with yourself. You will be one step closer to the performance habit. You will be a better person for it. "We will be a better team!"

Together Everyone Achieves More!

Expectations, Rules, and Procedures

- Shoes and socks must be worn at all times for outside practices (guard included).
- Chewing gum is not permitted during a rehearsal, a performance, or in the band room.
- Each band member must respect his or her uniform and wear it properly at all times.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the band room.
- No hats or sunglasses may be worn inside the building.
- Be on your seat (or your dot), warmed up, and ready to begin on time.
- Respect authority and others, including their personal property.
- A band member will wear no jewelry in uniform.
- **Zero tolerance** for substance abuse.
- Students are required to remain with the band after games and will be dismissed as a group.
- Young adults shall not damage property or equipment.
- Fund-raising materials will be collected in the band office. **Be sure that all your information is neatly printed on order sheets.**
- If you share a folder and you are absent, please make sure the folder is at school.
- Students may practice in the band room after school, and during lunch (with permission).
- **15-minute rule: parent pick-ups are to take place 15 min. after all dismissal times.**

Marching Band Policy

It is a H.S. musician's responsibility to provide for the musical needs of the school and community. Therefore, all students are expected, but not required, to participate in marching band. Marching season takes place during the summer and the first 12 weeks of school. The marching band performs at football games, pep-rallies, Marching M.P.A. and two-to-three competitive events during the fall season. Marching Band is an intricate part of our evaluation and development; and during this season, we develop leadership, character, and *esprit de corps*. Marching band also provides the students with fundamentals, and performance skills necessary for other music performance assessments.

Marching Band Uniform(s)

The look is 75% of what we do. We must carry/wear our uniform with pride and honor. Any disrespect to the uniform will be treated as any act of disrespect towards an administrator of the school.

The student provides – out of pocket:

- Black marching shoes (provided for rookies)
- Black crew socks

Concert Band, Jazz Band, Percussion Ensemble Uniform:

The look is 75% of what we do. We must carry/wear our uniform with pride and honor. Any disrespect to the uniform will be treated as any act of disrespect towards an administrator of the school. On stage, we must look as outstanding as we sound. Only jewelry allowed is stud earrings in the ears. All hair needs to be out of the student's face.

All Members uniforms

- Solid black button down, long sleeve shirt with a collar
- Solid black full-length dress pants
- Solid black long socks
- Solid black dress shoes

Traveling

- If a conversation can be heard in the front of the bus, it's too loud!
- There will be no hanging out of or talking out of bus windows.
- Please lower the volume considerably when entering towns or stadiums. This is for your safety, it's courteous to the bus driver, and is an act of class.
- Please keep the bus clean; pick up after yourselves, and always thank the chaperones and bus driver.

☒ **There is no talking** when on 58th St. S.

Football Games

- Report time for all games will be announced each week on the board.
- Students must wear full uniform unless told otherwise by the director. Pep Band members will always wear their provided band shirt tucked into long jeans, and tennis shoes.
- For home games, students will be dismissed following the announcements in the band room.
- **For away games, students may ride home with another individual, but the band director must**

have a note signed by the parents prior to departure from BCHS, and said person must make contact with the director at dismissal time. Parents must also contact the director prior to dismissal.

- When marching to and from the stadium the band will remain at attention. When you have class it shows – when you don't, *it shouts!*
- Only uniformed band members, staff members, and chaperones are allowed in the band section.
- All members are to remain in their section. Any stands music will not be played unless rehearsed and approved by the director.
- There will be no eating or drinking in the stands.
- The band will have part of the third quarter off and must be back in their seats for the beginning of 4th quarter. Tardiness will result in a lowering of the grade.
- 3rd quarter break is a privilege not a right.
- All members should be alert as to what is going on down front. Be ready to react immediately to instructions given by the drum major or director.
- If a student leaves the band section, another student must accompany him or her and both must have permission from the director.

Competitions

Competitions are special events in which we get to perform for a sophisticated audience and very competent judges. We are here to do our best – not to win. If we do our best, everything else will take care of itself. Specific information is given prior to competitions as to directions, departure, and anticipated return time. All parents are encouraged to attend competitions and support the band. Students may use the band phone to call following a trip. Parents, please come immediately when called.

Concert Rehearsals

Rehearsal goals:

- To establish a professional **performance** environment.
- To achieve consistency and artistry for the music performed
- To enjoy the preparation process for a performance.

Rehearsal objectives:

- To ensemble the percussion and wind sections of the band.
- To enhance the understanding and performance of the literature.
- To host clinicians and guest conductors in order to receive feedback otherwise impossible to attain during the regular class time.

All Concert Ensemble Rehearsals are mandatory and a part of the Students' grade in the class.

Classroom Procedures

- You must be in the storage room or in your seat when the bell rings; a downbeat will be given three minutes after the tardy bell. During the three minutes, beforehand you should move to your seat; obtain music, a music stand, and a pencil; and begin warming up for the day's rehearsal.
- Talking will not be tolerated during a rehearsal.
- The purpose of a rehearsal is for you to learn the music, and how your part contributes to others' and vice-versa. *Practice at home!*

- If you must leave your seat for any reason, please ask. Restroom breaks should be taken between classes.
- In your individual warm-up, it is important to practice long tones, lip slurs, scales, and that day's assignment on a daily basis.
- Announcements will be kept to a minimum – read the board, the bulletin board, and the weekly newsletter.

Materials Needed for Class

Every student should have the following items in class every day:

- A sharpened pencil
- Instrument (sticks & mallets)
- Music and folder
- At least three reeds (clarinets and saxophones)
- At least two reeds (oboes and bassoons)
- Tuner

School-Owned Instrument Rental

Students who are not able to provide an instrument are allowed to rent an instrument from school. These instruments are property of the school board and it is a privilege for you to use them. PLEASE, be careful with these instruments. The instrument rental fee for the year is \$60.00 and for one semester it is \$35.00. If you are unable to afford this for any reason, please provide that reason in writing, and we will do our best to reduce/waive the fee. **Summer Rental Fees are \$35.00.**

Use of the Band Facility

Band Room

The use of the band facilities before, after, and during school is a privilege. Students who abuse the facility will be disciplined accordingly. Any abuse or damage will be considered vandalism. **No outside students are permitted in the music building**, except for business with the director(s). There will be no horseplay, e.g., throwing things in or around the band room. All percussion and guard equipment is off limits to anyone not specifically designated to using it. There will be no storing of personal items – the band room is not a locker! Band Room use during lunch is limited to practicing and business with the director.

Practice Rooms

Practice rooms are to be used for practice or private instruction. Keep the room neat with the appropriate music stands in place.

Library

The library is private and is to be used only by the library staff or for sectional rehearsals supervised by the director or a staff member. Materials may be checked out through the librarian; this includes solos, ensemble pieces, and etude/method books.

Band Office

There is an "open door" policy; however, the band office is private and is not to be entered by any student without the permission from the director or a staff member. All students should keep in mind

that this is a place of business. If the door is shut, it's for a reason, knock first. If the door is open, knock first.

Phone

Telephone use should be kept to a minimum and is not for personal use. **Ask permission before using the phone.**

Percussion Room

To be entered and used by the percussionists of the program only. Only percussion instruments and equipment shall be stored in this room. Percussionists may use this room to practice on large instruments during the day. **Any items that are do not belong to the percussion section shall be removed and discarded accordingly.**

Locker Room

To be used for the storage of your instrument, music, and marching band rehearsal materials only. Personal items (e.g. textbooks, food, clothes, etc.) need to be removed by the end of each day. Otherwise, they will be placed in the lost and found bin or discarded. It is the students' responsibility to keep and maintain this area clean and organized.

Bathrooms

Will remain locked throughout the day and be opened at the end of the school day for use before and during rehearsals. Bathroom breaks during class are to be kept to a minimum. If you need to use the restroom, use it **before** rehearsal.

Practice

As with any activity, you get out of it what you put into it. Band will not be fun unless you practice. There are many values in the study of music as a discipline that transfer to other areas of life. Although this will not immediately happen, persistent practice will lead to enthusiastic, driven practice. Remember: "Perfect practice makes perfect!" Here is a suggested plan of study:

- Pick a set time each day
- Use a tuner for a portion of your practice session
- Have a non-boomy place of practice
- Increase dynamic range (work on *pianissimo*)
- Use our daily warm-up and think "tone"
- Increase endurance (10-15 minutes of full-tone playing)
- Play some form of scales at every practice session
- Increase range (highest note with good tone)
- Take a break every 20 minutes
- Use a metronome for part of the time
- Work on technique (articulations, accents, etc.)
- "I will start with _____ minutes a day and increase to _____"
- Practice sight-reading