



# Marching Band Handbook

David Evans, Director of Bands

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*Adams 12 Five Star Schools maintain a strict zero-tolerance policy regarding hazing and initiation of any kind. **Coaches and sponsors who witness or are made aware of an incident, no matter how minor, MUST report that to their building administrator.** Building administrators will review and potentially investigate any situation that involves hazing or initiations within a student group.*

## **I. Introduction**

Being a success at any worthwhile undertaking requires focus, ambition, teamwork, and determination. The absence of any one of these things makes the learning process very difficult. There are an incredible variety techniques and terminology to master. Even for veterans, there is always something new to learn. There are many levels of achievement to grow into, and that requires time and practice.

For those new to the marching activity, being in marching band requires things of its members that are not asked of other bands. For instance, the amount of coordination needed to put together a marching show requires increased time and dedication from the performers. Further, the physical requirements of playing instruments while moving are much different and more demanding than those when sitting down. All band students come to realize this, and there is an adjustment phase that includes the building up of physical and mental stamina.

On the other hand, marching band offers its performers extraordinary opportunities for teamwork, camaraderie, and memorable experiences that students in other bands do not get. Yes, we work hard in band, but by the time the season is over, you won't want it to end. If you ever need evidence of the amazing experiences students have in band, please see me.

## **II. Educational Philosophies**

- Music is art, and it means something important to you (the artist) as well as to the audience
- Marching activities and concert activities enhance each other and reinforce each skill set
- Discipline and focus open the door to achieving personal victories and championship moments and introduce the more fun aspects of success in band
- Attendance problems put a halt to success and forward momentum
- Individual ability to perform is a valued quality in this activity, and our group progresses only when each member understands that
- Honesty about our efforts, good or bad, is one of the best teachers. Don't get your feelings hurt over performance corrections.
- How others perceive the quality of our work, determines the respect they give us and the scores we earn
- Marching band is often challenging, but I will never ask you to do something I do not believe you are capable of, or I would not be willing to do myself
- To be a "big dog," you have to successfully compete with other "big dogs"
- Success should be *expected*, and our behaviors determine if we get there or not
- Winning is fun and means something, but takes work to achieve

### **Our goals:**

- To impact our audiences with creativity and skill
- To make constant progress
- To enjoy the process of learning and growing as musicians and teammates

- To give excellent performances on a consistent basis, even in rehearsal
- To earn respect every time we perform
- To constantly pursue personal victories and championship moments

Much of our success starts with good decision making, on each student's part and on the staff's part. This puts our ensemble in a great position to achieve at a high level. I expect that each individual member's ambition, drive, and enthusiasm will carry us forward. As the director, I have to do what it takes to put you in good position for success. As the performer, you have to do what it takes to take advantage of these opportunities and be successful.

### **III. Volunteer Commitment**

“Many hands make light work.” - John Heywood

The success of any band program depends upon volunteer help from its parents and students all year long. There are many different events throughout the year, and many different jobs that need to be done, both large and small. If only a handful of people are left to do these tasks, it can be overwhelming. But with more “hands” to carry that load, we can have less burnout and have more fun as a “band family”. For that reason, we require each family to provide volunteers during the school year. Your kids may say that they don't want you to come and help, but that is far from the truth. The parents are the backbone of our success, and it means the world to our students to see you there supporting them.

While much effort certainly goes into the marching band season, we have many others facets of the program that continue year-round. Our students participate in multiple concerts and public performances during the school year, including the Denver Parade of Lights (or other holiday parade) and judged concert band festivals. After the marching season, students can choose to join Winter Percussion or Winter Guard. These are exciting and valuable experiences for our students, but all require volunteer support to achieve.

We need all members of the Mountain Range Band community to support two major fundraising events. Mountain Range is lucky enough to host a Winter Guard and a Winter Percussion contest each year. These two events can bring in up to \$18,000 to our band program, and this helps offset our personal costs (detailed in the Fundraising section).

There are a wide variety of jobs and events throughout the year, with tasks that can fit every person's skill set and time availability. We cannot rely on just a small group of volunteers to carry the load. Therefore, we have established the following volunteer requirements:

- Parents:
  - o Volunteer on at least one Committee/task, and
  - o Volunteer for one shift at either the Winter Guard or Winter Percussion event
- Students:
  - o Must work one shift at both the Winter Guard and Winter Percussion events.

#### IV. Fundraising

Fundraising is imperative for the band program to provide a truly meaningful and educational experience for the students. It is critical that each and every family participate in fundraising efforts with the MRHS Band Boosters. We do recognize that fundraisers can be time consuming and a lot of work. If a family does not wish to participate in individual fundraisers, payment directly to the Band Boosters is an acceptable way to fulfill the needs of the program.

We continually strive to strike a balance between a reasonable budget and wanting to provide the absolute best experience for our students. In order to meet our financial goals for the year, each student in Marching/Symphonic Band will need to contribute \$500 to the fundraising effort. Any color guard student who does not participate in Symphonic Band during the Spring semester will receive a \$100 discount. This only partially fulfills the budget for the school year, and the rest will be funded through group fundraisers.

If you would like to fulfill your student's individual fundraising contribution by check at this time, please feel free to do so. All checks should be made out to "MRHS Band Boosters". There is also now a Venmo link on the home page of the Band Boosters' website ([mrhsbandboosters.com](http://mrhsbandboosters.com)). If you would like to break these payments up into monthly installments, that's fine too. Most of our families, however, choose to participate in our fundraising programs so that *little or no money comes out of pocket*.

**It is *never* our desire to price anyone out of band.** We have a variety of fundraisers in place to help families make this contribution to the band. If we need to defer or spread out payments, or make other arrangements for financial assistance, please contact Mr. Evans directly. It is never okay, though, to simply not contribute financially to the success of the program—we cannot function that way.

#### V. Leadership

A motivated student leadership team will push the ensemble forward, and help keep things running smoothly, but the right people need to fill these roles. Not everyone can serve in this role, though the smart student will notice what needs to be done and takes the initiative to complete tasks without being told. This shows leadership and ownership. As well, each member must be cooperative and supportive of these individuals, as they are often put in awkward and difficult spots in relating to their peers.

Captains are chosen for their *merit* and *example*. It is their role to encourage, assist as needed, and *lead by example*. This example is meant to be a consistent reminder of the type of quality we expect here.

These factors are considered when evaluating a student's leadership potential:

- **Maturity** - Respectful, optimistic, thorough, and selfless
- **Responsibility** - Initiative and ownership, positive example of excellence

- **Proficiency** - Ability, skill, the quality of their contribution
- **Team Skills** - Positive interactions, helpful attitude, citizenship
- **Attendance** - Self-explanatory

Some finer points of being a student leader:

- there is no “power” given or implied
- the focus should always be on productivity and serving the group
- student leaders should be constantly *building* and *protecting* a positive culture
- the student leader’s role is of *service* to the group
- should be the first to arrive, and the last to leave
- help the director and staff keep things running smoothly

## VI. Rehearsal Expectations

Overall, I am a calm and friendly person and am always willing to listen to students and their families—outside of rehearsal time--when issues arise. However, I am also competitive by nature, and ask for members and staff to be competent and professional in preparing themselves for this competitive atmosphere. There will be times when the staff will ask a lot out of you, and tensions will rise. That is a normal part of the learning process, especially when weather or other issues disrupt our rehearsal schedule. Members are encouraged to keep a positive perspective on what we do, and treat it in a healthy way. You aren’t expected to *like* everyone in the group, but you do have to work together for the entire season. As such, each member is expected to handle themselves appropriately and professionally. If issues arise, either work it out in a mature fashion or agree to disagree *peacefully*. If necessary, bring it to the director’s attention, and it will get sorted out. Our success and positive experience depends on it.

The in-rehearsal process is simple, and will be followed in this order at every rehearsal:

- Run the chunk, always go to “plus 1”, freeze in place (no talking)
- Wait for “check and adjust”, adjust as needed, then listen for comments
- Director gives comments
- Staff give comments
- Q&A (always raise your hand, no blurting out). Ask questions that have not already been answered by director and staff comments
- Staff gives thumbs up when ready
- Listen for the next set of instructions, proceed

General expectations for rehearsals:

- Arrive early and be fully set up before start time. Please remind your parents to get you here with enough time to do so.
- Have *all music, drill and other materials* through the entire season. This is simple to do, but the lack of it affects rehearsals and performance quality immensely.
- Be cooperative and professional. Our rehearsals will almost always be run the same way, and the rehearsal process will become habit quickly. Each member is expected to

establish good attendance/transportation habits and effective rehearsal routines that will help us achieve our goals.

- Be still, quiet, and calm during verbal communication. Listen to comments, follow the instructions, and things will run very smoothly. Otherwise, a lot of time that we cannot get back will be wasted.
- Raise your hand to speak; no blurting out.
- Have an open mind, be patient, move fast, and work hard.
- Once something has been complimented, lock it into memory and perform it at that level or higher from that point forward.
- Always perform at a level in rehearsal that you would want to do in a performance. Form good habits, don't rehearse bad ones!

Why are these things necessary?

Because these habits make personal victories and championship moments possible.

## VII. Competition and Sportsmanship

“Perfection is not attainable. But if we chase perfection, we can catch excellence.”

- Vince Lombardi

Every day, we will chase perfection. And if we do this relentlessly, we can achieve excellence. Competition is a tool that we use to grow through the preparation process. Great performances don't just happen, but must be prepared for ahead of time. The opportunity will always be there, but we must *prepare* well if we are to take advantage of it. When we achieve at a high level, we bring credit to ourselves, to our school, our organization, and to our community.

However, competition can be a negative force as well. Marching band is a competitive activity and at times tearing others down may make you feel better about yourselves in such an activity. Please keep in mind, though, that every other band out there works just as hard as this one does, and maybe harder. Whether they are successful or not, they deserve our appreciation for all the hard work they put into this activity. Applaud for the other bands...they're out there applauding for you! And please don't talk negatively about other groups—you never know who's standing right behind you.

## VIII. Equipment

Our equipment is an obvious, but often overlooked part of what we do. It costs money to purchase, maintain, and repair. We can't do what we do without good equipment, so taking care of it is an absolute must.

- Anything that has a case or storage space should always be stored in/on it
- Anything without a case should be covered and handled with care at all times
- Instruments that fit in lockers should be stored there and *secured* when not in use
- If you own your own instrument, you must keep it in good playing condition. This includes performing maintenance, handling repairs and having good reeds as needed.
- Mallet percussion instruments and timpani are not shelves

- If it's not your instrument, you shouldn't be playing it.

If you do not own your own instrument for Marching Band or Symphonic Band, the school has many of the larger or more expensive instruments available for loan. The district rental fee for all instruments, including percussion, is \$100 for the school year. We have very few smaller instruments like flutes, clarinets, trumpets, or alto saxes available through the school.

## **IX. Facilities**

Very simply: every space we use will be cleaner when we leave than it was when we arrived.

## **X. Attendance**

Attendance is the biggest make-or-break element for us. Without 100% attendance at every rehearsal, we can achieve only average results at best, and average isn't good enough. Any absence, legitimate or not, cuts our productivity in half, because we have to spend twice the time learning the material. Please keep this in mind as you plan out appointments and other potential conflicts. Remember that, as marching band and color guard are graded courses, students will be held responsible for information presented at *all* rehearsals.

Absences for legitimate illnesses or circumstances beyond your control should be communicated as soon as is possible. These instances should be limited to those that are absolutely necessary, such as: funerals, student illness, family emergency, traffic accident, etc.

Illegitimate absences include: homework, parties, dinners out, dates, relationship issues, and social events that can be scheduled around our rehearsal schedule. School work is important, but marching band typically rehearses only two nights per week, and students must manage time well *outside of rehearsal* so their grades don't suffer.

Students must be present at the rehearsal immediately preceding a performance or contest in order to participate in that performance. Students will still be expected to attend the event and assist the band in such a circumstance. Students with more than three unexcused absences during the season may be written out of the show and given alternative assessments for the semester. In order for an absence to be considered excused, written notice from a parent or guardian is required.

## **XI. The "Fun" Factor**

"Excellence is not found down the path of least resistance."

- Unknown

This is a big and involved concept, but here it is in a nutshell:

1. There is a misconception these days that everything should be immediate and "fun".
2. This notion is false and counter-productive in an activity like this.
3. To be a success in the real world, effort and attention to detail are required, much as they are in marching band.
4. Any success achieved must come from constant effort and the sharpening of our skills through



some trial and error and the occasional failure.

5. Studies have established that the ambition, effort, and mental energy required to be a winner in our activity help prepare students for the rigors of real life.

6. Finally, life *demands results*. It doesn't simply give away success, regardless of what we see occurring in society these days. The truth is that we will either rise to the challenge or we won't. Those who rise to the challenge are the ones who succeed.

...How does this relate to the "fun" factor? Simple: *success is fun. Winning is fun!!* The memories, pride, respect, and the great experiences are where fun and hard work meet. It is worth every ounce of energy.

Being average takes less effort, but it is *not fun* and is a bitter and forgettable experience in the end. Average ensembles do not earn respect.

On the other hand, turning your efforts into winning moments earns you respect that is undeniable.

# Criteria for Letter in Band

A letter should be a source of pride for each student. It represents the tremendous time, effort, and dedication a student has invested in the Mountain Range High School Band. It should reward the student for efforts that go above and beyond the classroom. The key element in any lettering program is that a student must spend extra time and effort in order to earn a letter. A letter that is granted merely for participating in class diminishes the value and meaning of the letter to all who receive the award.

To earn a Band Letter, a student must accumulate 1500 points, according to the chart below. Points begin in May and are accumulated throughout the current school year only. Questions about the point list should be discussed with the Band Director prior to submitting the Band Letter Form. Students must have earned an “A” or “B” in the Marching/Symphonic Band class *each semester*, and have fulfilled the behavioral and attendance expectations of the band program throughout the year.

This application for a Letter in Band will be due approximately two weeks before the awards banquet in May.

## Points List

It is the sole responsibility of the student to submit their information and all necessary documentation (programs, receipts, etc.). Students are expected to be honest when claiming points, otherwise the application may be denied. The student must obtain verification or approval (when stated), before submitting this form.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Points are earned by participation in the following activities:	Points Possible	Your Total
Senior who has participated in the Band program all four years	1500	
Performed with an All-State Band (Jazz, Symphonic, Orchestra)	1500	
Won a State Championship	1500	
Marching Band After School/Saturday Rehearsals – 150 points possible – subtract 5 per missed rehearsal	150	
Marching Band Summer Rehearsals & Band Camp – 120 points possible - subtract 10 per missed rehearsal	120	
Marching Band Sectionals – 2 points per sectional – 20 points maximum	20	
Marching Band Competitions – 500 points possible – subtract 125 per missed performance	500	
Marching Band Football Game Performances – 150 points possible – subtract 50 per missed performance	150	
Completion of Color Guard Final Project (1 <sup>st</sup> semester) – 250 points	250	
Parade of Lights/Brighton Festival of Lights – 50 points (must perform in BOTH nights of Parade of Lights)	50	
Symphonic/Wind Ensemble or Concert Band Concerts – 150 points possible – subtract 150 per missed performance	150	

Symphonic/Wind Ensemble or Concert Band Festivals – 100 points possible – subtract 100 per missed performance	100	
<i>Bonus: Ensemble earned an overall “I” rating at festival – 50 points</i>	50	
<i>Bonus: Ensemble earned placement in State Concert Festival – 100 points</i>	100	
Placement in Wind Ensemble – 50 points	50	
Jazz Band Concerts – 200 points possible – subtract 50 per missed performance	200	
Jazz Band Festivals – 50 points possible – subtract 50 per missed performance	50	
<i>Bonus: Ensemble earned an overall “I” rating at festival – 25 points</i>	25	
Section Leader/First Chair (at any time) – 50 points for Marching Band, 50 points for Symphonic Band	100	
Captains – 100 points for Color Guard, Winter Guard, or Percussion Captains	100	
Drum Majors – 300 points	300	
Winter Guard/Winter Percussion – 300 points for attending all rehearsals and competitions	300	
Performing as an “extra” or “actor” with marching band or a winter ensemble – 100 points	100	
Participating in more than one music ensemble or course at MRHS (like choir, orchestra, jazz, or music theory) – 100 points for each group beyond the first		
Performing in Pep Band for basketball – 25 points per event		
Attending other approved concerts – 10 points per concert – 80 points maximum	80	
CHSAA Solo and Ensemble Festival – Rating of I = 40 points, II = 20 points per entry		
Auditioning for Drum Major or any Honor Band – 25 points per audition		
Performing with any Honor Band – 50 points per performance		
Taking private lessons – 50 points per semester	100	
Attending a summer music or color guard camp – 5-50 points, upon Director approval		
Special service to the organization – 5-50 points, upon Director approval		
Other, upon Director approval		
1.		
2.		
3.		
Fundraiser Participation – 20 points per group fundraiser (Please list fundraisers and frequency below this line—this includes hosting Winter Percussion or Winter Guard shows, but only for those not already involved in those groups. This is NOT for individual fundraisers, only group fundraisers like Tag Day, restaurant nights, and hosting shows.)		
1. Winter Guard contest (1 shift required)	20	
2. Winter Percussion contest (1 shift required)	20	
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
Grand Total		

# Communication is key!

So that we can communicate well with you throughout the year, please provide your contact information here:

[Tinyurl.com/bandroster](https://tinyurl.com/bandroster)

Also, please visit our Band Booster website for detailed calendars and more information at:

[www.mrhsbandboosters.com](http://www.mrhsbandboosters.com)



# Mountain Range High School Marching Band Contract

1. This document is designed to ensure that the student and their parents have read the Handbook, understand its contents, and agree to the participation requirements and financial commitment.
2. The student is required to sign and date the top portion, indicating their understanding of the requirements and agreeing to be fully committed to the ensemble for the whole season.
3. The student's parent or guardian is required to sign and date the bottom portion, indicating an understanding of the requirements, and agreeing to fully support their child's participation in the ensemble.

## Part I. Student Portion

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Mountain Range Band Handbook with my parent or guardian. I understand its contents and will comply with the directives contained and follow directions to the best of my ability. I understand that marching band is a special and unique experience, and that participation is voluntary and a privilege. Upon signing this contract, I commit myself to:

- Following all MRHS and Adams 12 School District policies
- Maintaining perfect attendance
- Maintaining exemplary conduct
- Participation in fundraising to support the band and to *meet my fundraising obligation*
- Maintaining good communication with the instructors in the event of emergencies

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Part II. Parent/Guardian Portion

I, \_\_\_\_\_, as Parent/Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Mountain Range Band Handbook with my student, understand its contents, and fully support my student's participation in the group throughout the season. I understand the time requirements and financial commitment. Upon signing this contract, I commit myself to:

- Following all MRHS and Adams 12 School District policies.
- Ensuring and supporting my student's attendance at all band functions
- Ensuring that my student's *financial commitment/fundraising is fulfilled*
- Fulfilling my volunteer requirement to support my student and the band at large
- Maintaining good communication with the instructors in the event of emergencies and illnesses.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date