

# Boardman Band

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Boardman Band is a very active organization with many responsibilities for school and community performances. Thus it becomes the responsibility of every band member to help the Band fulfill its obligations. Membership in the Boardman Band is demanding, but the benefits of membership far outweigh the disadvantages. The success of the Band is dependent upon its members understanding, accepting, and prioritizing the attendance requirements.

The first thing that band members and their parents must know is that all rehearsals and performances are mandatory. Likewise, students must not be late to any rehearsal or performance. Each member will be given a calendar of band functions. Any changes to the calendar will be given to the students with as much advance notice as possible. In case of a conflict, students must submit an **EXCUSE REQUEST FORM** to the Band Director as soon as possible but **at least two weeks** before the date in question. Forms are available in the Band Office and on the Band Website at [www.boardmanband.org](http://www.boardmanband.org).

**In case of an emergency, parents should call the band office (phone: 726-3420, e-mail: [tom.ruggieri@boardmanschools.org](mailto:tom.ruggieri@boardmanschools.org)) as soon as possible.** Even in the case of an emergency, an **EXCUSE REQUEST FORM** must still be submitted so as to provide the Band Director with an explanation of the emergency or illness.

The Band Director decides whether the request is excusable or not. Approved requests are kept on file in the band office. Denied requests will be returned to the student. Absences will have an effect on a student's Band grade based on the following guidelines:

- EXCUSED ABSENCE or TARDINESS .....No effect on grade if work is made up\*
- 1<sup>st</sup> UNEXCUSED ABSENCE .....Two letter grades lower for the grade period
- 2<sup>nd</sup> UNEXCUSED ABSENCE .....Automatic failure for the grade period
- 2<sup>nd</sup> UNEXCUSED TARDY (Rehearsal OR Performance).....One letter grade lower for the grade period

In addition, unexcused absences will result in the loss of a student's marching position or chair placement. Positions and chairs can be regained via the Band Challenge System.

\*Just like any other class, work missed due to an excused absence must be made up. Upon returning to school after an excused absence from a performance, the student must submit a recording of him/herself playing through the music for the missed show. This make-up performance will be graded. Make-up points may also be obtained through Additional Activities.

## SPECIAL SUMMER PRACTICE CONCERNS

In order to be prepared for marching band season, a schedule of summer practice sessions is necessary. Just like any rehearsal or performance, summer band is mandatory. Schedule conflicts must be handled according to the Attendance Policy. **Excuse forms must be submitted for all absences.** Student athletes should try to work out a compromise between their two activities. They may include all members of the team on Band Excuse Request Forms.

**Band Camp is MANDATORY. ONLY EMERGENCY ABSENCES WILL BE EXCUSED. Other absences will affect the student's first 9-week grade and will jeopardize the student's permanent spot in the field shows.**

**To preserve the quality of performance, the morale of the entire group, and the dignity and integrity of the educational values, full attendance must be required.**

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## Grading Policy

In addition to the effects of absence and tardiness on a student's grade, there are other factors on which grades will be based. As a result of extensive research in grading performing groups, the Boardman Band uses a performance-based grading system that will give students, teachers, and parents a more accurate report of a student's knowledge, ability, progress, and achievement in music and marching. The tools and methods used for assessment will give students prompt and frequent feedback so that they will know on what skills they need to improve. Students will have many opportunities to raise low grades, but they will have to work on doing that. Since the goal of the band is to perform, grading criteria will be related to the standards of quality performances. Specific standards, rules, and guidelines for band members are outlined below.

The Attendance Policy will play a major role in grading because one of the standards of quality performance is that the performer be present and prompt at all functions. Please pay close attention to the details of the attendance policy and how it affects student grades.

**Any student who earns a failing grade during any grading period preceding or during the annual band trip will be ineligible to go on the trip.**

Grades will be derived from a number of formal (playing, marching tests) and informal (teacher observations) assessments. In tests and observations, directors will be listening and looking for the following elements:

### Musical elements

- Tone Quality
- Notes
- Rhythm
- Dynamics
- Posture
- Articulation
- Intonation
- Phrasing
- Tempo
- Form
- Sight-reading

### Marching band elements

- Marching in step
- Horn angle
- Choreography
- Standing at attention
- Height of step
- Sharpness of turns
- Knowledge of drill
- Memorization of music

Test grades will be a percentage that reflects the degree to which the required elements of an assessment are met. The test grades will be averaged and posted regularly to give students feedback on their status.

### Non-musical elements

- Physical presence at the performance
- Being on time
- Having all necessary equipment, music, and supplies
- Being properly uniformed
- Professionalism

Non-musical elements will only be assessed by observation at appropriate times. Non-compliance of the non-musical elements will result in point deductions. Report card grades will reflect a student's test average minus any deductions. Remember that an unexcused absence results in an automatic two letter grade penalty.

Additional Activities points can be earned by students who need them. Proof of private lessons, written review of an out-of-school concerts (not rock/pop concerts), and participation in extra band activities will be worth extra points. Students may also participate in independent projects for extra credit. Such projects must be pre-approved by the director.

## Standards, Rules, and Guidelines

- Sit with your section at all times. The directors will designate each section's boundaries. The only exception to this will be if you are individually assigned a seat by the directors or chaperones.
- Play when the band plays. Do any and all choreography associated with stands tunes.
- No gum, food, or candy during the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters of football games or at any time during a parade.
- Only drink water as supplied by the chaperones during the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters.
- Only use the restroom when Mr. Ruggieri authorizes it and then only when accompanied by a chaperone.
- **Do not use electronic devices during performances. This includes times when we are in the stands at football games. Devices during rehearsals are permitted ONLY as aids to the rehearsal (tuner, metronome, recorder, fingering/trill chart).**
- No baseball caps or bandanas in the stands. Hair bands must be approved colors and only worn to keep long hair up.
- Boardman Band winter hats will be allowed ONLY when Mr. Ruggieri decides that the weather warrants them.
- No large, or dangling earrings. Stud or post earrings in each ear are permitted. No other body piercings are permitted while in uniform. **No Band-Aid cover-ups will be permitted. No excuses pertaining to new piercings will be accepted.**
- Long hair will be completely tucked under the hat during performance.
- No profanity of any kind when you are with the band. This includes times when you are not in uniform, but are still representing the band.
- Obey all bus rules when traveling.
- Do not spray any type of perfume or hairspray while on the bus.
- No food, drink, gum, or candy in the rehearsal rooms unless it is authorized by Mr. Ruggieri.
- Do not be tardy to rehearsals. Be in your seat and READY TO PLAY when the tardy bell rings.
- Be prepared for all rehearsals and performances by having your instrument and music.
- Do not disrupt the rehearsal or performance in any way.
- Do not talk when a director or conductor is on the podium or when a director is addressing the band.
- Treat the facilities and equipment with respect at all times regardless of its current condition.
- Treat the instruments and belongings of others with respect.
- Do not touch or play anyone else's instrument.
- Do not touch the percussion instruments. The directors will only authorize percussionists to touch the percussion instruments, and only when the instruments are required in a piece of music.
- Do not be in any room or area of the music department where you do not belong.
- Do not talk or cause any disruption when another group is performing.
- Always wear the band uniform correctly. This includes wearing the Band T-shirt, white socks, polished shoes, clean gloves, and a clean uniform for Marching Band.
- Have a pencil in your folder at all times.
- Have all supplies for your instrument at all times.
- Make sure your instrument is clean and/or polished for all performances.
- Keep your instrument in proper playing condition.

## More Serious Concerns

There are certain behaviors that must be dealt with more harshly than those mentioned above. Insubordination, or refusing to follow any rule or directive, is one such behavior that will be treated as an unexcused absence. Infractions of the Boardman Schools Code of Conduct and bus rules will be treated likewise.

The aforementioned rules and guidelines are designed to maintain the highest standards of spirit, appearance, professionalism, and performance. In short, they are designed to make the band better. If you choose not to obey these rules and other accepted school and band rules, then it will be assumed that you do not care to be a contributing member of the band. Therefore, in addition to having your grade adjusted, you will be removed from the band, immediately and temporarily, at first. Then, with a repeat offense, you will be removed permanently.

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## Synopsis of Grading Procedures

- At any given rehearsal, the directors will be recording their observations of students performing in class. They will rate students on a scale from 1 to 10 (with 10 being the best) on applicable Marching Band Elements as listed in the Grading Policy (Concert Band Elements will be used during concert season).
- Students will be given a percentage grade for each observation session.
- All percentage grades will be averaged at the end of the grading period.
- Additional Activities percentages will be averaged in.\*
- A letter grade will be derived based on the district-wide grading scale.
- Attendance deductions will be applied to the letter grades of affected students.

### \*Additional Activities

- **Individual Playing Test** – a student must schedule a time to perform individually for one of the directors. The director may ask the student to perform scales and music from the current band folder. Sight-reading may also be used. The director will derive a percentage grade based on a rating scale of Musical Elements as listed in the Grading Policy. Two additional percentage points will be added for each test. The grade earned on the test will also be averaged in IF it will raise the average.
- **Music Memorization Test** – a student must schedule a time to perform individually for one of the directors. The director will ask the student to perform one or more pieces from the current marching band folder from memory. A percentage grade will be assigned accordingly. Two additional percentage points will be added for each test. The grade earned on the test will also be averaged in IF it will raise the average.
- **Private Lessons** – a student can earn up to six additional percentage points by showing evidence of private study with a qualified music teacher (the teacher must be on our Approved Private Teachers list). The student must submit a properly completed Private Lesson Form. This can only be used once per grading period.
- **Attendance at other concerts** – a student can earn additional percentage points by attending and reporting on a performance of some other group in which the student does not participate (rock/pop concerts are not acceptable). The student must submit a report using the form available on the Band Website.
- **Independent Projects** – a student can earn additional percentage points by completing other projects. All such projects must be pre-approved by the band director.
- **Participation in extra band activities** – students may earn extra points by volunteering for extra activities such as Jazz Ensemble 3, Drumline, Manager, Librarian, football pep band, elementary instrument demos, fruit sale helper, etc. The amount of extra credit earned will be based on the demands of the activity and on a student's degree of participation in the activity.

The district-wide grading scale will be used to determine letter grades.

93 — 100 =	A
86 — 92 =	B
75 — 85 =	C
70 — 74 =	D
0 — 69 =	F

**An example of grading during Marching Band**

• Observation session	90%
• Observation session	93%
• Observation session	94%
• Observation session	96%
• Average of Observations	93%
• Private lesson form worth 3 points	+3%
• One memorization test with 80% scored	+2%
• Total percentage points	98%
• Resultant letter grade	A
• Two unexcused tardies	lower one letter grade
• Final grade for the grading period	<b>B</b>

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## Expectations of Band Members

Although the following concerns may not necessarily be subject to the above policies, they are very important in maintaining a positive public image for the Boardman Bands. Even when we are not in public or when students think that no one is watching, I will correct these problems when they occur. Some may disagree with me or not understand why I think these are important. However, just like any rule, I will enforce them.

- If you are early, you are on time. If you are on time, you are late. If you are late, you are in trouble!
- Public Display of Affection – When in uniform or on the buses, in class, or on trips, this is forbidden. When not in uniform and not immediately apparent to strangers that you are part of a group, it is just annoying. Control yourself.
- “Spoon dancing” – Scheduled activities at Band Camp and on trips sometimes include dances. Couples must dance face to face or side to side. “Spooning” will not be permitted.
- Sitting on tables – Have some class. I hate the thought of sitting down to eat a meal where somebody just had his or her rear end.
- Cutting through flower beds and landscaping – People put a lot of work and money into their yards. Stay on designated walkways.
- Profanity – I have surprised so many students by coming around the corner when they didn’t think anyone was listening. My standard response is, “You never know who is listening.” Do not jeopardize any opportunity to make a good impression.
- Leaving a mess – Whether it is on a bus, in the bleachers, in your band camp room, in the band room, or anywhere, clean up after yourself. Students should be well-acquainted with the concept of everyone being punished for the mistakes of a few. We employ this concept in band also. All of the students on a messy bus have lost privileges because of the carelessness of a few. This is obviously not fair, but it is the best method we have UNLESS we can get everyone to take care of his or her own mess.
- Inappropriate dress – Students must follow the dress code for all school functions. A gray area exists, however, when we are at summer practice, band camp, on trips, etc. Always use good judgment when choosing wardrobe for activities. When you are out on your own, you don’t have to care what anyone thinks about how you dress. When you are with the band, you MUST be concerned with what others think.
- Loud and obnoxious behavior – It is annoying and disruptive all the time, but especially so when the attention of a crowd is supposed to be focused on something important. For example, there are many times when Boardman Band students are members of an audience. Display some class at concerts by sitting quietly during the music, only applauding - not screaming - after the music, and not entering or leaving during a performance. To do otherwise takes the attention away from the performers and puts it where it is not supposed to be.
- “THANK YOU” – This simple phrase is a great way to earn respect. There are countless times in Band when people do things for students that they don’t have to do. I want students to realize this and show their appreciation for it. The students get so many compliments and earn so much respect from others when they show their appreciation in this simple way.
- Written and verbal communication – Students always tell me I should have been an English teacher. I will correct them when they speak or write incorrectly. People are judged by the way they speak and write. I simply want to reinforce good communication skills that they will use for the rest of their lives.
- RESPECT – Students want respect, but they must earn it. The best way to earn it is to give it. In fact, all of this comes down to the Golden Rule: Treat others as you would want them to treat you.