

**WASKOM HIGH SCHOOL BAND  
STUDENT-PARENT  
HANDBOOK**



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## **WASKOM ISD BAND DEPARTMENT**

As a member of the band, you are a member of one the most prestigious student programs at Waskom ISD. As with any other organization, the success of the band depends on the level of loyalty by all of its MEMBERS.

### **DISCLAIMER**

The rules set forth by Federal Law, Texas State Law, Texas Education Agency (TEA), and University Interscholastic League (UIL) supersede that of any policies in this handbook that are found to be in conflict. This handbook adopts policies that are more stringent than those adopted by Waskom ISD, and Waskom High School as allowed by district policies.

### **PURPOSE**

This handbook was written to serve as a guide to help students and parents understand policies that will be followed on a daily basis in the Waskom High School Wildcat Band.

Understand that it covers some policies already set forth in the WISD Handbooks and additional policies that are unique to the Waskom High School Band. Students are required to follow all guidelines within. Students are also expected to follow ALL rules and regulations set forth by the organizations listed in the “Disclaimer” section. If an issue arises that is not covered in this document, the Band director will decide on the appropriate action.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

Waskom High School Band students will learn the importance of dependability, teamwork, and music. WHS band students will also learn that hard work is the only path that leads to success. By doing this, students will be prepared to become good citizens and future leaders in our society.

### **BAND OBJECTIVES**

**Cultural:** To continue the development of music appreciation and understanding through the study and performance of the best literature in music.

**Educational:** To develop interested and discriminating listeners and provide a well-rounded musical background.

**Service:** To provide music and support for certain school and community affairs, while promoting and enhancing the dignity and reputation of the band at music performances.

**Recreational:** To provide all students with an opportunity for worthy use of leisure time, and an emotional outlet and good social experiences.

### **THE BAND PROGRAM’S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE STUDENT**

- Providing the band members with the proper kind of rehearsal room, ventilation, lighting, seating, music stand, instrument storage space, and such other equipment as is necessary to aid in good, lasting performance habits.
- Plan each day’s activities and encourage daily progress of the entire band.
- Provide the band with a full musical education through rehearsal, performance, teaching, testing, and listening.
- Assure that no individual member through inappropriate or irresponsible behavior interferes with the learning (achievement) of the group. It is the responsibility of the band department to see that all members conform to the school and department policies.

- Supervise the students in class or on school sponsored band trips. Each student will receive an information letter to bring home to their parents containing the plans for each trip, the type dress, and the complete schedule of activities.
- Grade the progress of each member on his/her instrument and their participation in the band.

### **THE BAND MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROGRAM**

- Be regular in attendance and make sure all absences are excused by the band director prior to the absence.
- Make a real effort to learn and improve on a daily basis.
- Become responsible for and expect to assume the consequences for your actions.
- Be personally clean, neat, dress appropriately, and respect the WHS Band Uniform.
- Have the proper respect for those in authority.
- Follow all classroom rules, school regulations, and all travel instructions given for trips.
- Be honest and fair with others concerning equipment, music, and school life in general.
- Cooperate with fellow band members and share with them the responsibilities and privileges that are a part of the band program.
- Contribute positively to your music education and that of others by the best use of your talents.
- Read and play music with insight and expression.
- Communicate with the band director when conflicts arise. We want you to be **SUCCESSFUL** in everything that you do.
- NEVER SETTLE FOR “**GOOD ENOUGH**”... ALWAYS STRIVE FOR THE BEST!!
- Most of all: **HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE!**

### **WASKOM ISD BAND PROGRAM**

The Waskom band program consists of all band students at the middle school and the high school. These students will expand on the primary skills learned in their beginning year of band, and will be introduced to full ensemble playing, as well as individual and group competition. The following is an overview of the various performing groups in existence at Waskom Middle School and/or Waskom High School.

**Marching Band:** The marching band will be made up of all band students in grades 9-12 grade who have successfully completed the middle school program. This group will perform at all football games, pep rallies, parades, and festivals throughout the school year. Band students will not be allowed to join band in the spring.

Students that leave the band program will not be allowed to register for band in the future unless reviewed and approved by the band director.

**Middle School Band:** The middle school bands consist of a combined 7th and 8th grade band. This class will be treated as a training class for the high school band. The middle school band will attend UIL and/or a spring festival of the director's choosing. The middle school band will also have local concerts for the public.

**Beginning Band:** The beginning band is made up of 6th grade students who are

starting instrumental music instruction. This group will perform full band concerts. This group may also perform at a spring festival and/or a solo & ensemble contest. Students wishing to join the beginner band after their 6<sup>th</sup> grade year must be approved by the band director.

H. S. Concert Band: This organization may perform a variety of concert band literature throughout the year and will perform in numerous concerts, competitions, and school events.

Ensembles: Ensembles will be scheduled after school as time permits for solo & ensemble competition, and will be open to all eligible band members.

Color guard: This group consists of members of the Waskom High School Band that have completed the requirements set forth in the Color guard Handbook. The color guard will use the standard equipment which can include flag, rifle, and sabre. The guard performs at football games, pep rallies, and/or other contests and competitions. The guard will be a part of the band and not a separate entity.

### **WASKOM BAND GRADING PROCEDURE**

The grading scale will be used in accordance with the Waskom ISD grading scale.

Daily Grades may include

- Chair Tests/Playing Tests
- Portfolio Entries/Practice Records
- All Music Pass-Offs
- Other Daily Grades, Folder Checks, Pencil Check, Supply Check, etc...

Test Grades

- Six Weeks Playing and/or Written Exam
- Attendance of Rehearsals/Performances-proper dress and on time

### **ATTENDANCE AND SCHEDULE**

The band competes and performs as a unit. If individuals are not present at rehearsals or performances, the entire group is affected. The schedule will be given to the students prior to the start of school so students are aware of the band schedule well in advance. Students are expected to make arrangements to attend ALL performances and rehearsals.

A permanent schedule will be given to the students at the start of the school year. In the event a change is made in a scheduled performance or rehearsal, students are expected to make every effort to adapt to that change. If ample notice of the change is not possible, the policy on the absence will be adjusted accordingly.

An excused absence can only be granted with prior notification in writing. Emergency situations require a phone call as soon as possible. The number to the band hall is 903-687-3361 ext 1333. Parents are asked to leave a voicemail message or send an email. In the event of an emergency absence, the student should bring written documentation upon his/her return to school in order for the absence to be excused.

Students that are absent from school must call the band director BEFORE the end of the school day in order to be excused from an after-school practice or performance. Acceptable excused absences are as follows: severe personal illness, death in the family, school related performances, or a "once in a lifetime event." Absences that a student wishes to be considered

as a “once in a lifetime event” must be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance of the projected absence. Absences from a contest must be requested at least 30 days in advance. The band director will make the decision whether or not to excuse the absence in a case-by-case manner.

Work, dentist appointments (non-serious nature), orthodontist appointments, outside-of-school organizational activities, club meetings (school or otherwise), and non-serious family member illnesses will not be excused and will result in the proper grade reduction. Dental emergencies (ie. severe tooth ache, tooth knocked out, abscess, etc.) will be covered by the “severe personal illness” excuse. If a student is found to have an attendance problem, regardless of the nature, the student may be excluded from special activities or removed from band.

Students are expected to be at football play-off games at the end of the regular season. If a student misses a play-off game, his/her grade will be adversely affected.

**Please do not use the band program as a means to punish your child by not allowing him/her to be at a rehearsal or performance. We are a team, and therefore depend on all members!**

### **EXPECTATIONS OF THE DAILY REHEARSAL**

The daily class time is the basis from which good performances originate. A conscientious effort at rehearsals will guarantee successful performances and this means that adequate preparation on your individual part must take place at home. Band rehearsals are designed to learn about music and solve ensemble problems and not to teach you your part note by note.

To make each class more productive:

- Be on time!!! To be late is to be on time... to be on time is to be early...
- Warm-Up softly and slowly once the director has instructed you to do so. (No Blasting)
- Have a pencil or writing utensil at all times.
- Make sure YOUR folder is at all rehearsals.
- Maintain a good posture at all times keeping both feet on the floor.
- Do no talk or play (except when instructed to do so) while the director or anyone is on the podium.
- Be attentive and anxious to participate.

### **BAND HALL RULES**

- Enter and exit the band hall in an orderly, QUIET manner.
- When getting your instrument out, get YOUR instrument only. You should not be in any other section of the instrument storage area except your own.
- Be in your seat when the director steps on the podium to begin class with YOUR band folder, YOUR music, YOUR instrument, YOUR pencil, and any other required materials.
- No talking once class has begun unless given permission.
- Listen and follow directions at all times. They may not always be repeated.
- Remain seated until dismissed.
- When class is over, be sure to get all personal belongings. Anything left will be thrown away or turned into the office.
- No food, drink, candy, or gum is allowed at any time during rehearsals.
- Respect others; their rights, property, person, and feelings.
- Cell phones are not allowed in the band set up. If caught, the phone will be kept for the remainder of the school day and may be picked up after school. (See Student Handbook)

## GAME CONDUCT

- You are encouraged to support our team by cheering and being involved in the game.
- During the game you are to remain at your assigned seat at all times.
- No food, candy, or drinks are allowed in the band set. You may visit the concession stand during the third quarter. No messy foods that will damage the uniforms are allowed.
- Be ready to play. Music will be called up in advance. Have the fight song ready at all times. No non-band people in the band stands- this includes your parents.
- In cold weather, wear warm clothes under your uniform that are maroon/black in color.
- No one leaves the stands without the permission of the director.
- You will remain in our stands until dismissed after the game.
- Restroom business must be taken care of before the game or during 3rd quarter.

## TRIP CONDUCT

Since the band is a part of the whole school system, we will operate by the rules set down by the school district with a few additions of our own. The band will always travel to a performance as a group on assigned buses. Once a student has been assigned to a bus, there will be no changes in the seating arrangement. A student may ride home with his/her parents provided that a permission form, signed by the parents, is given to the director. Prior to a trip, information will be given which will tell students exactly where to be, at what time, with what equipment, and in what uniform or dress, and for what purpose. Students are expected to follow these instructions to the letter.

Student transportation will always be provided by Waskom I.S.D. We will be traveling on school buses driven by competent drivers. Our drivers are acquainted with the routine and responsibilities of the Waskom Bands. The bus trips sole purpose is to transport the Waskom Bands to and from an event safely. It is not for entertainment. Waskom ISD buses that are designated as “band buses” will **ONLY** transport currently enrolled students of the Waskom band. The following rules will be followed at all times while you are on the bus:

- Respect the bus driver and all chaperones and adults
- Be completely quiet during roll call
- No food or drink, unless authorized
- Use normal tone of voice
- School policy will be followed in reference to public display of affection
- No sound devices are allowed unless they have headphones
- Students must ride school transportation to all events
- No portable DVD players will be allowed unless told differently
- Students must ride the bus home unless riding back with parents and have signed permission form.
- If riding home with parents after contest, you must stay until the band director releases you and take your instrument home since you will not be there to unload it upon return
- In the case of an overnight trip, you will not be allowed in any room other than their assigned room without the presence or consent of the director. Curfews will be in effect. *In extreme cases (stealing, drugs, alcohol, tobacco), parents will be contacted, and the director reserves the right to send any student home by the parent's expense with a possible expulsion from the band program.*

## UNIFORM USAGE POLICY

The high school band uniform consists of uniform coats, pants, hat, plume, gauntlets, gloves, and shoes. Each of these items (except shoes) will be provided by the school district at the beginning of the school year. We will check out each of the items at the beginning of an event and check them back in immediately upon the conclusion of the event. **There is to be NO RUNNING while in uniform!** No student is dismissed until all parts of the uniform are put in their proper place. If a student chooses to ride home with their parents, it is his/her responsibility to see that the uniform is properly hung on the hanger and returned to WISD. No band uniforms will be taken home. At the end of the year, the uniform will be examined and students will be financially responsible for missing or damaged parts. All band members will be responsible for providing their own black socks and band t-shirt. Please note that the average replacement cost of each uniform is approximately \$450 a unit. If the uniform is returned and shows more than the average wear and tear, the student will be held financially responsible.

## EQUIPMENT

Students will be responsible for the upkeep and care of all of their equipment, whether it is school owned or not. Any damages to the instruments, music, uniforms, or any other equipment will be repaired or replaced immediately at the student's expense.

## ELIGIBILITY

TEA and UIL have very strict policies when it comes to eligibility issues and events that are deemed "extracurricular." Some activities the band participates in are curricular or academic, and others are extracurricular. Either way, in order for a band student to participate fully in the band program, he/she must make a 70% or higher in all of their classes. Grade checks will occur at the end of each six week grading period. Students are also encouraged to come in and have their grades checked as the six week grading period progresses. It takes many hours of preparation for the band to become a quality unit. If individuals become ineligible, the band has to be re-taught and valuable time is lost. Students that have excessive eligibility problems will be excluded from the marching show and the concert band until a time comes in which he/she can prove he/she can consistently remain eligible. Students that are ineligible for more than 2 consecutive grading periods may be asked to choose an elective other than band. Student leaders as well as members of auxiliary units of the band will be removed from his/her position if he/she becomes ineligible at any time

during the year and may not be allowed to audition or apply for any position in the future. In the event that a student becomes ineligible, he/she may not be allowed to practice with the contest band. Instead, he/she may be given alternate assignments in order to make up for his/her lost time. TEA and UIL does not allow students that are ineligible to participate in football games, pep-rallies, parades, or any competitions. However, ineligible students are allowed (and required) to participate in school concerts in order to satisfy requirements in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills.

## DISCIPLINE MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

Students involved with the Waskom High School Band are looked at as "band students" even at times when he/she is not formally participating in a band activity. Because of this, these students are expected to be good examples to all other students in his/her classes and in the community. Students that are in conflict with this philosophy will be removed from band at the discretion of the band director.

Band members are expected to follow all Waskom Independent School District policies regarding appropriate student behavior. Violation of the following policies will be handled by existing school policy in addition to the “WISD Band Consequences” listed below: class cut (during or after school), destruction of school property, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, smoking, fighting, knives or weapons, bullying, profanity, sexual harassment, stealing, tardiness, and insubordination.

All negative student behavior (while in band, other classes, or in public) will be evaluated by the band director and appropriate disciplinary action will be determined based on the severity of the incident and its impact on the band.

WISD Band consequences can include:

- Lap(s) around the football field or marching the lines
- Push-ups or sit-ups
- After-practice marching fundamentals
- After school detention or discipline write up
- Loss of 3rd quarter privileges or any other privileges extended to the band
- Suspension from one or more performances
- Exclusion from a special band trip
- Expulsion from an auxiliary unit
- Not allowed to audition for an auxiliary unit or student leadership position
- Expulsion from band at the end of the semester
- Immediate expulsion from band with loss of credit
- (If away from school) sent home at the parent’s expense
- Turned over to the local police

It should be noted that 3 things may result in immediate expulsion from the WHS Band Program:

- Theft of any kind at school or away
- Open defiance towards a band director (or other teaching staff) telling any member of the teaching staff “NO” or any other insubordination.
- Any activity that could lead to the arrest and conviction of a student.

In the unfortunate event that a student is expelled from the band program, parents are asked to consider that his/her child has usually received ample warnings and “chances” to correct his/her behavior. Band is an elective in which the student must truly want to participate.

Actions speak louder than words and if a student doesn’t “act” like he/she wants to be in band, he/she will be asked to find another class in which to participate.

The following additional rules will be in affect when the band is at band practice or away from school:

- “Truth-or-Dare” or any like games are prohibited from any band activities.
- While traveling on a bus, students are expected to behave in a manner that is not distracting to the driver.
- No energy drinks allowed on trips
- While students are on the bus he/she is to: stay seated, keep feet off of the seats, and maintain a low volume level.
- Students are to ride on the bus that he/she is assigned.

- Absolutely no public displays of affection are allowed.
- Girls and boys may not sit in seats together.
- When arriving at the destination, the students are to sit quietly and wait on the bus for further instruction from the band directors. Students are not to exit from rear door of bus.
- Students are expected to follow the itinerary as set forth by the band director.
- Students are not allowed to go anywhere that he/she does not have prior permission to go.

### **BAND COUNCIL & LEADERSHIP**

Band leadership positions/band council will consist of drum majors, guard captains, and section leaders. All positions will be selected by the band directors with the exception of Band President.

### **LETTER JACKETS**

The following policies will be in effect when dealing with the awarding of band letter jackets:

- Students that are awarded and receive a letter jacket are required to continue his/her enrollment in band until his/her graduation.
- Letter jackets will be ordered only for those students that are actively participating in band and have met the requirements.
- Students that make the All-Region Band and attend the All-Region Clinic/Concert on or after his/her 9th grade year will be awarded a letter jacket during the first semester of the next year.
- Students that make a “superior” rating at the UIL State Solo/Ensemble Contest will be awarded a letter jacket during the first semester of the next year.
- Students that have been in the WHS Band for at least two consecutive years and have participated in all band contests during those two years will be awarded a letter jacket in the first semester of the next year of high school.
- Seniors that have not received a letter jacket and have been in band since August of his/her freshman year will be awarded a letter jacket during the first semester.
- The band director reserves the right to deny a letter jacket to a student that has discipline, attendance, or eligibility problems. Transfer students may receive a jacket after 3 semesters or after they make the All-Region Band or make a superior rating at State UIL.

### **BAND BOOSTERS**

The Waskom Band Boosters is the support organization for the Waskom ISD Band Program, which includes the Waskom Beginner Band, Waskom Middle School Band, and Waskom High School Band. All parents of band students are automatically Waskom Wildcat Band Boosters. The Waskom Band Boosters are involved in raising money for band trips, scholarships, summer band camps, and other financial or support needs of the band that are beyond the responsibility of the school district. It is impossible for this organization to function as it was intended without the support from all of the band parents. Each parent that has a child in band (6-12) is asked to help the organization in any way that he/she can throughout the year. The Waskom Band Boosters will meet at regular intervals at the high school band hall (or other Waskom ISD school building) unless otherwise called by the booster president or head band director. The band director reserves the right to eliminate the band booster organization if deemed necessary.

# WASKOM BAND

This handbook is provided to help ensure that the band program will be an enjoyable and rewarding educational experience for all its members. Clear expectations that are established at the beginning of each school year will help make that possible. This handbook contains information about general rules and regulations of the program along with academic rules, UIL rules for competition, school owned equipment, individual equipment, alternates, concert bands, band hall policies, uniform procedures, and attendance policies. Please do not be overwhelmed by the information, especially if you are new to varsity school band. The band experience should be a positive one, and this can be achieved through cooperative teamwork among directors, parents, band members and the community.

“I have read and discussed the Waskom Band Handbook with my son/daughter and we will abide by the rules and regulations set forth in this handbook. We understand the responsibilities that come with being a member of the Waskom Wildcat Band Program and will accept the decisions of the band director(s).”

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Student's Name (Print)

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Student's Signature & Date

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Parent's Name (Print)

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Parent's Signature & Date

# **Waskom High School Color Guard Handbook**

- A. You must be a member or become a member of the Waskom High School Wildcat Band to participate in the color guard.
- B. Quitting band is the same as quitting color guard. Members are not allowed to quit one group for the other.
- C. Members are not allowed to rejoin the group during the year or in the future years after quitting.
- D. Tryouts will be in the spring for fall guard each year. The tryouts will be judged by a panel of judges chosen by the sponsor.
- E. Prospective members must be eligible at the time of tryouts and cannot have failed at any time during marching season.
- F. Members must pass off the show every week during color guard rehearsals. If a member had an excused absence from school then he/she can arrange a time 24 hours in advance of a performance to pass off the show. This must be arranged with the color guard sponsor.
- G. The school provides the majority of the color guard uniform (uniform, shoes, equipment), but members are required to purchase any make-up and appropriate undergarments.
- H. Members are required to wear the appropriate uniforms to all performances regardless of their participation in other groups. (ie, cheerleaders who are also members of the color guard must change into their color guard uniform prior to any performance)
- I. Candidates for captain must have been in color guard for at least 1 year prior to auditions.
- J. All prospective members must have been in marching band as a regular marching member in the fall prior to auditions. The color guard will be comprised of 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade band members. Transfer students who wish to audition must be in good standing at their previous band program.
- K. Hair, make-up, and jewelry will be done in a specific manner chosen by the sponsor and are required for all performances.
- L. The color guard will use the standard equipment which can include flag, rifle, and sabre.