

PREFACE

It is the current goal of the Gulf High School Band to be high quality marching and concert bands capable and worthy of representing our school, City of New Port Richey, Pasco County, and the State of Florida any place in the nation. This is an energetic and idealistic goal and we have made enormous strides toward our goal. There is a responsibility to continue a tradition of excellence and purpose through dedication, devotion, and hard work. **Band is a privilege, not a right! Those members not acting in a manner that is productive or in the good name of the band, he/she will be removed immediately!**

The purpose of the Handbook is to help you meet your responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner and applies to all auxiliaries and components of the band (the term 'band member' refers to both instrumentalists and auxiliary or 'flag corps' students). The policies established in the Handbook have been proven to be necessary and essential to good order and discipline which insures the best organization possible. **The policies contained in this handbook are in effect on the first day of school until the last day!!!** We will furnish each member with this Handbook, a calendar of activities, and a parent release form (Power of Attorney). This release form should be signed by the parents and notarized by the end of Band Camp. This Handbook is to be read by the student and the parents, with the parents signing the attached form which is returned by the student by the end of Band Camp. Failure to do this will result in having the student sit out football games until the form is returned.

The Band Booster Organization exists to support the band program and does so by supplementing State and Federal funds to fulfill the schedule of activities and needs of the band. Behind every superior band is an active Booster group. In order to be active enough to challenge and satisfy our students, we are compelled to supplement funding. Parents are **expected** to take an active part of the Band Booster Organization. All parents are band boosters!

All Band members and parents are urged to read the entire handbook carefully to avoid conflicts with the policies and rules stated therein.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CLASSES

Each student will be placed into a band class with regards to his/her ability level on their instrument. Auditions will be held to determine this level and the director will place the student where he feels the student is most needed. Recommendations from the middle school band director will also play an important role for incoming ninth graders. These classes aim to develop one's musicianship, tone production, and performance techniques beyond those offered in middle school. The analysis of music theory, form, style, and history are included in the performance of varied literature. **Attendance at out-of-school rehearsals and performances is required!!!**

ATTENDANCE

Band is a very special organization. It is one of the most active organizations at Gulf and as such, demands members of special character. The Band is a voluntary organization and no one is forced to join. Therefore, it must be your desire to participate in all rehearsals and performances (except in cases of extreme illness, death in family etc.). Failure to comply means you are no longer interested in remaining a member. A master schedule (calendar) is available to all students and parents. Performances and rehearsals scheduled on less than a thirty (30) day notice is negotiable.

Excused Absence from Rehearsal

In case of personal illness, severe illness or death in the family, students should call Gulf High School as early as possible. If you are absent from school on the day of a rehearsal, call the band office (836-3634). It is imperative that your music be on hand for substitutes. Verification of an excused admit is all that is required to be excused. Appointments or personal problems will be reviewed by the director and/or the administration. You should try to make appointments on days other than rehearsal days. **Check your calendars!!!** Work and/or transportation should not result in absence from rehearsal and will not be approved as excused absences. The director will phone employers about conflicts when necessary. Absences should be approved in advance when possible. Please provide your employer with a calendar so they can work out a non-conflicting schedule.

Unexcused Absence from Rehearsal

Any student receiving an unexcused absence from a rehearsal will receive a zero for that rehearsal grade. **Be responsible and take care of matters ahead of time; this is part of becoming an adult.**

Absence from Performance

Performances are exam grades. Any absence must be approved by the director in advance. Any absence which is not brought to the director's attention prior to the performance will be considered unexcused (exceptions include health related emergencies). Unexcused absences count as zeros for a major exam grade. Written assignments may be given to reconcile an excused or unexcused absence.

STUDENTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE UP REHEARSALS NEARING AN IMPORTANT PERFORMANCE WHETHER THEY ARE EXCUSED OR NOT. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT OUR PERFORMANCE IS HURT WHETHER YOUR ABSENCE IS OR IS NOT EXCUSED - YOU HAVE MISSED IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THAT PERFORMANCE.

Athletic Conflicts

At Gulf, we believe that it is important for students to experience as many activities as possible during their high school career. So that both students and the school groups can be successful, the following guidelines must be observed. Students who participate in Gulf athletics are to split band rehearsals 50/50 with school sports activities; both the coach and the band director should be aware of a student's location. If a conflict arises where there is a sports practice at the same time as a band performance, the student should perform with the band. If a game occurs at the same time as a band practice, the student should participate in the game. In cases where a band performance and a game coincide, the student may choose, without penalty, the activity he or she wishes.

Eligibility

The Department of Education, along with the Florida Schools Music Association and the District School Board of Pasco County, have mandated required minimum grade point average (GPA) to participate in extra-curricular activities. Currently, this minimum unweighted GPA requirement is a **2.0 per semester**.

Any student falling below a 2.0 GPA is considered ineligible for the entire semester and are unable to participate in Florida Bandmasters Association evaluations and football games. Students are allowed to participate in parades and seasonal concerts. Due to this stringent level of expectation, our band program has adopted the following policy: **Any student that becomes ineligible for a semester, has that semester to achieve the minimum requirement by the end of the term. If by that time the student does not have the proper requirement, then he/she will be removed from the band program.** The rationale is that the band program is very busy and if a student can not hold the minimum required GPA, then they need to focus more on their core subjects. Also, we hope to motivate the student to improve their studies by giving them 'a second chance'. If after that second chance the student does not improve, then they need to point themselves in another direction. Again, this is Florida mandated policy and we must follow it to ensure a high quality program.

REHEARSAL PROCEDURE

Each musician is responsible for arriving at rehearsal in time to get all music and equipment ready for rehearsal, warm-up, and tune prior to the start of the rehearsal.

The Drum majors or Band Director may conduct warm-up. Regardless of who does it, the student has the same responsibility toward serious effort, careful tuning and submissive attitudes.

When there is someone on the podium, you may not talk. When the Director steps off the podium, you may talk about music matters when directed to do so. Students are to remain in their seats and are not to get up and walk around.

For after-school rehearsals, breaks will be given every 45 to 50 minutes. Students are expected to be in formation ready to continue rehearsal at the appointed time. Students may not leave school grounds during breaks.

As a rehearsal comes to an end, do not pack up your equipment until you are released. There is a need to remind the band of matters to be taken care of. These matters deserve your undivided attention.

GAMES AND PERFORMANCES

Policies in force at football games and all performances are designed for your safety, reputation, and the good name of the Buccaneer Band.

Before each game, you, your instrument, and your uniform are subject to an inspection. Inspection will be done by the Director and/or the section leaders. Deficiencies in items inspected will lower your grade for that performance. Items that will be checked for are: visible jewelry, proper uniform items, shoes, and all items clean, instrument clean, and lubricated.

In the stands, we sit in sections; that is according to instrument. Wait for signals from the Drum majors to be seated and remove your hat. Cheers and fanfares must be rehearsed and approved by the director in advance of the game. Uniforms are to be worn properly at all times. Students may stand and cheer for touchdowns, however, be ready to play the fight song before and after the conversion. Cheer with the cheerleaders and avoid disorganized or section cheering. Individualized playing or beating percussion equipment is not permitted. Attention should always be directed toward the Drum majors or Director when they stand in front of you.

A break will take place during the third quarter of the game. The sooner you can return to the stands after half-time and be seated, the sooner you will be released. You must be back in place ready to play at the end of the third quarter. There is the possibility that we might forego the break in some situations. If this happens, it is for your safety; take it in stride. Individuals not returning on time from break are choosing to forego the break at the following game. Treat the other bands, directors, and chaperones courteously.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

In order for our band program to run smoothly and efficiently, it is necessary for us to have outlined disciplinary actions for the Director to use to solve any problems with behavior that may arise. We have developed the "**Strike System**" to assist the Director and Band Officers with organization of rehearsals and performances. Any student that the Director and/or Officer feels is not performing or participating using behavior deemed inappropriate according to band standards, that student will receive a "**strike**". The "**Strike System**" will be covered during the first week of band camp and each student will receive a handout outlining the system.

Our band program is one of excellence and due to the high level of standards, it is important that each student and band parent understands the value of discipline and the importance of keeping discipline problems to an ultimate low. The Gulf High Band has a long history and good reputation, and therefore the tradition of good quality performance is a necessity. **It must be clearly stated that any band member not acting in the good name of the Gulf High School Buccaneer Band (in or out of uniform and at any time) will meet administrative discipline and removal from the band program for the remaining time the student is enrolled at Gulf High School. Removal is at the Director's discretion and a schedule change will occur at the next available opportunity.**

UNIFORMS

Uniforms are to remain at school as they are the property of Gulf High School and the District School Board of Pasco County. Students must handle their uniform with respect and care. Items obviously abused will be replaced at the student's expense. The approximate value of each uniform is \$250.00.

Uniforms will be cleaned by the same cleaner and at the same time. Monies collected prior to each wearing of the uniform will go toward paying for cleaning. If additional cleaning monies are needed, you will be notified.

A uniform rental fee of \$10.00 is to be paid at the beginning of the year, usually with the other fees paid to the school. All monies collected are sent to a replacement fund at the District School Board of Pasco County - this is where the money comes from to pay for new uniforms.

BUS AND TRAVEL POLICIES

Each student must have on file a copy of the parent release/band travel form (notarized) in order to travel with the band. You are expected to conduct yourself properly at all times when traveling with the band. Observe all safety rules while riding buses. Silence must be maintained at all railroad crossings. You must remain in your seats while the bus is in motion. Nothing is to be thrown from the windows. Do not shout to passing motorists from a band bus. Radios and tape players must be used with headphones.

Students will be asked to sign up for bus seating and/or room assignments at an announced time. Any student failing to sign the lists will be assigned a seat/room. Do not sign for someone else. Consider carefully the first time, do not change your name from list to list. Once the lists have been established,

students will not be allowed to change buses or rooms without permission from the Director. Officers are responsible for calling roll. Students are to remain seated when the roll is being called. No bus should leave a stop until roll is called and everyone is accounted for.

All students must travel to and from performances in buses with the band and must remain with the group unless you have special permission from the Director. Any student who needs to depart a performance with his/her parent must submit a note signed by the parent to the Director prior to the trip. Please make arrangements to have someone return your uniform and/or instrument to the school.

When departing the bus, band members must be in proper dress; that is whatever the Director is appropriate for that time. Conduct of students in restaurants should be subdued and courteous. All members are responsible for leaving the restaurant in clean condition. Officers will check to make sure this done.

BOOSTER ORGANIZATION

Please be a Band Booster!!! We know that in many cases both parents work. Everyone can do something during the year to help the group. If every family assists in at least one activity per year, the band will benefit tremendously. Booster meetings times and dates will be listed on each month's calendar. If you are in doubt, call the band room at 774-3374.

MUSIC AND FOLDER

Music distributed to you is similar to checking out a book from the media center. It is expected that you will take proper care of the music and return it in good condition. Write comments on your music in pencil. Do not fold it. Keep the music in folders and folio cabinets provided for you. Keep marching music together in your flip folder. See the librarian(s) for music you do not have. We will provide you with initial copies of the music. If you lose it, there will be a replacement charge. If an officer finds your music carelessly abandoned, there will be a charge for you to retrieve it.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Each year the band spends, on an average, over \$300.00 per student. Only part of this budget is funded by the school system. The remaining portion of the budget comes in the form of fund raisers and user fees. **For this reason, it is very important that all members of the ensemble(s) pull their own weight financially by participating in fund raising activities and by paying their fees on time.** See the Director about any problems which will be held in confidence.

BAND CAMP

All students are required to attend Band Camp to prepare for marching season. Students who are on rosters but fail to show up to camp, will be placed as an alternate. Newly transferred students who have no knowledge of the scheduled activities will be worked into the band if there is space. Otherwise, they will become alternates until there is space in the formations.

SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS

School owned instruments may be used with the permission of the Director. These instruments are large instruments usually too expensive for individual purchase. They may be used as long as the user is a good, participating band member. **The user will be responsible for any damage that is not considered normal wear.** You must fill out a check-out form for these instruments before you take them from the band room.

GRADING POLICY

Grades are based on a combination of rehearsal/performance attendance, completion of course objectives, progress of an individual on his or her instrument, written and performance exams, attitude, and cooperation.

ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR

Students found smoking or using drugs on school grounds or school/band trips will be removed from the band for their remaining stay at Gulf High School with further discipline initiated by the administration. Any student participating in an illegal act at school or on a school trip could be removed from the band as part of administrative discipline.

OFFICERS

Band Officers will consist of at least a Drum major, Band Captain, Class Representative(s), Quartermasters, and librarian(s). Other officers may be appointed by the Director. These officers will be appointed by the Director based on past performances and general attitude and cooperation along with an application process. The band needs **good** leaders and only the best will be selected. Officers may be removed from office by the Director if they are not an asset to the program.

CHALLENGING PROCEDURE

Challenging is one means of advancing in each section. In order to keep the band stable and progressing logically, the challenges will be controlled by the Director and will not be allowed immediately after a seating test, or just before a performance or series of performances, such as football season or concert evaluation.

A challenge consists of any musical requirement a student wants to place on the person to be challenged. A normal challenge will be from the music in use by the band, scales, and/or exercises being studied by the band and sight reading. Challenges must be against one (1) person at a time for the next high chair.

Procedure:

1. Ask for permission to challenge.
2. Inform the person of the challenge.
3. Identify the exact music to be considered in the challenge.
4. Allow two (2) weeks for the person to prepare.
5. Set an agreed time for all the parties.
6. Remind the person the day of the challenge.

Rules:

1. The challenge will not be during school or class time.
2. The challenger will go first.
3. A failure to show up to defend a position will mean the loss of a chair. A legal excused absence is an exception. School detention will not be considered.
4. There must be a significant difference in performing skill in the view of the Director in order to advance.
5. The Band Director will use scales and additional music to reach a decision if the challenge music is not conclusive.
6. The decision of the Band Director is final. The Director will tell both students strong and weak points that form the basis of the decision.

CONCLUSION

The Gulf High School Buccaneer Band has been in existence for over 50 years, and look to move forward for at least another 50 more. Because of our extensive history and many years of success, it is important to understand our role; not only to our school but to our community. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication, but will be one of the most rewarding events of your entire life if you choose to make it so. Respect for others, especially of those in authority, plays an important role to our success. Maybe you don't plan to become a professional musician, but band will help you become a well-rounded individual and teach you things like responsibility, dedication, and a positive work ethic.

This band is yours, so make it a successful one!

Gulf High School Buccaneer Band



"A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE..."

HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM

By signing below, both the student and parent understand the rules and regulations of this band organization. No student is immune to these provisions. In order for this band to be one of the best in the county and in the state, you must follow these guidelines. Please tear this form from the handbook and return this form before the last day of Summer Band Camp. Failure to do so will result in the student sitting out of performances until it is returned to the Director.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name: _____ Date: _____

VIDEO/PICTURE RELEASE FORM

As a member of the band program, there are occurrences where students will be photographed or put on video for various functions. These pictures or videos will be used to help promote the band through various forms of media: our web site, presentations, or press releases. By signing below, both the student and parent understand these purposes and agree to allow pictures or videos of them to be used to help promote our program. By not signing this form, then you or your student will not be used in these matters.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent Name: _____ Date: _____