

Student Leader Handbook

Introduction

Congratulations on being chosen as a student leader in the Columbus High School Marching Band! This is a great honor that should not be taken lightly. You were selected because of your musical abilities, responsibility, work ethic and many other traits that separate you from the average student.

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize all student leaders with the responsibilities that come with holding a leadership position in this band. Please read and review your responsibilities and specific role, as well as all the other positions, to better know how everyone fits together in the whole.

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I. Student Leadership

All student leaders have many common goals and responsibilities no matter the title. It is imperative that we all work together to realize our ultimate goal of being better than the best ever. Each student leader and each individual is invaluable to achieving this goal and it is absolutely necessary for everyone to buy into this system. Your common goals and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Set a good example for younger students.
- Be early for every rehearsal.
- Come to work each day.
- Motivate and encourage younger students.
- Treat younger students with respect.
- Do not haze and report any hazing to Mr. Reeves immediately.
- Do the right thing, not the popular thing.
- Hold yourself accountable.
- Desire to inspire!

II. Positions

For the band to function efficiently, each student leader must know their specific jobs. Each position has an area of expertise and importance that is essential for the daily operations of the band. If you are a student leader, you will automatically be placed as a squad leader, therefore everyone effectively has two separate roles. Below is the breakdown of all student leadership positions.

- 3 Dance Commanders
- 10 Section Leaders
- 2 Librarians
- 5 Equipment Managers
- 20 Squad Leaders

The next few pages break down the specific duties and responsibilities for each position. Please read each position carefully so you know what you and your peers are all responsible for. If you believe someone is overstepping his/her boundaries, try to address it in a professional manner with that person, off the field. If there are still issues, do not hesitate to see Mr. Reeves for assistance.

III. Dance Commanders

As a Dance Commander you have one of the most prestigious positions in the band. This is a high honor and one that involves a lot of outside work. You must be creative to come up with the dances the band will perform. You must also be someone who commands the respect of your peers because you will be in front of the band, teaching them. You are welcome to take suggestions from other band members for dances, but remember that you have the final say in what the dance looks like.

Remember to always document each dance. Write down counts and sets along with descriptions of any moves you deem difficult. Before you teach each dance, decide amongst yourselves who will be the main "teacher" and have the other two Dance Commanders demonstrate to each side of the band.

When parade dances are being taught, you are responsible for supervising each section to see if there are any discrepancies in the way the dances are being taught. Do not be confrontational, but bring it to the attention of the section leader if something catches your eye.

One of your most important duties is to stretch the band before each field rehearsal. We use a very athletic style of marching that puts a lot of stress on the body. To prevent injuries, be sure to stretch upper and lower bodies. It is not a bad thing to break a sweat before we start rehearsal.

Basic Responsibilities

- Create and teach all dance breaks.
- Supervise the teaching of parade dances.
- Stretch the band before every field rehearsal.

IV. Section Leaders

As a Section Leader, you have one of the most essential positions in terms of daily operations. You are a top musician and marcher in your section and it is your responsibility to make your section better with separate sectional rehearsals. You are welcome to take any suggestions from other squad leaders during sectionals, but remember that you have the final say in how something sounds or looks.

Many of your musical sectional rehearsals will focus on music memorization. To help other members in your section, break down the music into sections. Also try to recognize any patterns that are present in the music. A trap that many section leaders fall into is to memorize notes and rhythms and nothing else. You were chosen for this position for your musical abilities and knowledge, use them to make each song sound musical. If you deem it necessary, you may require your section to "pass-off" songs to test their memorization. Stay objective during these check-offs. Do not show any favoritism to friends and do not discriminate against other members you don't get along with.

As a section leader you may also choose to hold a marching sectional. These may include working on parade dances, fundamentals, or skills pertaining to your specific instrument. Do not use these sectionals as punishment, instead they should be used to improve areas of marching that are weak within the section. Stay positive and encourage the other members in your section rather than belittle them for not marching with proper form. If your criticism is not constructive, then it is not necessary.

One thing to keep in mind is that most section members will not have your musical or marching abilities. You must keep your expectations in perspective and remember that everyone learns differently.

Basic Responsibilities

- Run music sectional rehearsals.
- Run marching sectional rehearsals.
- Teach section parade dances.

V. Librarians

As a Librarian in the band, you have a position that makes a band director's life much less stressful. It may not seem to be a glamorous position, but it is quite essential for this band to function. Every member in the band must have sheet music to every song we play. If they don't, then it is impossible to run a music rehearsal, and therefore impossible for them to learn the music. Every squad leader must have a drill chart as well. This is imperative for learning drill for each show. If squad leaders do not have drill charts, then it is impossible for them to know what directions to give, and therefore impossible for the entire squad to learn the drill.

You are directly responsible for making all copies of music for each member of the band. After copying, it is easiest to distribute the music to section leaders so you don't have to pass out music to each individual member. You are also directly responsible for copying and distributing all drill charts to squad leaders. You will distribute these drill charts on the field before we start learning drill.

On all away events, you are also responsible for taking attendance on the bus you ride. There will be a sheet with a clipboard and pen you will pass back when we depart for the event. When we leave from the event, call names and mark them off.

Instrumentation Copies

- 10 Flutes
- 6 1st Clarinets
- 6 2nd Clarinets
- 6 1st Alto Saxophones
- 6 2nd Alto Saxophones
- 4 Tenor Saxophones
- 6 Mellophones
- 7 1st Trumpets
- 9 2nd Trumpets
- 10 Trombones
- 4 Baritones
- 4 Tubas
- 4 Snares
- 2 Quads
- 4 Basses
- 4 Cymbals

Basic Responsibilities

- Copy and distribute all music to section leaders.
- Take attendance on busses.
- Copy and distribute all drill charts to squad leaders.

VI. Equipment Managers

As an equipment manager, you are quite literally the backbone of this band. You are responsible for loading and unloading instruments and other equipment on and off the trailer. This is a key step in making for a smooth performance. The more efficient you become at this, the smoother loading will be for everyone. Having a select few in charge of this process also reduces the amount of people crowded in one spot, reducing stress of many band members, parents, and staff.

You are also somewhat responsible for the maintenance of your section's instruments. Mr. Reeves will instruct you on how to properly care for your instrument, along with any helpful tips on quick repairs you can perform. You are responsible for relaying this information with your section during a designated workshop day. This will ensure that the members of this band will have a better knowledge of how to keep their instruments in a functional state and therefore keeping our sound more consistent throughout the year.

At the beginning and end of each year you are responsible for taking inventory of all school owned instruments. This duty, while time consuming, is a very necessary one. We must know what instruments we have, and in what condition they are in so we can continue to help out those students who rely on the school for an instrument. The current instrument inventory will be given to you by Mr. Reeves.

Basic Responsibilities

- Load and unload all instruments and equipment on/off trailer.
- Hold an instrument maintenance workshop for all section members.
- Take inventory of school owned instruments and equipment.

VII. Squad Leaders

As a student leader, you have been automatically made a Squad Leader. Or band's marching style is based upon the concept of squad marching, that is, movement in groups of four members as individual units. Your duties are essential for this band to learn and master drill quickly and effectively.

As a squad leader you are responsible for reading drill charts and communicating their directions to your squad. You will all be taught how to read these charts by Mr. Reeves. Teaching drill can be a time consuming process if errors are constantly made by squad leaders in communicating drill movements. Please take the time to look over each drill before you teach it. You should receive drill charts at least a day before they are to be taught.

If you are not a section leader, then it not your responsibility to lead sectional rehearsals. However, you are welcome to assist your section leader if they ask for help. You are also expected to set a good example for younger members by not talking and getting down to work.

Expanding on that, you are responsible to maintain discipline in all aspects of the band. Mr. Reeves cannot and will not see every problem that happens. You need to step up as a squad leader and make sure the problem is dealt with in an appropriate manner. Your are to enforce all band rules and policies. Maintaining discipline on the field, reporting uniform violations, and problem solving on the spot are only some your inherent duties as a squad leader.

Basic Responsibilities

- Read and communicate drill to squad.
- Assist section leaders during sectional rehearsals.
- Enforce all band rules.

VIII. Helpful Hints

- Do not abuse your authority. You are in this position to help other members, not belittle them.
- Realize that it is easier to start stricter and ease up, as opposed to starting loose and tightening the reins later.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Mr. Reeves and other student leaders are there as a resource for you to use.
- Every student learns differently. Vary how you teach, communicate, and discipline. What works for one member, might not work for another.
- Nothing is more important than the success of the entire band. Band is not made up of individuals. It is a collective effort from everyone striving for a common goal.
- Be able to "flip the switch" between being a friend and a peer to a student leader with real responsibilities.
- Remember to have fun. If this isn't fun, then you shouldn't be doing it. Find enjoyment in what you do, and you will always do it well.

Be tough, try hard, have fun!