

# **Liberty High School Bands**

## **HANDBOOK**

2004 - 2005

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### **PREFACE**

All performing ensembles are essentially community endeavors. They achieve musical excellence through the collective efforts of all of their members. Therefore, no performing ensemble, professional or scholastic, voluntary or paid, can successfully accomplish its goals without a complete commitment to excellence from each member. This handbook is designed to help students enrolled in the Liberty High School Band Program (MUS110 and MUS135) in identifying the standards of excellence to which we collectively aspire.

### **MISSION**

The goal of the Liberty High School Bands (MUS110 and MUS135) is to present polished musical performances. We will perform only the highest quality wind literature, including compositions for massed winds and percussion, marching band, and pep-band. Our audiences may range from performances for our school community, through the extended Liberty High School family, and to the community at large. We will rehearse as an ensemble unit and practice individually in a way that continually elevates our abilities as musicians. We will seek outside opportunities to grow as musicians, including becoming active listeners and audience members to concerts given by fellow Liberty High School ensembles as well as professional ensembles in and around the community.

### **RULES**

As you read this handbook, you may see some rules which seem to be more restrictive than those of the school at large. These rules reflect the collective nature of a performance ensemble. Without every member present at every rehearsal or public performance, the ensemble fails to reach its potential. These guidelines have been developed with the best interest of the whole group in mind. We ask each individual to strive toward our commitment to excellence.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Because the bands are collective endeavors, we require everyone to be present at all rehearsals and performances. Unlike other classes in which active presence affects the individual, attendance and focused participation profoundly affects the entire group. For this reason, attendance is mandatory at all rehearsals and performances. The only exceptions to this rule will be severe personal illness or family emergency.

The following guidelines have been developed to ensure maximum participation at all rehearsals and performances:

### **IN-SCHOOL REHEARSALS**

1. Students are expected to attend all band rehearsals which occur during the school year at Liberty High School.
2. A student is excused from a scheduled school rehearsal only if he or she will be absent from Liberty High School FOR THE ENTIRE DAY.
3. Medical appointments are NOT excused from rehearsals, since these may be scheduled at other times.
4. From time to time, other classes will hold field trips, retreats, or other events. As we mutually support each other in all learning experiences, students will be excused from Band to participate in these learning opportunities.

### **EXTRA REHEARSALS**

1. From time to time, the band may schedule extra rehearsals to take place after school, in the evening, or on a weekend. Most often, these are "dress rehearsals," before public performances. Students are expected to attend ALL such extra rehearsals.
2. Every effort will be made to never call extra rehearsals without ample advance notification from the conductor. This will ensure that students and families can make appropriate arrangements for the student to attend these rehearsals.
3. A student is excused from an extra rehearsal only if she or he was absent from school on the day of (previous Friday for weekends) the rehearsal.
4. Most after-school, evening, and weekend jobs will accommodate shift trading. Since advance notice will be given to students regarding these rehearsals, we expect that they will be able to adjust their work schedules to accommodate them.

### **PERFORMANCES**

1. All public performances are required. Since they are regarded as "Final Exams" in the grading process, there can be no exceptions.
2. The only excused absences will be severe personal illness or a family emergency.

Some common issues will arise regarding attendance. These are discussed below:

## **CONFLICTS WITH WORK**

Many students hold part-time jobs. These are excellent ways to build responsibility, good work-ethics, and an income. We applaud the efforts of these hard-working students. At the same time, Band can supply many of the same character-building influences. Therefore, since many part-time employment situations are flexible while a Band rehearsal is not, we hope that students will see the necessity of rescheduling or trading shifts to accommodate those rare occurrences when a rehearsal or a performance overlaps with a work schedule.

## **CONFLICTS WITH LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

Band often attracts those students with all-around talent: intellectually, musically, and physically. Many of our students participate on Liberty High School athletic teams. We applaud their dedication to these teams and the discipline, camaraderie, and the working toward common goals that this involves. Since we believe that Band offers many of the same benefits, and since Bands and teams only function fully with full participation, we always seek cooperative compromises.

Most conflicts will occur with after-school, evening, or weekend rehearsals and performances. Since teams know their schedules and since Band schedules are published far in advance in multiple ways, conflicts can be predicted and minimized.

## **PARENTAL EXCUSES**

The only excused absences from Liberty High School Band rehearsals and performances are severe personal illness or family emergencies. Since neither of these can be foreseen, it is rare that a student will know in advance about an excusable absence. Therefore, the following procedures should be followed to excuse these absences:

## **REGULAR REHEARSALS**

1. Since Band is a class, attendance will be taken just as with any other class. Students who are absent without an excuse will be reported to the administrative office as absent, unexcused.

## **EXTRA REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES**

1. Because of the sheer volume of students in the program, we do ask for your assistance by providing the conductor with a parental note.

On extremely rare occasions, a planned absence may be excusable due to a situation other than illness or a death in the immediate family. Such absences will be excused at the discretion of the director. Advance written request for the absence with a parent or legal guardian's signature is required. NOTICE: minimum of 7 days notice to be considered

## **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Although we have tried to cover all aspects of attendance, some students or parents may have an exceptional circumstance. All requests for an excuse are required in writing at least 7 days prior to the event. However, in order to better explain their circumstances, families may wish to phone first and then follow up with a written request. The director is always happy to discuss your situation at any time. Please feel free to call at (425) 837-4885. This is a 24 hour line with voice mail.

The Band Office is an extremely busy place. Keeping track of all of these students and their attendance status is a large task, and we ask students and families to be aware of this. Because of its permanence, written communication is the only officially acceptable mode for communicating absences, tardiness, and other situations to the director. Of course, this does not mean that the director does not wish to speak to the parents and students. He is more than happy to schedule appointments to discuss issues as they arise.

## **TARDINESS**

Liberty High School strives to prepare its students for the future. One characteristic of mature adults is that of promptness. All employers require this of their workers and promptness is also a courtesy in social situations. It demonstrates good planning, constructive use of time, and a positive attitude.

The following guidelines will assist students in organizing their schedules to be on-time for the Liberty High School Bands:

1. The only excused tardies to rehearsals or performances of the Liberty High School Band are those caused by a pre-arranged conflict of academic (field trips, etc.) or athletic commitments at Liberty High School. These require a note in advance signed by the teacher or coach involved. (In some cases, a permission form or other written communication will take the place of a note).
2. Early dismissals from rehearsal or performance are just as disruptive as late arrivals. Procedures are the same as for tardies.

## **ATTIRE**

Any performance ensemble must appear to the audience as a uniform body. Any member who is not properly attired will attract undue attention away from the image and performance standards that the group is striving for. The following guidelines will help band members in dressing properly for performances:

### **MARCHING BAND (Full Uniform)**

1. The Liberty High School Band wears its uniform with pride and NEVER appears in public outside of full uniform. The uniform must be completely on or completely off at

any time the band member is outside of his or her home or the Band room. This includes transportation to and from Liberty High School, unless otherwise instructed.

2. The complete uniform consists of the school issued jacket, pants, and hat. These are supplemented by black socks, and black marching band shoes, to be supplied by the student.

### **CONCERT ATTIRE**

1. Normal concert uniform will be Tuxedo with bow tie, cummerbund, black socks and black shoes (could be marching band) for men. Women will wear the Symphonic Band Black concert dress, the designated black shoes, and accessories.

2. For members in the chamber orchestra, jazz band, pep band, or other ad hoc ensemble, an alternate dress may be announced prior to the concert. As a rule, this dress will be flexible enough to allow you to work within your existing wardrobe and should not require an additional purchase.

### **PEP-BAND (Basketball/Informal Football Games)**

1. Normal pep-band uniform will be Khaki Pants, casual socks and shoes, along with the designated band shirt and or band fleece.

### **BEHAVIOR**

Because of the public nature of our performances, band faculty and members are, for better or worse, viewed as representatives and ambassadors of Liberty High School, the Issaquah community, and the United States of America. Band members are expected to appear in public with the utmost of dignity, grace and pride in their work. This will convey a group image, which reflects well on the individuals and the school at large. The band's collective nature requires that it be able to work together as a group, to achieve its goals. Band members and faculty need to behave in rehearsals and performances in a way that promotes respect, enthusiasm, and focus on the job at hand.

### **REHEARSALS**

1. Band Members must be in accordance with the Liberty High School Dress Code for all rehearsals during the school day.

2. Band members will refrain from any talking which distracts from the rehearsal.

3. Food, drinks, and gum are prohibited at all times from indoor and outdoor rehearsals.

4. Band members will use dignified speech when communicating with each other, the director, and the public.

5. Band members will display respect for each other's and Liberty High School property at all times.

6. Tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, and profane language have NO positive affects on us as human beings whatsoever. Band members who choose to exhibit such behavior will subject to severe sanctions.

## **GRADING**

Liberty High School Band members will be graded primarily on class participation, performances, and playing tests or auditions.

### **Daily Assignments**

1. Students are expected to practice 30 minutes per day, five to six days per week. This is considered their HOMEWORK for the Band Class.

2. On many days, students will be given a specific assignment to practice with a specific goal. Students will then be checked at the next rehearsal to determine their progress. Students who have not mastered their assignment will be expected to practice the material after school in order to achieve mastery.

3. Students who exhibit a pattern of being unable to master the assigned material AND who choose not to consult the director for extra help or other solutions will find their quarter grade to be adversely affected.

## **SOLO & ENSEMBLE**

Each year Liberty High School is well represented by its student musicians at various solo and ensemble festivals. In order to provide an enriched musical environment, the program highly recommends all students to participate in a solo or small ensemble when festival time approaches.

## **ALL-NORTHWEST BAND AND W.M.E.A. HONORS BAND**

The director will nominate outstanding musicians to audition for these and other honor ensembles. If a student is not asked, but feels he or she would like to audition, please contact the director as soon as possible, so materials can worked on ahead of time. Students will be responsible for preparing material for the audition and arranging transportation to the audition, and if selected, to rehearsals and performances. Students are highly encouraged to audition for these honor groups. Playing in such an ensemble is an unforgettable experience.

**Phillip D. Donley**  
**Director of Bands**

**Liberty High School**  
**Issaquah School District 411**