

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Beginning Band Handbook

2026-2027

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August 26, 2026

Dear Band Members and Parents,

I am really looking forward to working with the Beginning Band students this school year. It is my desire to work with each one of you in creating the best sounding band we can be. In this handbook you will find my policies and procedures of the band program as well as information concerning this school year.

Parents

Thank you for allowing your son or daughter the opportunity of playing a band instrument. Playing in a band is a unique experience. It is crucial that I have the support of parents as we partner in training your children in becoming great musicians. Please encourage your children to practice their instrument. Being an instrumentalist for over 50 years I know that the only way to improve as a musician is to spend time practicing. A musician's expertise on an instrument is directly proportional to the time spent practicing – it's as simple as that!

Response

Please read through the following information very carefully. Students and parents must sign and return the attached sheet by Friday, September 4.

I'm looking forward to working with your children!

Sincerely,

Mr. David Wright
Director of Bands

Discipline

Band by its very name suggests oneness, teamwork, ensemble, and cooperation, with everyone striving for a common goal. This all comes at a middle school student's life when individual identity is desired. As Christians, we all recognize the importance of working together cooperatively, for one goal – bringing glory to God. A very small number of students find they cannot make this kind of sacrifice and become disruptive discipline problems in the band rehearsal. These students will not be allowed to affect the quality of learning taking place in class. Continued problems will result in that student being removed from rehearsal and ultimately dismissed from the instrumental program. Consequences will include a one-on-one conference with the director and an after-school detention. Band members need to accept *responsibility* for their actions, good or bad. Students should be looking to glorify God and work toward the success of our band program.

Daily Rules and Procedures

The following rules are set in place to create an atmosphere of learning and success. Students who violate these rules are responsible for reducing the amount of time for rehearsal and consequently hurting the entire band.

1. Show respect to your band director and your peers.
2. Enter the band room in a quiet, courteous, and orderly manner.
3. BE ON TIME! Students are considered late to class if they are not **in their seats, instruments ready, music on their stands, and ready to play** by **10:56 a.m.**
Class begins at 10:53 a.m.
4. When Mr. Wright is teaching there will be **no playing** or **talking**. Be a good listener and watch the conductor throughout rehearsal. *Students will be given a detention for breaking this rule!*
5. Students will warm-up appropriately on their instruments. No **blasting or over-playing**.
6. Students will not play other students' instruments. **This includes percussion instruments and keyboards.**
7. **Students' instruments are required to have an identification tag on the instrument case.** Please take care of this before your instrument is brought to school.
8. Band members will have the following at every rehearsal:
 - a. INSTRUMENT (with the necessary accessories)
 - b. ALL MUSIC
 - c. PENCIL
9. Good posture is of great importance at all times.
10. Instruments MUST be stored in instrument lockers when not being played at school. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR INSTRUMENT ON THE BAND ROOM FLOOR OR IN HALLWAYS!** If you would like to lock your instrument in your instrument locker, locks are available. Please use WCGS locks only.
11. **Practice, practice, practice!** More is accomplished in band rehearsal when you have learned your music at home. Leaving your instrument at school overnight should be the exception rather than the rule.
12. Absolutely no gum, food, or drink in the band room or practice rooms. (water is OK)
13. Accept responsibility for yourself and your learning.

Grades/Points

Grades are based on an individual student's progress from at-home practicing, rehearsals, concerts, and sectionals. Points are accumulated for each activity listed above. All students are required to practice at home. **A minimum of 90-100 minutes** is required. Consistent, daily work is essential to improvement on your instrument. Practice is most effective when it is broken into smaller practice sessions. For instance, practicing 20 minutes, 5 days a week, or 30 minutes, 4 times a week is much more beneficial than 60 minutes at one time. Attendance (excluding days absent from school), punctuality, and good participation are a major part of your grading period average. Good participation means good habits in your behavior including playing at the right time, refraining from talking during teaching time, knowing your music prior to rehearsal based on practicing. Always give your very best! - Colossians 3:23.

Sectionals

All students in Beginning Band have weekly scheduled lessons (sectionals) during the regular school day. Since some academic classes may be missed for sectionals, **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK!** The only exception for missing a sectional is if a teacher is giving a test during that period in class and it cannot be made up at another time. **It is critical that every band student attend these sectionals. They are vital to the progress of the student's and our band's success.**

Rehearsal Schedule

Beginning Band will rehearse twice a week on **Wednesdays and Fridays, from 10:53-11:23 a.m.** At the beginning, most of the work learning the instruments will be done during sectional lessons. We will continue to work progressively through the method books at weekly lessons. If you know you will be out of school on a particular day, please see Mr. Wright ahead of time to cover what you will miss.

Playing Assignments

Students will be given weekly playing assignments in their sectionals. Each week band students must play their assignment for the director either alone or in groups. Students are expected to practice the assignments at home in preparation for their weekly playing test.

Class Materials / Curriculum

All Beginning Band students will be working out of a method book entitled *Essential Elements Interactive, Book 1*. Books may be purchased through Music and Arts Center. Books and instrument accessories should be purchased when renting your instrument at Beginning Instrument Night.

Practice Records

I would like students to keep track of how long they practice each day. Please use the chart inside the cover of your method book to write down assignments and practice times. Even though this will not be graded, it is a good practice to write down times to develop good habits and consistency.

Instrument Care and Maintenance

All students' instruments must be clean and in good playing condition. Students are expected to maintain proper care of their instruments throughout the school year. This includes reeds, mouthpieces, mutes, valve oil, slide cream, cork grease, etc. Music and Arts, Inc. visits our school weekly and can be utilized for repairs. I recommend the following companies for purchasing supplies: Music and Arts Center - musicarts.com (on Irving Park Road east of Rt. 53, Itasca), Musician's Friend – www.musiciansfriend.com, or Amazon - amazon.com.

Many accessories will either be included or offered for purchase at the time you rent to buy your instruments. Here is a list of accessories each student will need for the proper care of their instrument(s).

Flute - Cleaning rod, flute, polishing cloth

Oboe - A minimum of 3 medium strength reeds, Oboe Swab, Cork grease

Clarinet - A minimum of 4 Vandoren 2.5 clarinet reeds, 4-reed holder, Yamaha 4C mouthpiece or similar, Cork grease, Mouthpiece brush, Clarinet swab

Saxophone - A minimum of 4 Vandoren 2.5 saxophone reeds, 4-reed holder, Yamaha 4C mouthpiece, Cork grease, Mouthpiece brush, saxophone swab

Trumpet - La Tromba T2 Valve Oil, cleaning snake, Tuning-slide grease, Mouthpiece brush, cleaning rag, Bach 7C (4th - 5th grade) or 5C (6th - 8th grade) mouthpiece.

Horn - La Tromba T2 Valve Oil, Holton Farkas Mouthpiece Medium Deep Cup, cleaning snake, Tuning-slide grease, Mouthpiece brush, cleaning rag

Trombone - Polishing cloth, cleaning snake, cleaning rod, Cheesecloth, Mouthpiece brush, Tuning-slide grease, Yamaha Trombone Slide Lubricant or Slide-O-Mix, Water spray bottle, Bach 61/2 AL or 5G (7th or 8th grade) mouthpiece.

Baritone/Tuba - La Tromba T2 Valve Oil, Tuning-slide grease, Polishing cloth, cleaning snake, Mouthpiece brush

Percussion - Snare/Bell Kit, Stick Bag, SD1, 5A or 5B (7A for Jazz Ensemble) Drumsticks, Bell Mallet

Concert Dress Code

Performing groups will be uniform during performances. This year all band, choir, and orchestra students will wear "concert black" for performances:

Boys: Black shoes, black socks, black dress pants, black long-sleeve dress shirt with buttons.

Girls: Black shoes, black dress skirt, dress, or pants, black top.

Parent Volunteers

We need volunteers for our concerts. It is very helpful to have parental supervision for concerts and people to help tune instruments before performances. If you would like to sign-up to volunteer, email Mrs. Beth Wright at bwright@wheatonchristian.org as soon as possible.

Concerts and Important Dates

The concerts and events listed below are **mandatory** and may not be missed for any reason other than illness or a death in the family. Student's grades for concerts cannot be made up except for illness or death in the family. These events are to be viewed as a final exam. Failure to attend any of these events will cause a drop in the student's quarter grade.

Christmas Band Concert6:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 8, 2026

Spring Band Concert6:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 6, 2027

All Concerts will be held in the WCGS Commons unless noted otherwise.

Beginning Band Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Beginning Band for the 2026-2027 school year at WCGS.

Student's Name (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Student's Signature

Instrument

Parent's Signature

**Please detach this form, sign, and return to Mr. Wright by
Friday, September 4, 2026.**