

Wheaton Christian Grammar School

Intermediate Band Handbook

2026-2027

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August 26, 2026

Dear Band Members and Parents,

I hope you are as excited as I am about Intermediate Band this school year. I am really looking forward to working 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 consistently 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 their parents must sign and return the attached sheet by Friday, August 28.

I'm looking forward to a great year together!

Sincerely,

Mr. David Wright

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 **11:28 a.m.** Class begins at 11:25 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, assignments, 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 90 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.

These are the elements that determine the students' band grades:

- Participation in rehearsals

- Participation in sectionals

- Playing assignments

- Participation in concerts

Additional Opportunities

Concerts/Recitals – Students should look for opportunities to hear live music being performed. Look for opportunities to hear a professional playing your instrument. It will inspire you!

Recitals – Playing in recitals is a great way to build confidence, take on a challenge that will push the development of your skills, and help overcome the fear of performing.

Private Lessons – Every instrumentalist should consider taking private lessons on his/her instrument. Students that study privately are generally significantly farther ahead in their ability to play their instrument well compared to students that do not take private lessons. See Mr. Wright for a recommendation of local teachers for your instrument.

IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest – Solo and ensemble contest will be coming up on February 20, 2027. Now is a good time to begin thinking about your involvement in this contest. Mr. Wright will talk with many of you about participating in this event. It is my hope that many students will choose to participate and that we represent WCGS well in this district contest. Information will be sent home when it is available. WCGS will host this event this year. Many volunteers will be needed!

Sectionals

All students in Intermediate Band have a scheduled 30-minute sectional during the regular school day. Since academic classes will 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 our band's success.**

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 Intermediate Band students will be working out of a method book entitled *Essential Elements Interactive, Books 1 and 2*. Books will be purchased through WCGS and will be charged to your school account.

Instrument Care and Maintenance

All students' instruments must be clean and in good playing condition for rehearsals and concerts. 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.

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 2.5-3 clarinet reeds or similar, 4-reed holder, Yamaha 4C mouthpiece or similar, Cork grease, Mouthpiece brush, Clarinet swab

Saxophone - A minimum of 4 Vandoren 2.5 saxophone reeds or similar, 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, Slide-O-Mix, or Trombotine slide cream, 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 Mallets

Rehearsal Schedule

Intermediate Band rehearses twice a week on Wednesdays and Fridays, from 11:25 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Always be on time. Rehearsals are mandatory and may not be missed for any reason other than absence from school. 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. Attendance and punctuality are a major part of your grading period average.

Printed Music

Each student will be issued a new folder with copies of the music the band will be playing. It is the student's responsibility to take good care of this folder and music and have it present at every rehearsal and sectional. Music and folders that have been lost are subject to replacement fees.

Concert Uniforms

Performing groups will be uniform during performances. This year, concert 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. We need 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 student events listed below are **mandatory** and may not be missed for any reason other than illness or a death in the family. Concert participation makes up 15% of the students' quarter grade. Students' 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 minimum of a **one-letter drop** of a student's quarter grade.

Christmas Band Concert 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 8, 2026
Spring Band Concert..... 6:00 p.m., Thursday, May 6, 2027

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

In addition to the above concerts, students may **choose** to be involved in the following events:

IGSMA Solo and Ensemble Contest..... Saturday, February 20, 2027

Intermediate Band Commitment Form

I have read the preceding information. I understand and accept the commitment and expectations of becoming a member of the Intermediate Band. I also realize that I am making a one-year commitment for the 2026-2027 school year to the WCGS Intermediate Band.

Student's Signature

Parent's Signature

**Please detach this form, sign, and return to Mr. Wright by
Friday, August 28, 2026.**