



BAND HANDBOOK
2026 – 2027

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Drum Major, Samuel Johnson

MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL
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Welcome to the Montgomery Blair High School Marching Band

Congratulations on joining the Montgomery Blair Blazer Marching Band! We are about musical excellence, enthusiasm, and dedication, and we are looking forward to a fun and OUTSTANDING year together.

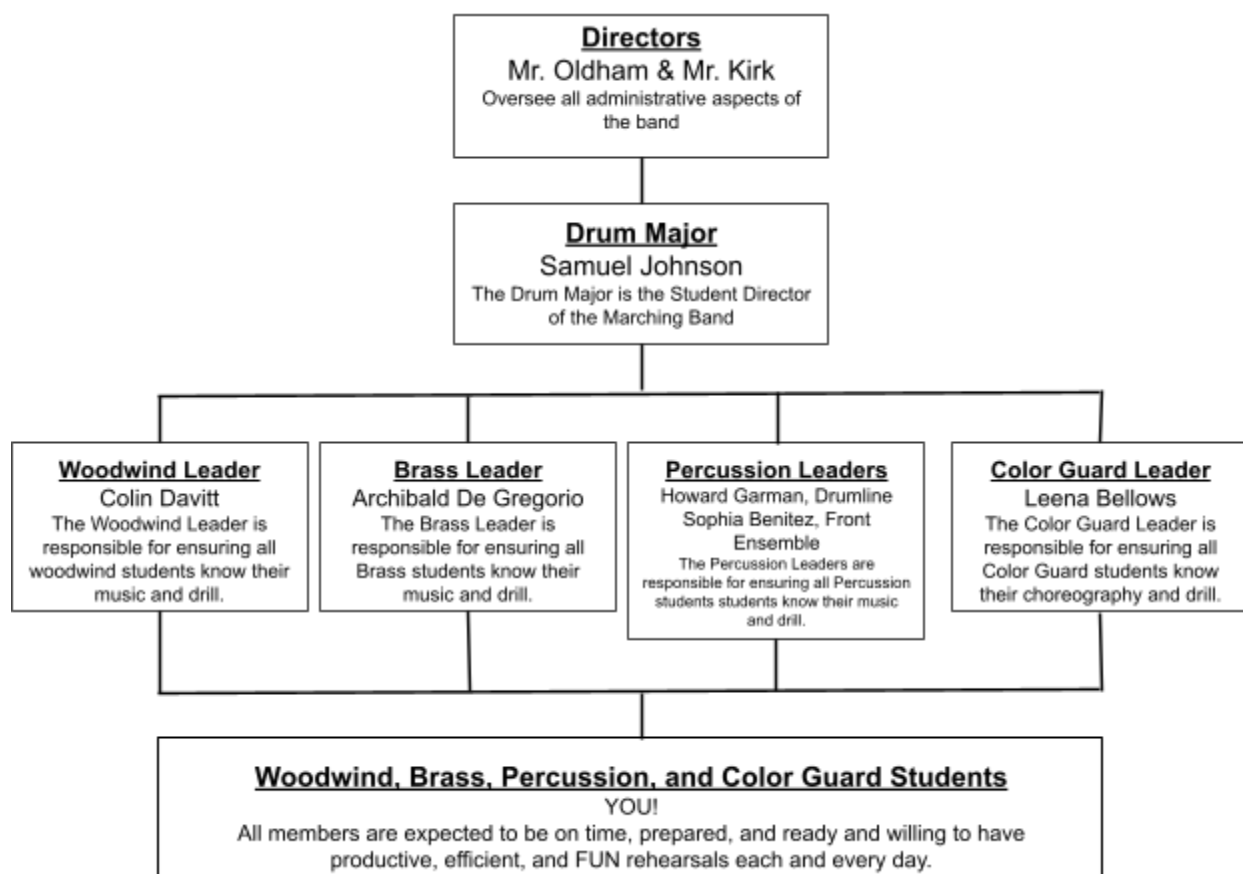
We have an excellent leadership team in place that is committed and working hard to ensure that the MBHS **BLAZER PRIDE** Marching Band continues to excel. As always, we will begin with the all-important MARCHING BAND CAMP! It is IMPERATIVE that all students attend the Band Camp period of instruction. This summer activity is mandatory for all members. We need to be completely prepared for our first performances during the first few weeks of school! Check the calendar on the marching band webpage for exact dates for performances and rehearsals!

I look forward to meeting everyone – students and parents alike – and to a great marching band season!

Go Blazers!!

Sincerely,
Mr. Oldham

Chain of Membership



Volunteers

We are always seeking student and adult volunteers to help during the marching band season with equipment transportation, water distribution, and fan support at all events and performances! Please contact Mr. Oldham or Mr. Kirk if you are able to help.

Attendance and SSL Hours

In order for the Marching Band to function and perform at its highest quality, consistent attendance is required. **It is expected that all students will arrive promptly for all scheduled events, including every rehearsal and performance, and will have warmed up and be prepared for the start of each event.** If you will be absent for a serious illness, family, or medical emergency, parents/guardians must fill out the provided Google attendance form that will be shared with them once student contracts have been received for absence approval. Practices, games, or events for non-Blair activities will not be excused. Three unexcused absences will regrettably result in dismissal from the band.

SSL Hours will be awarded for student participation in the Marching Band. Students will receive 50 SSL hours each year, split as 30 hours in the first semester and 20 hours in the second semester. It is the student's responsibility to bring a pre-filled SSL form to Mr. Oldham for approval and signature.

Security

Because we have valuable equipment and leave our personal belongings in the band room when we go outside to rehearse or perform, everyone **MUST** take preventive steps to ensure the safety of personal property:

1. **Always** take your instrument home to practice and use the provided combination lock to secure personal items in the provided lockers.
2. **Always** lock your personal and valuable belongings in your music locker when they will not be under your direct supervision.
3. **Keep your eyes open.** If you see anyone who is not in the marching band (or in band class or orchestra during the school year) hanging around the classroom, report it immediately to the directors or the Drum Major.
4. **Keep a record at home** of the serial number(s) of your instrument.
5. If you discover that the last person to leave the band room didn't lock a door (front, back, uniform closet, or instrument closet), please inform the directors.

General Rules of Conduct

Rehearsals

Please be prepared for all rehearsals in the following ways:

1. Be in the right place, at the right time, with the right equipment.
2. Bring the following items to all rehearsals:
 - a. Instrument and all of its working parts
 - b. Music
 - c. [Lyre and Flip Folder](#) (brass and woodwinds only)
 - d. Drill Sheets (phone for UDB App)
 - e. Breathing tube (winds)
 - f. Pencil
 - g. Water Bottle
3. Dress comfortably and appropriately for all rehearsals. Appropriate clothing for rehearsals includes: Breathable, compression/athletic shirts, t-shirts, shorts, sweats (as we approach cooler weather), and laced tennis shoes with proper arch support – **NO sandals, boots, etc. Students will be dismissed from rehearsal for being dressed inappropriately, resulting in an unexcused absence. Students may NOT wear athletic shoes that cannot be laced (example: Adidas Lite Racer Adapt 7.0) or any laced shoe that does not provide proper arch support (example: Converse, Adidas Sambas, skateboard shoes like Airwalk or Etnies, etc.).**
4. Please remain silent unless spoken to directly. Comments and questions are welcome and will be recognized when students raise their hands to be called on. Extraneous conversation prevents productivity.
5. **Rehearse the way you would perform.** Students should look to their section leaders and captains to set the example for proper instrument carriage, horn angles, etc.
6. Give the same respect to all people who may be conducting a rehearsal, whether it's the directors, the Color Guard Instructor, the Drum Major(s), or Captains. Show respect to yourself and each other.

7. Keep all spaces we use clean. No food or drink (except water) is allowed in the band room during rehearsals. All students will help strike the field/band room after every rehearsal and event.
8. **Come to rehearsals with a positive attitude.** Positive and negative attitudes are contagious!

Performances

1. Be on time. Times to be ready to rehearse before a game, competition, or other performance will be announced prior to the event via itinerary.
2. Be professional. Our performance begins as soon as we start to march to the stadium or get off the bus for a competition. The performance does not end until the directors or the Drum Major dismisses us.
3. Please do not eat or drink while in uniform. There will be plenty of time after school to eat dinner before home football games, and you may visit concession stands at competitions once we change out of uniform.
4. Be mindful while wearing the uniform. Do not lean or sit on anything that will soil, tear, or snag the uniform.
5. At home football games, students must stay on the home side of the field. The same rule applies for away games – stay on our side (visitor side) of the field.
6. There are to be no visitors in the stands during a football game. Only MBHS Marching Band members, parent chaperones, and instructors are allowed in the band's stands. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Friends and family are welcome to come by and say hi, but should not be entering our section of the stands to intermingle.

Video and Audio Recording/Photography

The band will be audio/video recorded and photos will be taken at both rehearsals and performances for rehearsal review and recruitment purposes. Parents/Guardians and all Marching Band members understand and agree that their likeness, voice, and/or performance may be shown/printed in newspapers, magazines, on the Internet, on video, on television, or other media by Montgomery County Public Schools and its assigns for all purposes of education, instruction, or public information, with or without the use of the student's name.

If you are interested in or are able to videotape or photograph performances of the marching band, please contact Mr. Oldham or Mr. Kirk.

Travel/Away/Competition Performances

Performance times and schedules will be provided in advance at rehearsals and via email/Canvas, and are tentative and assigned by the host venue. Occasionally, schedules

are provided or modified by our host with short notice. It is important that we are able to adjust our schedule to meet these changes.

Because of unforeseen late schedule changes, all Marching Band members should not schedule any other events on the day of the travel/away performance.

All Marching Band members are **required** to ride on the provided transportation. For safety reasons, students may not travel in their own vehicles without the written permission of their parent/guardian.

Regarding marching festivals and competitions: ALL students are expected to be present and perform at such events. Aside from **emergencies**, students will **NOT** be excused from competing.

The Uniform

All students in the marching band will be issued a uniform at the beginning of the season. This uniform is designed to identify members of the MBHS **BLAZER PRIDE** Marching Band as a unique and distinct group representing MBHS. The uniform is **always to be worn in its entirety and with pride**. The uniform will be stored at school unless otherwise instructed by the directors. All students will care for their uniform and will dry clean and return their uniform after the final performance of the first semester.

All MCPS/MBHS rules regarding use of school property apply. Although appropriate behavior is always expected, it is much more so when the uniform is worn. Poor behavior and inappropriate conduct while in uniform will not be tolerated.

Hearing Protection

Hearing protection is highly encouraged for all students, especially when we rehearse indoors. Please make the best choice for yourself, but information about a specific set of earplugs can be found below.

To learn about real hearing protection, visit www.etymotic.com. The Etymotic high-fidelity ER-20 ETY-Plugs are ready-fit and do not require custom ear molds. You can buy a pair of clear earplugs, a neck cord and a case directly from the Etymotic web site for as low as \$14.99. The website also has information about custom musician's earplugs. ER-20 plugs are also available for purchase on www.amazon.com. The Home Depot and Lowe's have similar products for just under \$5.00.

Instrument Policy/Care

The Montgomery Blair High School Instrumental Music Department will provide the following instruments from its existing inventory at no cost to its members: mellophones,

baritones horns/euphoniums, sousaphones/basses, tenor/baritone saxophones, marching percussion, and auxiliary accessories for the field show such as flags, poles, etc.

The Instrumental Music Department may also have a limited supply of other band instruments for its members to use. Check with Mr. Oldham about the availability of an instrument. Students will need to complete a Receipt and Bond Form for Band/Orchestra Instruments (MCPS Form 334-13) when issued an MBHS instrument.

Members of the marching band are required to supply their own mouthpieces, reeds, valve oil, mallets, and other supplies.

If an instrument is accidentally damaged at a rehearsal or performance, the student(s) involved must immediately inform their captain and the directors so that the appropriate repairs can be made. It is requested that the student/family drop the instrument off at the repair shop, pick it up when it is done, and pay for the cost of the repair. Mr. Oldham will give you the names of MCPS authorized repair shops. If the cost to repair the instrument creates a financial hardship, please see Mr. Oldham.

If an instrument is **maliciously or carelessly** lost or damaged, **the student(s) who is/are at fault will be charged** for either the repair to the instrument or the purchase of a replacement, if necessary.

Proper care of all instruments (personal and school owned) during the marching season is essential. It is impossible to present a high-quality musical performance on an instrument with stuck slides, bad pads, sticky valves, split reeds, or chipped mouthpieces. Any questions or concerns about instrument care and maintenance can be brought to the directors, captains, or the section leaders.

Check-in of all borrowed instruments will occur during the final week of the marching band season. Instruments must be returned in good working order, as issued.

Paperwork & Fees

Things that need to be turned in to Mr. Oldham *before* Band Camp:

1. **Signed Commitment Contract by June 30, 2026**
2. Student Information Form
3. Health History Form
4. Shoes/Gloves Order Form - Students who need shoes and/or gloves will be assessed a fee of \$50 to cover these costs.
5. Band Fee – Each student will be assessed a band fee of \$100 to help cover operational costs for the season. Should this create a financial hardship for the student, please speak with Mr. Oldham as soon as possible.

Commitment Contract

I have read and understand the Montgomery Blair High School **BLAZER PRIDE** Marching Band Handbook and agree to abide by and consent to the rules, regulations, attendance and videotaping/recording/photographing policies and procedures. I have reviewed the rehearsal and performance schedules and my parents or guardians will notify the directors through the Google attendance form for absence approval if I am unable to attend a scheduled Marching Band activity. I understand that I am agreeing to participate in **all** marching band activities for the entirety of the 2026-2027 school year, beginning Monday, August 10, 2026 and ending Friday, June 11, 2027.

Student Name (Print): _____

Instrument: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

*****PRINT, SIGN, AND UPLOAD THIS CONTRACT TO THE FORM LINKED HERE****