

Monticello High School Marching Mustangs



Marching Mustangs Handbook

2026

I. Policies and Procedures

A. Membership Eligibility

Students must be:

1. In 8th-12th grade in the MHS school zone
2. Enroll in the marching band course
3. Enroll in a band class if not a guard member

B. Attendance

1. **All practices and performances throughout the year are mandatory.**

2. **Excused absences include**

- a. Illness attested by a parent note or doctor's note
- b. Special circumstances by pre-approval of the director

Full Attendance Policy:

Success at rehearsals/performances is dependent on everyone being there. As such, all events are mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in missing assignments for that day. For the safety and success of the group, excessive absences can also result in being removed from performances or the program depending on severity and materials missed. To get an absence excused- use the following procedure.

-Known conflicts at the time of turning in the handbook agreement should be communicated on the handbook agreement.

-Attempt to schedule appointments around our schedule. (Tuesdays are always good, Fridays are usually good, there are 2 weekends in the competition schedule that are open)

-Emergency absences will be excused if the following procedure is done:

- a. All attempts to make the event are made.
- b. Communicate with Mr. Strickler as soon as possible.
- c. Turn in an explanation note from home within 3 school days of the absence.

3. **Regular Rehearsal Schedule**

Mondays- 4pm-6pm

Wednesday- 4pm-6pm

Thursdays- 4pm-6pm

Starting 8/13 and Ending on 11/7

4. **Band Camp**

July 27-31st - 12:00-9:00

Aug. 3-7th- 6:00pm-9:00pm

Extra Guard Sectionals: 4:00pm-5:30pm

Aug. 10th- 6pm-9pm- *Guard: 4:00pm-5:30pm*

5. **Dismissal**

-Staff will do our best to dismiss on time, do not ask to dismiss early unless pre-approved

-We will not dismiss until all equipment has been stored, announcements given, and the room is in tip top shape.

6. Home game dates

Sept. 4
 Sept. 25 (8th grade night)
 Oct. 16 (Homecoming)
 Oct. 30 (Senior Night)

7. Competition dates/locations

Sept. 19 (Salem Stadium)
 Sept. 26 (William Flemming HS)
 Oct. 10 (Harrisonburg HS)
 Oct. 24 (JMU)
 Nov. 7 (VA Beach Sportsplex)

C. Grading Procedure:

1. 65%- Rehearsal Assessment Grades

The bulk of our time is spent rehearsing and learning the show. Effective rehearsing techniques will be assessed.

a. Rubric categories are:

-Demonstration of rehearsal readiness
 -Demonstration of rehearsal techniques
 -Demonstration of contribution

If a student is absent-submit a note from home within a week in order to be considered for an excused absence for that day's rehearsal assessment..

b. Material Tests

A test on material learned in rehearsals may be called. This may be to demonstrate a section of music, drill, work, or choreography. They will be assessed on a rubric.

2. 35%- Performance Grades

Attendance, activity, and preparedness for each performance in a grading period will be assessed for a total of 30% of the grading period's grade. (See performance attendance policy for procedure if a performance is missed)

D. Required Equipment

1. Band equipment required for all members.

- a. band t-shirts (show shirt and regular shirt)
- b. uniform shoes
- c. standard uniform
- d. show uniform

- e. black socks
- f. 3 ring binder with sheet protectors for music

2. Wind/Brass specific equipment

- a. Instruments
- b. Music lyre
- c. Flip folders
- d. BERP or Brass Buzzer (brass only)
- e. Reeds (sax/clarinet)
- f. Instrument maintenance equipment

3. Guard

- a. Fingerless guard gloves (nude color for 2026)
- b. Guard shoes (nude color for 2026)
- c. Danceable practice clothing and shoes

4. Percussion

- a. appropriate sticks and mallets for your assigned parts
- b. Practice pads

5. All equipment may be purchased or borrowed. .

Purchasing items allows the music boosters fundraising to go towards staff, experiences, and helping students with financial assistance.

II. Rules and Expectations

A. Behavior

1. Attitude, Language, and Demeanor

- a. Maintain a positive attitude
- b. Do not use profanity
- c. Support your band/bandmates/directors and other bands
- d. Never mistreat your uniform or equipment

2. General Rules:

- a. Do “the right thing”
- b. No devices, headphones, or distracting materials during rehearsals (UDB exception)
- c. Show respect for staff, students, MHS, and host schools.
- d. Give 100% every day
- e. Keep a calendar
- f. Communicate
- g. Do everything- *WITH PRIDE*
- h. Students must report directly to band after school for practice.
- i. Be on your spot at downbeat without being asked.
- j. Have all materials at all rehearsals
- k. Uniform doesn’t touch the ground ever.

3. When Traveling

- a. No sharing blankets
- b. No seat sharing by couples after dark.
- c. Sit forward, no yelling, no speakers, no instrument usage, no hairspray/perfume/cologne/body spray on the bus.
- d. Groups of 3 minimum when going somewhere while on location. Go and come back to your seat quickly.
- e.
- f. If alternative transportation is needed, it must be approved via paper note BEFORE the trip departs.
- g. No talking, phone use, or getting up during a band's performance
- h. Do everything on a trip- *WITH PRIDE*
- i. Lose with poise, win with grace. Act like you expected the outcome no matter what it is.

B. Consequences

Breaking rules may result in the following or other appropriate consequences.

1. Added responsibilities during rehearsal
2. Loss of performance/travel privilege
3. Loss of 3rd quarter privilege
4. Assigned seating at events/travel
5. Confiscation of materials for the event
6. Removal from the marching band.

III. Event Information

A. Game Day Procedures

The band will perform at all home game.

1. All students will stay after school on home game days through the game.
2. Typical Gameday Schedule
 - Practice in stadium- 4:15-5:00
 - Dinner- 5:00-5:45
 - Uniforms Changing- 5:45-6:10
 - Music Prep/Guard make-up 6:10-6:30
 - Block up in lot 6:30
 - Step-off 6:35
 - Dismissal (estimated 45 mins after game ends)
3. Uniform rules will be followed (must have a band t-shirt on)
4. All students are to sit with the band and perform with the band throughout the 1st, 2nd, and 4th quarters. The band section is reserved for band members only. Students may receive the 3rd quarter off at the discretion of the director but must be back in the stands ready to play at the conclusion of the 3rd quarter.
5. On Homecoming we will perform a post-game show
6. Following the game- All students will be dismissed at the same time from the band room. Don't ask to leave until everything is put away.

B. Competition Procedures

Each competition will have its own itinerary which will reflect the day's activities.

1. All performance procedures are in effect.
2. All behavior procedures are in effect.

3. During other band's performances there is no talking/phone use. AT ALL. NONE.
4. Band members stay with the group.
5. Trips to the concession stand/restroom must have chaperone approval and students may not go in less than groups of 3. Students are to return to the band quickly.
6. Band members are to have their band t-shirt on at all times or they are to remain in uniform throughout the day.
7. Do not leave the stadium
8. Wear the uniform as mandated in that situation. (full, half, show shirt, etc.)

IV. Financial Obligations/Boosters

A. There are no required fees for participation except to buy 2 t-shirts (show shirt and regular band shirt).

The MHS Band department receives some funding from the school but not enough for the whole season as planned. The band boosters is an organization dedicated to providing the best possible experience for each student.

B. The typical boosters budget per season is \$700 per member (near \$20,000 in total).

This money comes from fundraising, event hosting and grant writing. Meeting that funding level requires participation in this process by families.

C. There are a variety of ways to help and opportunities to serve.

- Purchasing your own items helps meet our budget
- Boosters meetings will be held monthly via zoom
- Parents are also needed to volunteer their time:
 - Dinner crew
 - Pit Crew
 - Uniform Crew
 - Band Camp help
 - Fundraising Planning
 - Chaperoning
 - Boosters meetings
- When we hold a fundraiser- please participate when you can.

Known Fundraisers

- Band Sponsorships
 - Search and collection May-July
- Donation Day
 - Held on the day before school starts
 - Virtual donation drive
 - Donation tables at storefronts
 - Alumni email drive
- Poinsettia Sales
 - November