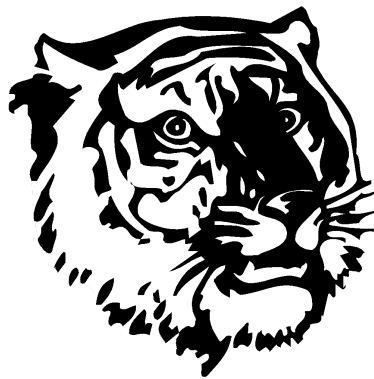

Festus High School

2024-2025 Band Handbook



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FESTUS HIGH SCHOOL BANDS PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

This handbook has two major purposes. The first is to give ready reference to students, parents and school personnel the formula used for grading purposes for the Marching Band, Concert Band, Freshmen Band, Symphonic Band and Jazz Band. The second purpose is to communicate the behaviors and values necessary to build us into one of the most beneficial school organizations known.

First, let's take a look at the positive behaviors necessary for our organization to be the best we can be.

CHAPTER I "LAYING THE FOUNDATION"

For us to be successful, to establish and sustain a long tradition of excellence, we must strive to embed these values in the foundations of our programs:

1. The primary purpose of the Festus Band Program is to serve the educational and developmental needs of its members. All decisions concerning performances, competitions, and trips must be made with this purpose at the forefront of our thinking. The total development of our band students must be of highest priority.
2. To be in band you must be enrolled in band. Your directors and school administration will be doing all in our power to make it possible for those truly interested in developing themselves through instrumental music to do so. Only students who have progressed through the instrumental music program or who can pass a special audition to prove their musical skills may enroll. We always welcome students from other schools to join us when they move to Festus.
3. Occasionally students wish to change to another instrument. Changes can only be made to help meet the instrumentation needs of our bands. An instrument change to help the band is a very positive way to contribute. Any change must first be approved by the directors.
4. Because we are dependent on each other in performance situations, and because great rehearsals make great bands, students and parents must place rehearsals and performances as a top priority on their personal calendars. Missing practices and performances is horrible on band morale, not to mention the devastating results on the level of performance we will achieve. The closer to perfect our attendance and punctuality is the better our band will be. Be responsible, communicate with your parents and employers months in advance.
5. Your time is valuable. Our rehearsals will be designed to be efficient and fast-paced so we will not waste your valuable time. To help maximize the benefits of our rehearsal time, practice at home as often as possible.
6. Our ability to progress and achieve, both as individuals and as a band, is dependent on our ability to function in an orderly, systematic manner as we strive to attain our goals. Each of us is dependent on the other, not only for high musical standards, but even more

importantly, for high moral standards, strong character and a sense of responsibility to our group. Just a few weak musicians or one undisciplined individual can have a detrimental effect on the positive effort of the other band members. To help communicate the values and behaviors that are necessary for success, Rehearsal Expectations, The Code of Conduct, and Equipment and Uniform Care have been established.

Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to produce uncommon results.

CHAPTER 2 - GREAT EXPECTATIONS REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS MARCHING BAND

Specific musical expectations for all bands are listed later in this chapter.

1. The following marching fundamentals must be executed identically as taught with constant improvement expected throughout the marching season:
 - A. Correct marching position both in the stationary position and moving.
 - B. Correct instrument positions in the down and playing positions.
 - C. Maintenance of attention discipline.
 - D. Music must be memorized as needed, played in tune and in proper style.
 - E. Correct execution of marching and maneuvering.

2. To assist you with learning your field assignments and moving assignments in coordination with the music, it is expected that you have the following items at every rehearsal:
 - A. Your instrument and music.
 - B. Your drill charts.
 - C. A pencil.
 - D. Some type of athletic shoe, to ensure correct marching style with less discomfort.

3. The primary function of the Festus Marching Band will be the **MUSICAL ADVANCEMENT OF ITS MEMBERS**. The secondary function will be to learn a show for the enjoyment of the people that will see us perform. The first step in learning the show is for each individual to learn their individual field positions from chart to chart throughout the entire show. Each student will be expected to show continuous improvement in the execution of their individual marching assignments in the show, in coordination with the form and phrasing of the music.

4. Because the Festus Marching Band is largely a student run organization, it is necessary for the students to SHOW RESPECT for and to follow the instructions from the Drum Majors, Section Leaders, Captains, etc. In turn, the student leaders are expected to complete the responsibilities of their positions in a kind, caring manner.
5. We can create a professional atmosphere of integrity by all of us committing to one basic principle – being on time for every rehearsal and performance. Remember the definition of being on time –

“IF YOU’RE ON TIME, YOU’RE LATE.”

MUSICAL EXPECTATIONS IN ALL FESTUS BANDS

When you are running on “Festus Band Time” you arrive early to prepare for rehearsals. Minimum expectation is to be seated with your music, instrument and any other necessary equipment before rehearsal begins.

1. To cut down on confusion and to make it possible to hear, do not play after the director has stepped on the podium.
2. It is dangerous to chew gum and play a wind instrument and percussionists who chew gum in rehearsals tend to chew gum in performance. Therefore, do not chew gum in rehearsals or performances.
3. It is impossible to produce your very best sound without correct playing posture. To assure the best possible posture the school has purchased posture chairs. However, to keep us mentally alert, when playing – sit tall.
4. Be it a student conductor, your own band directors or a guest clinician, always show respect by stopping all conversation when the individual steps on the podium. Please do not have to be asked to stop talking.
5. To reach the high level of excellence we will be striving for, it is absolutely necessary to mark every detail on your music. Keep a pencil on your music stand ready for action. (Never use ink.)
6. Don’t waste rehearsal time. If another section’s problems are dominating the rehearsal, use the time to fake through difficult sections of the music. In the early stages of a composition’s development, writing in rhythmic counting syllables, circling dynamics, routing endings, D.C. & D.S. markings, and searching out key signature and accidental traps will benefit not only you, but all the other band members as well.

7. Exert control over yourself. Demand alertness, vitality, musical expression and a positive attitude from yourself.
8. **BOTTOM LINE!** Do nothing to take your attention or anyone else's attention away from the music or subject of the rehearsal. With everyone concentrating hard for 50 minutes every rehearsal, we can achieve all our goals!!

The following musical expectations will be used as a yardstick for all our performing organizations. When your individual performances are evaluated this will be the criteria used:

1. Correct notes and rhythms.
2. Performing in phrases by breathing at phrase endings and following the natural nuance of the line.
3. Performing all the written articulations.
4. Performing all the written dynamics.
5. Playing in tune with yourself and with musicians you are performing with by adjusting flawed notes on your instrument.
6. Maintaining a steady tempo as you perform.
7. Improving your range, both ascending and descending.
8. Demonstrating your ability to balance musically with the other members of the ensemble.
9. Demonstrate musical term knowledge.
10. Exhibit knowledge of music form and theory.
11. **IMPROVE YOUR TONE QUALITY DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR.**
12. **STRIVE FOR MUSICALLY EXPRESSIVE PLAYING.**

EXPECTATIONS FOR EQUIPMENT CARE

The Festus R-6 School District is not responsible for stolen or damaged instruments that are owned, rented, or borrowed by students. Although the school has instrument storage available, no storage space is 100% secure. Instrument storage rooms and practice rooms are not secure, and the school cannot be responsible for anything left in them, either during the school day or overnight. Instrumental students are expected to take their instruments home every night to practice. Parents are advised to make sure their homeowners or renters policies cover musical instruments, most do. Students must take proper care of instruments including not leaving them in practice rooms, classrooms, buses, hallways, etc., during the school day, weekends, or vacations. Under no circumstances will private instruments be housed at school during the summer.

Students need to take care not to leave instruments unattended in precarious positions (on music stands, which can be easily bumped, on chairs sticking out into aisles, and standing or lying on the floor where someone could knock them over, step on them or kick them).

Instrument cases must not be used as chairs, foot rests, as these uses can impair their ability to protect the instrument inside from damage, dirt, or moisture.

A musician playing a great instrument which is kept in perfect working order is in perfect condition. A musician playing a poor instrument or a great instrument which he/she fails to keep in perfect working condition does himself/herself and the listener a great disservice. Now let's define perfect working condition:

Brass Instruments:

1. The inside of the instrument must be kept clean and free of germ cultures. Clean it thoroughly at least twice a year.
2. All the tuning slides must be free and easily moved.
3. The trombone slide and the valves on all the valved instruments must be working freely and quickly.
4. The mouthpiece must be cleaned often for the best response.
5. All major dents should be removed. Dents in the lead pipe will cause intonation problems.
6. Water key corks must not leak air or water.
7. The outside of the instrument should be kept clean and shiny.

Woodwind Instruments:

1. The keys must be kept in adjustment. Keys too far from the instrument will cause tuning problems and technique problems.
2. Alternate fingering keys must be kept adjusted and responsive.
3. Worn pads must be replaced or they will cause tuning and tone problems
4. A special note about reeds:
 - a. Buy your reeds by the box if possible
 - b. Have at least four good reeds in a reed case and alternate them often. When one splits, break in a new reed immediately, that way you will always have four good ones ready for performance.
 - c. In the Festus Bands, clarinet players typically need to use at least a 3 (medium) strength reed. (Use a firm reed that plays in tune.)
 - d. Saxophone players should never use anything stronger than a 3 strength reed.
 - e. NEVER use a chipped, split or worn out reed in our band.

Percussion Instruments:

1. Keep all equipment packed away properly and/or covered when not in use.
2. Worn, dented, or cut heads must be replaced for all instruments.
3. Use of the proper sticks is required for all instruments.
4. Never play with broken or split sticks.
5. Tune drum heads at least once a week outside class.
6. Always return all instruments and mallets back to their place of storage.

UNIFORM CARE AND INFORMATION

MARCHING BAND UNIFORM

The Festus R-6 School District has provided us with a uniform that is second to none. *The students will provide long black socks. You will need to purchase marching band shoes and gloves from FHS Bands.* Basically we expect you to:

1. Take pride in your uniform, because while you wear it, you are a walking billboard for the school and representative of it.
2. Wear the full uniform at all times in public, with the exception of hat and gloves. This includes walking around at games, competitions, or any public performance. Any change will be announced and followed as a group.
3. Keep the uniform on a hanger issued to you and hung up neatly after every performance.
4. Have the uniform dry-cleaned and pressed every time it does not look in tip-top shape.
5. Have your shoes cleaned, even the soles and heels, spotless for every performance.
6. If you lose any part of the uniform, you must pay for it as indicated on the uniform checkout form.
7. NEVER store any item in the garment bag (especially shoes) or in the hat box other than what is intended to be in them.
8. Pants may be whip stitched to correct length, but never use a sewing machine, pins, or tape!!!

To sum it up – the better we look, the better we feel when we perform. The better condition we keep our instrument in, the better we will feel about how we sound when we perform. The better we feel about how we look and sound when we perform, the better our performance will be.

CONCERT BAND and FRESHMEN BAND UNIFORM

Concert Black Attire:

Everyone should be in a nice all-black top, black dress pants/skirts, black dress shoes. (Your black marching band shoes would work.) No flip flops or sneakers. All black - no other colors. (Maybe a holiday tie at our holiday concert.)

To sum it up – the better we look, the better we feel when we perform. The better condition we keep our instrument in, the better we will feel about how we sound when we perform. The better we feel about how we look and sound when we perform, the better our performance will be.

SYMPHONIC BAND UNIFORM

Ladies will receive black dresses. You will need black dress shoes.

Gentlemen will receive tuxes. You will need to purchase a tuxedo shirt/tie/cummerbund from FHS. You will need to have long black socks and black dress shoes. (Marching band shoes would work.)

JAZZ BAND UNIFORM

We will have specially made Tshirts for pep band and other casual gigs. These will be worn with jeans.

You will need to have a long-sleeved black button up shirt, black dress pants, black dress shoes for our concerts and other dressier gigs. A tie will be provided.

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

Each ensemble will have several performance opportunities:

Parades/Games, etc. for Marching Band

Concerts here at FHS

Assemblies

Pep Band at basketball games

District Band through auditions leading to All-State Band through auditions.

District Jazz Band through auditions leading to All-State Jazz Band through auditions.

MSHSAA Solo/Ensemble Contest

Jefferson County Honor Band

MSHSAA Large Ensemble Contest

?? Maybe some more!

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT

1. Each student must strive to demonstrate a sense of responsibility in the following areas:
 - A. Bringing all necessary items essential for performance to the performance site (instruments, music, accessories, mallets, sticks, etc.).
 - B. By keeping the music room, practice rooms, and storage areas in a clean state.
 - C. Showing respect for every musical instrument in the room.
 - D. Keeping your instrument in excellent playing condition at all times.
 - E. Attending special sectionals and mini-lessons.
 - F. Representing your school, community, and band with only the best behavior and conduct on all band trips and performances inside and outside the community.
2. Because of the tens of thousands of dollars in musical instruments kept in the music room, we must provide for a common defense. Each of us must look out for the other by reporting any and all activity that might arouse suspicion in any student or adult.
3. Use only the best manners in the music room. Off-color remarks, foul language and the like are unacceptable.
4. No public displays of affection, please.
5. Everyone must have a tag or label on their instrument case, labeled in the following manner:

YOUR NAME
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP
FESTUS BANDS
6. Keep your instrument in the storage room only, not in the classroom or practice rooms. Keep your music in the folio cabinet.
7. Do not bring food or spillable drink into the instrumental music room.
8. The white boards are for informational and instructional purposes. Please do not write on anything in the room except appropriate paper.
9. Any student that encounters any kind of a discipline problem within the band risks losing the privilege of going on band trips. You are held accountable for your actions, good or bad.

Festus is a proud, progressive community. Festus High School is a great school. The Festus High School Bands are significant representatives, helping nourish the proud reputation of the community and the schools. We will strive to be an exemplary example of music education for schools around the area and state. Our goals, as your teachers, are to provide for the elevation of your lives through musically artistic experiences, inspirational performances, and a structured approach to attaining excellence. In addition, the bands will provide unique opportunities to develop interpersonal relationship skills and to cultivate leadership potentialities. None of the goals can ever be realized without each of us striving to be Festus' finest representatives, unwilling to compromise in the quality of our behavior or the quality of our performances. It is self-evident that a quality program for you will never be realized if we are reduced to dealing with the petty behavioral problems or the breaking of band or school rules, or worse, federal and state laws. For these reasons it is extremely important every member of the FHS Bands understand the responsibility for the best behavior that you automatically assume when you accept membership in our organization.

CHAPTER III ***ATTENDANCE***

Students are expected to attend, on time, ALL rehearsals, performances, concerts and competitions for the band. Evening rehearsals and performances are culminating activities of any performance class and are the equivalent of a major test or final exam. Ample time will be provided prior to any calendar changes so that other activities and jobs may be scheduled appropriately. **Please understand that student jobs, vacations, non-school sporting events, and other appointments will NOT constitute an excused absence.** Examples of excused absences are personal illness, death or emergency in the immediate family. It is important that the directors be notified prior to the absence for illness, emergency, death in the family, or situation approved by the directors. Unexcused absences, or absences without prior communication WILL affect the student's grade. Bottom line, communication solves problems.

This notification needs to be as soon as possible and always before the rehearsal or performance except when it is impossible because of an unforeseen situation. (Basically, we ask for each member to use common courtesy and responsibility in these matters, so the effort of the other members can best be served.) If an absence is necessary because of a conflict of activities, this must be discussed and decided on as early as possible, so it may be worked out with the best possible solution. If cases arise where there is a day or two of notification of a conflict, and it could have been earlier, it will be handled not only as a conflict, but also as a lack of responsibility for the member's actions. (Think and plan ahead to the best of your ability.)

Those with excused absences will be eligible to make up the lost points with an alternative assignment. Those with unexcused absences will only be eligible to earn up to half the lost points. Unexcused absences also result in the inability to earn a band letter at the end of the school year.

CHAPTER IV GRADING POLICY

Assuming that everyone has a good attitude toward cooperation, initiative, dependability, and the desire to improve themselves and the band, grading is very positive and rewarding.

The grade earned in band will consist of three important areas:

- A. Evaluations of performance
- B. Class Attendance/Participation/Effort
- C. Final Exam and Performance Assessments

A. Evaluation of Performance

Students are expected to show measurable progress with regard to the degree of proficiency they demonstrate on their particular instrument. The grade for this category reflects improvement (or lack thereof) of musical skills, related to individual performance. This portion of the grade will be determined in part through individual playing tests. If a test is missed because of an absence, sufficient time will be given to make up the test, but it is the responsibility of the student to schedule this make up. Make up tests will not be allowed in cases of unexcused absences. Make-up tests will be allowed if an instrument is being repaired with a note from home, but not if the student fails to have their instrument the day of a test for any other reason.

A musical performance is the culmination of the materials presented in class and other performance techniques taught in class throughout the year. Students participating in band are learning individually, but a substantial part of band is learning how to work together as one large ensemble. Therefore, students will be required to attend all performances and will be given credit for each performance. An unexcused absence will result in a lower letter grade. There are three acceptable reasons for being excused from a performance: (a) unavoidable conflict, (b) student illness, and (c) emergency. **All absences require prior personal director notification.** Absences due to a student's work schedule, vacations, or non-school sport events are not considered excused.

B. Class Attendance/Participation/Effort

Students must be on time to rehearsals, performances, etc., with the right equipment and music. As part of the intended learning objectives, this aspect merits evaluation. Students are expected to show a willingness to learn and work together toward the goal of improving both individual and group skills. The grade for this category covers both musical skills, desire to improve those skills, and general demeanor.

Daily attendance in band is crucial because of rehearsal technique, group cohesiveness, ensemble playing, and the difficulty of arranging credible make-up work. If a student is unable to play due to illness or medical reason, but is in class, they must have their music out and be actively involved in the rehearsal mentally. If a student is unable to play a second day in a row, they must bring a written excuse from the parent. If a student is unable to play three or more days, they must bring a written excuse from a physician. In any event of inability to play, the student must notify the director prior to the beginning of rehearsal. Make-up work may be assigned by the teacher, however there can be no real substitute for class rehearsal time. Make-up work may include rehearsal time after school with the director, written reports, or projects. Each attendance day will credit the student points. Points may be deducted for unexcused absences, lack of participation, gum/candy chewing, tardiness, lack of instrument, equipment or music, position and posture, inattentiveness, talking, and disrespect.

The "A" student shows positive leadership and interest in their particular section; makes outstanding progress in self-improvement, makes strong, positive contributions to the band as a whole through participation in various groups, and shows personal integrity and character.

C. Final Exam and Performance Assessments

No stress! We want you to do well, so we will prepare you for these!

CHAPTER V
“THE MARCHING BAND ORGANIZATION”

DRUM MAJORS (Marching Band)

The drum majors are the highest ranking student leaders during marching band. They are responsible for leading all rehearsals and performances as student directors. Drum majors are ultimately responsible to the director and assume responsibility for giving assistance that will aid in quality rehearsals and performances.

SECTION LEADERS (Marching Band)

Section leaders will be chosen in the spring by the directors using an application process. Section leaders will be chosen on the basis of musicianship, marching fundamentals, and leadership potential.

Section leaders will help guide members of the section through music sectionals, fundamentals of marching, and drill instruction. The section leader is responsible for the musicality and conduct of the section. They will meet outside class time with other leaders. They will be responsible for calling sectional rehearsals, and notifying the director(s). **KNOW WHO YOUR SECTION LEADER IS.** They will give their phone number to each member of the section to establish good lines of communication.

HOME FOOTBALL GAME PROCEDURES

1. Band personnel will meet at Festus HS in the music room before game time (be on time, tardies will count) to dress, warm-up, tune and organize for the performance. The band will march to the field 45 minutes prior to the kick-off. See the band calendar.
2. Cheerleaders and Poms who are band members will be expected to perform with the band in their normal cheer or pom uniforms.
3. Before kick-off, the band will present the pre-game performance.
4. The band will sit in the assigned area according to section with no food or drink of any kind from concessions. Water will be provided...maybe. (We will have dinner during 3rd quarter.) You will have your marching band bags to bring water and light snacks.
5. No playing in the seats unless directed by the drum majors or directors.
6. Perform always in a musical manner with good tone, precision and accuracy.
7. The band will leave the stands for halftime with three (3) minutes left in the second quarter. Section leaders will check instruments and uniforms. Cheerleaders and poms who are band members must be with the band at this time.

8. As the teams leave the field, think of every execution and be mentally aware of your responsibility to the band and to yourself.
 9. Following the halftime performance, you may return to the seats and have time to use the restroom and get dinner during the third quarter.
 10. Before the conclusion of the third quarter you should return to your seat to get your instrument ready to play before the fourth quarter.
 11. The band will stay for the completion of the game. The only exceptions to leaving after the halftime show include poor weather, and band performance the next day in competition. All band members are required to remain with the band.
 12. At the conclusion of the game, the band will form up on the track to troop back to the school.
 13. Uniform etiquette is expected at all times during home games. This includes the proper wearing of the complete uniform. Any deviation from this will be done as a group. Hats and gloves may be removed once in the seats. Jackets are to remain on at all times, except
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**PLEASE SIGN & RETURN THIS PAGE BY
FRIDAY, AUGUST 23**

**FESTUS HIGH SCHOOL BAND
HANDBOOK APPROVAL FORM**

Please take the time to read the contents of the Band Handbook. There is an online version located at the band website: **www.FestusBands.org**.

Sign this form indicating an understanding of all expectations. You also indicate knowledge of all the required performances and understand the commitment. If you have any questions concerning this handbook do not hesitate to contact Mr. Evans or Mr. Lorenz or Mrs. Sekelsky. This form should be signed and returned to the band directors during the first week of school.

I have read and understand the contents of this handbook.

Print Student Name _____

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date



**PLEASE SEE THE CALENDAR AT FESTUSBANDS.ORG
FOR ALL REQUIRED PERFORMANCE EVENTS**
