

## Drum Major Audition Information

Please be on time for your audition. If you would like to work with the band director personally on conducting and or vocal commands, you will need to make prior arrangements to do so. The audition will consist of marching, conducting, scales, and giving vocal commands.

Before you are allowed to audition, each student must have turned in his or her contract and 4 teacher recommendations. Please have the teachers give the recommendations directly to the band director.

### Eligibility

- Be enrolled in high school band in the upcoming school year
- Be in 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade in the upcoming school year
- Have at least one year experience in high school marching band
- Be academically eligible in the upcoming school year
- Provide 4 teacher recommendations
- Provide signed drum major/section leader contract

### Requirements to be demonstrated:

- All facets of marching, including but not limited to marking time, roll step, excellent body carriage, and pivot turns
- Conducting (A recording will be provided for the applicant to practice with and conduct to for tryouts. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to keep accurate time, and use a beat pattern that can be seen and understood.)
- Vocal commands, including but not limited to: attention, parade rest, mark time, halt, and turns. Voice projection and clarity are important factors.

The Role of the Drum Major: the most visible position in the marching band is that of drum major. This person is the leader on the street. The drum major exemplifies the spirit, dignity, and bearing of the entire band, and therefore should possess these qualities to the highest degree.

### Duties of the Drum Major include but are not limited to:

#### A. Marching Rehearsals

1. Consults with the Director prior to each rehearsal for instructions concerning the rehearsal plan.
2. Leads the band through the warm up routine.
3. Assists the Director in the teaching of marching.
4. Helps individual band members when problems arise.
5. Acts as proper example for difficult maneuvers and proper posture.
6. Maintains discipline (group morale) of the band at all times.

#### B. Performances

1. Upon arrival, report in immediately with the band director and receive instructions.
2. Take responsibility for making sure the band is assembled in the proper formation at the pre-designated time and place.
3. Check out uniforms and assist with general inspection.
4. Be responsible for moving the band from one area to another in an orderly fashion.
5. Prior to a parade, become familiar with the parade route.

6. Know when to bring the band to attention.
7. Give all commands during performances.
8. Set the example at all times in dress, leadership, punctuality, alertness, precise marching, attitude, and morale.

#### Desirable Qualities of a Drum Major

- The individual should be intelligent, and should have the capability to think quickly under pressure.
- A strong dedication to the band program by the individual is vital.
- The individual's musical ability should be of the highest level.
- The position is leadership-oriented; outstanding leadership qualities should be evident long before becoming drum major.
- The candidate should be personable and get along well with others.
- The candidate should be very dependable.
- The Drum Major is placed in a conspicuous position and is subject to spectator criticism and therefore should "look" the part at all times.
- Exhibiting a good attitude and encouraging good morale within the band is a major responsibility of the Drum Major.
- The Drum Major must be enthusiastic in his/her dealings with the band.

By returning this application you are showing that you understand what is being expected of you should you qualify for the position. A Drum Major is not expected to be at all rehearsals, he/she is **REQUIRED** to be at them all. There are no "free days" for the Drum Major, he or she is working all the time. You will be held to a much higher standard than you have ever been held before, and you will be asked to make numerous sacrifices for the good of the band program and your charges. Do not return this application unless you have absolutely no hesitations about what this position entails.

Duties of Section Leaders include but are not limited to:

#### A. Marching Rehearsals

1. Leads the sectionals.
2. Helps individual band members when problems arise.
3. Acts as proper example for difficult maneuvers and proper posture.
4. Maintains discipline (group morale) of the section at all times.

#### B. Performances

1. Upon arrival, report in immediately with the Drum Major and receive instructions.
2. Take responsibility for making sure the section is assembled in the proper formation at the pre-designated time and place.
3. Set the example at all times in dress, leadership, punctuality, alertness, precise marching, attitude, and morale.

## Warhill High School Student Leader Contract

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument \_\_\_\_\_

Grade level \_\_\_\_\_ Approx. GPA \_\_\_\_\_

It is understood that if I am selected to be Drum Major or Section Leader, I will be expected to:

- Support the Band Director and other Staff with the utmost dedication, devotion, and loyalty.
- Maintain a strong dedication to the entire band program.
- Not miss any rehearsal, performance, or function of the band except for severe illness or death in the family.
- Uphold the highest possible standards as set for all band members.
- Participate in all special band events (pep band, special performances, etc.)
- Demonstrate the highest level of musicianship throughout the entire year.
- If not chosen, I will assume my regular role in the band and give full cooperation to the other members selected and Director/Staff.
- I will purchase the required equipment.

I agree to follow the above policies and the policies of the marching band. I understand that failure to do so may result in my being remove from the leadership position bestowed upon me.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to help my student follow the above policies and the policies of the marching band.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Drum Major Audition Requirements

**Standing Verbal Commands:** Each auditioning candidate will give these verbal commands, from a distance away, while other candidates execute the maneuvers. The voice should be clear, projected with a good cadence and confidence. Participating candidates should do fundamentals without instruments.

|                 |                  |                |                   |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Band 'ten hut   | Band parade rest | Band 'ten hut  | Dress right dress |
| Ready ... front | Band horns up    | Mark time mark | Forward march     |
| Left slide move | Forward march    | Band ... halt  | Band horns down   |

**Marching Fundamentals:** Each candidate will be evaluated on their how well they execute the marching fundamentals while they perform the above maneuvers as a group. Posture, style, carriage, precision, rhythm, coordination, and confidence will be taken into consideration.

**Conducting:** Candidates will be evaluated a basic 3 pattern. Emphasis will be placed on precision and clarity.

All candidates will conduct the *Star Spangled Banner* in rehearsal setting. A rehearsal score and a recording will be made available on our website: [www.warhillband.com](http://www.warhillband.com).

**Conducting (drum major candidates only):** Candidates will be evaluated on style, precision, clarity, preparation beats, cut-off's, releases, and musicality. The following will be done as individuals:

Conduct 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 beat patterns in a neutral style.

Conduct 4 beat pattern staccato, marcato, and legato styles.

Conduct the prepared piece: *Tonight*, a recording of which will be available at [www.warhillband.com](http://www.warhillband.com).

**Interview:** Each candidate will be interviewed. Responses to questions will reveal attitude, enthusiasm, communication skills, emotional maturity, and knowledge of related matter. Possible questions may include:

Why do you want to be drum major?

Why do you want to be section leader?

What suggestions can you offer to improve our band program?

What do you feel the role of a drum major should include?

As a leader, what do you feel of your strengths and weaknesses?

What can you do to help your director achieve his or her goals?

## Teacher Recommendation

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Rate the student in each of the following categories. Please return this form to the band director, not the student. This form will not be seen by the student.

|                | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|----------------|-----------|------|------|------|
| Attitude       | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |
| Responsibility | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |
| Dependability  | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |
| Leadership     | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |

Comments:

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

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| Responsibility | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |
| Dependability  | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |
| Leadership     | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |

Comments:

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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| Dependability  | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |
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Comments:

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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| Leadership     | 4         | 3    | 2    | 1    |

Comments:

Teacher's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Warhill Marching Lions**  
**Drum Major Auditions**

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Auditionee: |  |
|-------------|--|

| Scoring Scale |       |        |           |          |
|---------------|-------|--------|-----------|----------|
| 1 - 4         | 5 - 8 | 9 - 12 | 13 - 16   | 17 - 20  |
| Weak          | Fair  | Good   | Excellent | Superior |

**I. Marching/Commands @ 20 pts.**

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Clarity of Command    |  |
| Knowledge of Material |  |
| Marching Style        |  |
| Presence              |  |

**II. Conducting @ 20 pts.**

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Conducting Patterns (2, 3, 4)     |  |
| Style (Marcato, Legato, Staccato) |  |

**III. Banner @ 20 pts.**

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Preparation               |  |
| Clarity of Instruction    |  |
| Dynamic Expression        |  |
| Cues, Entrances, Fermatas |  |
| Presence/Showmanship      |  |

**IV. Salute @ 20 pts.**

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Preparation |  |
| Showmanship |  |

**V. Other @ 20 pts.**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Interview |  |
| Essay     |  |

**VI. Recommendations @ 64 pts.**

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Teacher Recommendations |  |
|-------------------------|--|

Judges Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

# Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools High School Bands

## **Drum Major Handbook**

### *Section 1: Drum Major Duties*

1. The Drum Major is the link of communication between the band director and his staff and his band.
2. A Drum Major always takes initiative with the band. Whether it be warming up the band or starting drill out on the field, it is the job of the Drum Major to get and keep the ball rolling without having to be told to do so.
3. The Drum Major is the motivator of the band. It is his/her job to keep band members motivated when learning music, drill, and when going into a performance situation.
4. A responsible Drum Major also disciplines with respect. If someone is doing or saying something inappropriate, it is his/her job to correct the behavior in a stern, yet respectful manner. Remember, you have to GIVE respect to EARN it.
5. Being that it is a leadership position, the Drum Major needs to exhibit a great amount of maturity and to take on a great amount of responsibility. YOU are responsible for the band and its actions. Please act accordingly. The best way for someone to learn something is to watch and mimic the actions of others. Instead of telling someone about something, do it. Be an example.
6. Even after marching season is completed, the Drum Major still maintains the role and the title as Drum Major, which means that everything that was expected of him/her is still, and will continue to be, expected of him/her.



7. A Drum Major is responsible for every aspect of the band. Please be sure that your band members know their roles and what is expected of them. The Drum Major needs to make that clear from the beginning.

8. Don't be afraid to "Put yourself out there." Be verbal with your band and talk with them. Sing their parts to them and correct them (in a polite and constructive manner) if they happen to be wrong (drill, note, rhythm). Let the band know when it is time to work and when there is down time. Verbalization is the key to having a successful band and a happy director! The band doesn't know what the Drum Major wants until it is expressed!

9. Always be a positive energy for the band. Negativity brings nothing positive to the band, the members, or the program. Remember, the glass is always half FULL.

10. Oversee the band in all its aspects. The band director or a staff member may not always be present, so run the show. The Drum Major is the leader of the band, so live up to the title. On the field and at practice, the band belongs to the Drum Major. Remember that, and remember the responsibilities and expectations that come with the position.

## *Section 2: Field Conducting, Cues, and Commands*

1. Do not show your palms to the audience when conducting. Keep them facing in towards each other.
2. Visualize conducting within “The box.” Remember, boxes will vary based on the size of the person’s torso, but the box should be contained.
3. Be sure to hit each of the ictus points located at each extreme of the box. If each of the points is not hit accurately, the pattern becomes sloppy and unclear to the band members.
4. Facial expression is NECESSARY when doing field conducting. They rely heavily on you and your expression to see what they need to do and how they need to play. Exaggerate the facial aspect. If you give expression, they will give you something positive in return in the way of their performance.
5. Use your pattern as a way to indicate crescendo and decrescendo. The pattern should become larger with a crescendo and smaller with a decrescendo. Even though the pattern is getting larger and smaller, all of that needs to be done within “The box.”
6. Patterns can also be very helpful in alerting the band of different musical styles. For instance, if the band was playing a strict march, a stronger and tighter pattern is appropriate. If the band is playing a legato, the pattern should be soft and flowing. Adjust the conducting style based on the music. There can be more than one style of conducting in one piece of the music, which is usually the case.
7. Don’t have an excess of body movement. When the upper and lower halves of the body begin to move too much, it can be a TOTAL distraction from the conducting pattern, which is the MOST IMPORTANT thing of all. The pattern should be the focus of the Drum Major and the band members.
8. Keep eye contact with the band. If a section of the band has a BIG entrance, LOOK AT THEM! Don’t assume that they know this is their entrance. The Drum Major needs to look at the section to give some guidance and reassurance.

9. CUE! Cue big entrances as well as sections. Cuing is just a reminder for sections or the entire band that they need to come in here or there is something big about to happen in the music. ALWAYS cue with the left hand.

10. Don't be afraid to put yourself into the music. Be expressive and let the band see you get into the music and its style. If you do this, the band will be more likely to do the same, which is what you want.

11. Give the band what you want them to give you. Model what you want. For example, if you want a part to be played a certain way, sing it how you want them to play it. Give them something and they will give something back to you. Give them nothing and that's exactly what you'll get.

12. Make sure that cutoffs are clear, crisp, and snappy. Avoid sloppy or extended cutoffs.

13. Conduct at chest level. The band isn't looking above or below chest level for your pattern. The chest is eye level and is a comfortable level for conducting. If you conduct at this level, correctly, it will prevent overexertion of the arms and upper body.

14. When bringing up the arms for the downbeat, do not bring them too high. You don't want them going any higher than your face. If you bring them up too high, you take too long for the downbeat, which throws your pattern and rhythms off.

15. If the band (or yourself) should ever get lost in the music, be sure to beat "1" until you (or the band) can find where you are. The band will be looking for a solid downbeat, so always know where your "1" is.

16. NEVER cross your pattern. Never let your arms or wrists or any part of your hand cross.

17. Don't use your whole arm when conducting. Only make use of the arm from elbow to wrist. Everything else should feel and appear to be frozen and in place.

18. Don't hold your pattern too close to your body. Push your pattern (to a comfortable and natural position) out away from your body. It will be closer to the band.

19. Don't let your elbow sag down. Elbows should always be pointed out to the side and not down. If they are down, this means that your pattern is dropping and will not be readable.

20. Don't conduct with "gerbil fingers" (ones that are spread apart). Keep them all together except for the thumb, which can be separated from the rest.

21. Practice conducting in front of a mirror. This lets you do a self-evaluation of your conducting and the progress that you're making.

22. Don't hold your left hand in the air without doing something with it. Move it up or down to vary dynamic level or use it for a cue. Don't just let it hang out up there!

23. Be sure to cue only when there is a section or soloist to cue. Don't randomly cue for the heck of it. Always have a section or person in mind for a cue.

24. Conduct the soloist with the right hand ONLY. But remember, after you have introduced your soloist, use two hands because you have an entire band that needs your instruction.

25. Know when to use formal and informal commands. Use "Band, Ten, Hut!" when starting the day, after lunch and at the end of rehearsal. ALWAYS use the formal command when at a competition or football game. Use "Set" when on the practice field.

26. Command the podium. You have been given a great responsibility, so take it and use it appropriately. When you get on that podium, you need to mean business.

27. When calling commands, do not call from your throat, but use your diaphragm instead. Grab a nice patch of air and then belt out the command from your diaphragm.

28. Be sure to vary the inflection in your voice. Don't keep all of your commands at one level. For example, "Band, Ten, Hut!" should be varied. "Band" and "Hut" should be higher in pitch and "Ten" should be lower.

29. Don't draw your commands out. Keep them short, clear, and snappy so that they can be heard.

30. Be sure to call "Set" and "Horns Up" before mobbing to the next set.

31. If the band is going set-by-set or is playing through that show and they miss entrances or sound bad, cut them off and tell them to "Go Back."

32. Be confident! Know your score and each of the sections' parts. You can troubleshoot easily if you know this. If phasing occurs (where there are musical issues between each side of the field), jump off of the podium (only in practice) and go down there and get the band or section back together. This is the most problematic thing for a band and a Drum Major.

33. Never sing with the band while you're formally conducting. You cannot be in your own little world when you have about 50-70 other people on the field that need your direction.

34. When the music is faster, your pattern needs to be smaller and tighter. And when the music is slower, your pattern needs to be more fluid and open (all within the box, of course).

35. Make sure you distinguish between the downbeat and beat "3." The downbeat is closer to the middle of your body, whereas the "3" is at the extreme of your box.

36. When cuing, always cue up, out, and at an angle. The band needs to see the cue, so make it stand out from your regular pattern of conducting.

### *Section 3: Miscellaneous Information*

1. Always treat every band member with the utmost respect. Never talk down to any member of your band.
2. Never address problems with ANYONE in front of other band members. Always take them to the side (at an appropriate time) and discuss issues with them privately.
3. Try and get to know each member of your band members to a certain degree. This shows that you care and you create a bond with your band members.
4. Rely on the other leaders within your band. They are a great group of allies and the Drum Majors, Horn Line Captains, and Section Leaders need to be in one accord.
5. Be proactive, not reactive. Look ahead to avoid large issues and potential problems.
6. If you are having a constant problem with someone or if there is an emergency, do not hesitate to go to the band director or a staff member. Safety is our top priority.
7. Always be courteous and respectful to the director and the marching staff. They are here to help you.
8. Have fun with your position! It goes by quickly, so make the most of it and make it memorable. Not everyone gets to be a Drum Major.

## *Section 4: Warm-Ups*

Drum Majors can use the following to warm up the band:

- A. Whole notes – Concert B-flat (ALWAYS begin with these, no matter what).
- B. Quarter notes – Concert B-flat
- C. Quarter-eighth notes – Concert B-flat

With any of the following, you can change the tempo, articulation, and dynamics. You can tell the band to play concert B-flat staccato up and slur down, etc. Vary the warm ups so they don't become TOO predictable.

- D. The “Bump” exercise is a good one, too. See your band director for more details.
- E. Written chorales are good to play, also, depending on whether you have access to them.
- F. After being warmed up, begin run portions of the show or work on problem areas. Don't run the whole show or tune over and over again. Pick portions that you know need some attention and work. This is a good time to highlight those.

## JHS School Songs



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