



2025 Season Handbook

EHSMU

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Philosophy

The Ephrata High School Marching Unit’s philosophy encompasses character, creativity, and community within each individual member of the collective organization. Our basic goal is to work together towards excellence while creating an enjoyable and inspiring experience for all members and our audience.

With individual and collective successes as a unit comes pride in the hard work we do. Be proud that you are now a member of a unit that has seen many great successes and work hard at continuing and growing the legacy of the Ephrata High School Marching Unit.

EHSMU Staff

Marching Band Director:	Mr. Stephen Goss
Assistant Directors:	Mr. Chris Hynum, Ms. Angie Selbe
Music/Marching:	Mr. Gavin Grove
Visual Ensemble Caption Head/ Creative Director:	Mrs. Kristie Ohlinger
Assistant Visual Instructor:	Mrs. Olivia Brendle, Mr. Nathan Dick
Percussion Caption Head/ Percussion Arranger:	Mr. Tony Kirchner
Slide line Percussion :	Mr. Quin Watson
Music Arranger:	Chief Warrant Officer 2 – Mr. Don Carlson

Membership and Eligibility

1. Membership is open to any student enrolled in the Ephrata Area School District or students who are home-schooled and reside in the Ephrata Area School District. A student must be a member in “good standing” in either the Concert Band and/or Marching band to be eligible for Jazz Ensemble and/or Percussion Ensemble. Home-schooled students are exempt from this policy. Exceptions may also be made for pianists/guitarists and bass players.
2. All instrumentalists will be encouraged to be members of as many instrumental ensembles as possible.
3. Each week an eligibility list is published by the Student Activities office. If you are failing **TWO(2)** or more subjects and your name appears on this list, you will not be able to participate in any marching band performances for the following week.
4. If this should happen, you are permitted and *expected* to participate in all rehearsals. To participate in practices, an ineligible member must stay after school with a teacher for the class/classes he/she is failing and get a note from the teacher. ***Without a note, a student may not practice.***
5. Ineligible students may not attend any football games or competitions during ineligibility periods. There is no “second string” in the EHSMU, so missed performances can have a negative effect on the entire unit.
6. ***Any student who is academically ineligible more than two times through the course of the season may be dismissed from the unit for the remainder of the season based upon a review of the issues with the director.***
7. If you are absent from school the day of a rehearsal or performance and did not receive prior approval from the high school office, you are ineligible to participate. You will receive an automatic excused absence from band.

Expulsion from the Organization

The director of the Ephrata High School Marching Unit reserves the right to dismiss any member from the organization at any time due to poor attendance, lack of effort, lack of respect for the director and/or staff, poor conduct, or any combination of infractions of rules outlined in this handbook.

Fundraising

While the EHSMU does receive funding from the school district, it is not always enough to fully support the program. To supplement the district’s funding, fundraising activities are necessary. The EHSMU is permitted to conduct several fundraisers throughout the year. The money generated from these projects is used to help offset the cost of trips, supplies, and any unexpected needs that arise through the course of a marching band season. Because each

member benefits from these funds, participation is an **expectation** during each fundraising event. Goals and expectations for students will be specified with each specific fundraiser.

General Rules and Regulations

1. It is imperative that every member and his/her parents/guardians complete the medical release form, district permission form, and physical examination form provided on the band website prior to attending any July rehearsal. Students who do not complete the district physical examination form prior to July 24 will not be permitted to rehearsal with the band until this form is completed.
2. Any medical problems or special conditions must be made known to the director via the medical form provided at the June Information Meeting.
3. The parents/guardians of all members will be responsible for damages caused by a band member during any function, including rehearsals, performances, bus rides, or any part of a school trip.
4. Strict adherence to announcements, the itinerary, curfew, or changes as announced by the director or chaperones are to be followed.
5. Any student not obeying general policies, or refusing to cooperate with the directors, staff members, or chaperones will face disciplinary action. The director will individually evaluate each situation to determine the appropriate course of action. Depending upon the level of the infraction, a parent conference may be necessary to discuss continuation with the EHSMU. Additionally, high school administration may be consulted.
6. All rules and regulations outlined in the Ephrata High School student handbook and code of conduct are in full effect during all functions, including but not limited to rehearsals, performances, transportation, and trips.
7. The consumption, possession, or being under the influence of illicit drugs or alcoholic beverages will not be tolerated. Any student found to be in violation of this policy will be reported to the High School Office and will be penalized according to the district policy outlined in the student handbook.

Attendance Policy

The single most important factor in the continued growth and success of the band is the commitment to consistent attendance by all members of the Ephrata High School Marching Unit.

1. Members are **expected** to attend every scheduled rehearsal and performance. Students who must miss a rehearsal or performance are **required** to discuss this with the director and submit the request in writing no less than 7 days prior to a missed rehearsal, or no less than 30 days prior to a missed performance.

Attendance Policy (continued)

2. Sudden illness and family emergencies are understandably beyond the control of the individual student. In instances in which the student was not absent from school, a phone call or email by the parent/guardian followed by a written excuse at the next rehearsal or performance is expected.
3. Unexcused absence from Marching Band will result in the student being placed on probation for a two-week period. Three unexcused absences will result in an immediate and mandatory performance suspension. During this suspension, attendance at the event is required, but the student will sit out during the performance.
4. Rehearsal will always start on time. Students are expected to check for instructions prior to the start of rehearsal and be ready to being on time. If there is ever a question of procedure, please check with your student leader or staff members for further instruction or clarification. If you are going to be late to practice contact your Student leader and inform him or her of your need to be late.
5. Three unexcused late arrivals will equal one unexcused absence.
6. Unapproved absences from a Marching Band rehearsal or performance with the exception of a sudden illness or family emergency will be considered unexcused. Special circumstances that may arise will be dealt with on a case by case basis and must be communicated to the band director as soon as possible.
7. If a practice is missed, whether excused or unexcused, all material covered during that rehearsal will be the responsibility of the student. The Band Director reserves the right to not allow a student to performance based on attendance and preparedness for the safety of the student as well as the rest of the band.
8. A Calendar for the full season will be available at the June Information Meeting and will be posted on the band app and website. The dates of band camp will be announced in February. Please be aware of all rehearsals, as well as all performances throughout the season.
9. All students are **required** to attend band camp to be a member of the EHSMU. Exceptions for first year members and a small number of returning members have been made in the past, however this must be discussed before the official start of the season on July 1st, and all necessary paperwork must be turned in.
10. **Employment is not an excuse to miss band.** Take the schedule to your employer now; they will appreciate the advance planning and will usually work around the schedule. Should there ever be difficulty with and specific employer, please discuss this with the Band Director as soon as possible so that a determination can be made regarding attendance.

Individual Awards

End of season awards will be given to members in good standing.

First Year	Certificate
Second Year	Letter
Third Year	Pin
Fourth Year	Plaque

Transportation Policy

1. Students are required to use school transportation, both to and from an event.
2. Students wishing to arrive or return home with parents or legal guardians must present a written permission slip to the band director. This should be cleared with the band director at least 24 hours prior to the trip unless there are extenuating circumstances. A phone call may be made to verify this request.
3. Students will ride the bus they sign up for during band camp. These bus assignments will be effective for the entire season. Bus Sign-Ups will occur during band camp, at lunch as follows:
 - i. Seniors
 - ii. Juniors -
 - iii. Sophomores –
 - iv. Freshmen -
4. The Band Director reserves the right to reassign students to different buses temporarily or permanently for any reason.
5. While ride the bus, no instruments are to be played. Any music sources (CD players, iPods, etc) can only be used with headphones.
6. All students must keep heads, arms, legs, and any objects inside the bus always. Nothing is to be thrown on or out of the bus.
7. The Emergency Exits are not used unless it is a real emergency. This includes using these doors to enter or exit the bus on arrival during trips. These doors are to be used only when directed to do so by a chaperone or the bus driver.
8. Seats on the buses may be assigned at the discretion of the band director, staff member, or bus chaperone for one trip or permanently through the remainder of the season for any or all members of a given bus.

Uniform Policy

1. Every student is responsible for the care and maintenance of his/her uniform. A uniform contract is to be signed by both the student and parent/guardian prior to the student receiving the uniform to take home.
2. Students are required to purchase the following items:
 - i. Black T-Shirt or Band T-Shirt (to be worn under uniform) - NO sleeveless shirts under your uniform
 - ii. Black Band Gloves -
 - iii. Black Band Shoes -
 - iv. Black Socks
 - v. Shorts (worn under band trousers)
 - vi. Guard members will need Black Dance Shoes and Guard Gloves
3. No alterations are to be made to the uniform without first consulting with the uniform chairperson. **Do not cut any material from the band uniform for any reason!!**
4. When not in use, uniforms are to be properly hung in garment bags. The only exception to this policy is to air out uniforms following a very hot or very wet performance.
5. Uniforms are to be professionally dry-cleaned only. A dry-cleaning service is available through the band. Please see the Uniform Chairperson to take advantage of this service.
6. Helmets are to always be stored in the boxes when not being worn.
7. If minor damage occurs through the course of the season, please inform the director immediately. If damage is due to negligence, the student will be billed for repair or replacement costs.
8. When performing, unless otherwise instructed, the uniform jacket is always to remain completely closed.
9. **Jeans are prohibited under band uniforms.** Any jeans or pants with zippers will prematurely wear out band uniforms. Shorts and thermal pants are the only items permitted.
10. Students should always have raincoats available, as fall weather can be very unpredictable.
11. Students should be well groomed. Any hairstyles that are collar length or longer must be pulled up tightly and hidden in the helmet to ensure a professional and uniform look to all band members. The use of conservative make-up is allowed.
12. No visible jewelry is permitted during performances, including watches, rings, necklaces, and piercings. Any new piercing that cannot be removed must be covered with an adhesive bandage.

13. During football games, the uniform must be always worn. This includes when in the stands as well as at the refreshment stand during third quarter break. If a student is not in full uniform, the student will lose third-quarter privileges at the next game. Should weather conditions warrant a change to this policy, it will be at the discretion of the band director.
14. During football games, students are only permitted to bring their hat box and a small backpack in the stands. Baseball hats and knit hats are allowed in the stands. **No food, drink, candy, or gum is permitted in the stands.**
15. During showcase performances, students will remain in full uniform from the time of arrival until the conclusion of the performance
16. Unless otherwise stated, while riding the bus, all students must wear the band trousers. Students will not be permitted to board the bus unless black trousers and a black t-shirt are being worn.
17. If the band coat is not worn on the bus, it must be hung and carried in the garment bag, labeled with the student's name. Mistreated uniforms will be collected and students will be charged for cleaning or repair if needed.
18. No student will be permitted to perform without the full uniform.

Rain Policy

In the event a Football Game is postponed due to rain, attendance at the make-up game is **based on expectations set by the athletic office**. Exceptions will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and must be discussed with the director immediately upon notification of the schedule change.

Use of School Equipment

1. Students, when necessary, will be given the opportunity to borrow school-owned equipment. This may include uniforms, instruments, guard equipment, etc.
2. At the end of the season, students will be expected to return all borrowed equipment in the same condition in which it was issued.
3. Students will be expected to restore any borrowed equipment to its original condition, minus normal wear and tear. Should equipment be returned in poor condition as a result of misuse or neglect, the student will be responsible for reimbursing for repair or replacement.
4. Equipment not returned at the end of the season will be the responsibility of the student.
5. Students who borrow school-owned equipment will be required to complete appropriate paperwork.
6. Only student assigned to an instrument are allowed to use that instrument.

Lockers/Security/Storage

1. A school locker is assigned to each individual student at Ephrata High School. Additional storage is available in the band room for band members' instruments. Students will be assigned a storage location appropriate for the size of the instrument, regardless of if it is a school-owned instrument or personal property. It is the expectation that this area will be used **only** for the storage of the instrument itself, not for music, food, etc.
2. Never leave instruments or other valuable items unattended in the band room or practice rooms. Always lock them in a locker or keep them on you.

Infractions/Penalties

1. All rules and regulations stated in this handbook are in full effect during all Marching Band functions, including but not limited to rehearsals, performances, and transportation to/from a function. Any infraction of these rules will be dealt with through referrals to the school administration, parental phone calls/conferences, a probationary period, loss of third quarter privileges, performance suspensions, verbal reprimand, full-time assignment to a chaperone, or even expulsion from the organization.
2. It is nearly impossible to list every possible circumstance surrounding a violation and its consequence; however, the following are the most frequent violations and their consequences.
 - a. Unexcused Absence from performance or rehearsal
 - i. Probationary Period of 2 weeks (mandatory)
 - ii. Possible dismissal from a student leadership position (director's discretion)
 - iii. Possible dismissal from the organization (following multiple infractions)
 - b. Lateness to rehearsal or from third quarter break
 - i. First & Second Offenses: Repayment of time to the band after rehearsal
 - ii. Third Offense: Call home, counted as one unexcused absence
 - c. Disrespect towards Director, Staff, or Chaperones
 - i. First Offense: Call home, loss of third quarter privileges
 - ii. Second Offense: Call home, probation
 - iii. Third Offense: Call home, Administrative referral
3. Loss of Third Quarter Privileges will entail:
 - i. The student will sit in the stands with a designated chaperone or staff member for the duration of the third quarter.
 - ii. The student will not be permitted to leave the stands during this time except for the use of the restroom. The student will be accompanied if needed.
 - iii. Food is not allowed in the stands. Water will be provided.
4. Probation of a member entails:
 - i. The director will notify parent(s) of the reason(s) for the probation.
 - ii. The student will be considered on probation for a period of two weeks effective the day after the infraction occurred.
 - iii. The student will forfeit two(2) third quarter breaks.
 - iv. The student will sit in an assigned seat at the front of the bus with a chaperone on all trips during the duration of the probation.
 - v. The student will help straighten up the band room after all rehearsals and performances.

- vi. During the probationary period if a student is uncooperative or commits any additional infractions, a conference with parents and the director will be arranged. Possible disciplinary action by the school administration may be taken.
- 5. Performance suspensions will entail:
 - i. The student will report to the performance with the rest of the unit as the appropriate time.
 - ii. The student will be assigned to a permanent chaperone for the duration of the day, including on any bus trips.
 - iii. The student will still dress in uniform but will not perform. Instead, they will help the unit where needed.
 - iv. The student will sit with the assigned chaperone for the duration of the performance.
 - v. After the performance, the student will change and report to the assigned chaperone for the duration of the event.
 - 6. Any additional infractions after the student has received two probationary terms will result in an immediate performance suspension. Performance suspensions will result in detrimental effects to the performance; therefore it is in the student's best interest to avoid infractions that could result in this.
 - 7. Earning a third performance suspension as outlined in this handbook will result in the immediate expulsion of the member from the organization for a period of one season. One member's irresponsible behaviors can have a detrimental effect on the entire unit. Please do your best to make responsible decisions!

Rehearsal Procedures and Expectations

Prior to Rehearsals/Performances:

To be early is to be on time. To be on time, is to be late. To be late.....

Be certain you arrive to rehearsal early enough to be prepared to start rehearsal at the scheduled time. When it is time for rehearsal to begin, you should be at the rehearsal area, whether it is inside or out, **not waiting for instructions on where to go**. You will be considered late if you are not at the designated area on time at the start of rehearsal unless you have been asked to do something for a staff member.

To be adequately prepared for rehearsals with all needed materials, all members of the EHSMU are expected to purchase and have the following items at every rehearsal.

1. A 3 ring binder that contains this handbook, musical warmups, all show music, and all drill pages. All sheets should be in plastic sheet protectors to protect them from ripping and to protect from wet weather rehearsals. A string should be attached to the binder so that it may be carried around on the field during rehearsal.
2. Sneakers are **required** for rehearsals. These must be the athletic type and must be able to be tied. Shoes without laces are not adequate or safe for rehearsal. In addition, shoes such as Converse that have no support are not adequate or safe for rehearsal.
3. All members are expected to wear clothing that is school appropriate for rehearsals. In addition, this clothing must adequately allow for proper motion. Clothing that is too tight("skinny jeans") is not recommend as the students will not be able to flex and move properly in them.
4. Be certain to wear clothing for the weather. Dress in layers if needed. Rain gear may be needed as well, depending upon the weather.

During Rehearsal:

1. Upon arrival, get your instrument/equipment out, as well as music, a pencil, and take your seat or wait at the appropriate rehearsal location. Rehearsal plans will be on the board in the band room. You will be expected to refrain from playing once the instructors are ready to begin. Use your early arrival as a time to begin some simple warm-ups.
2. Students are expected to provide their own materials such as reeds, mutes, valve oil, sticks, etc. In certain cases, you will be able to purchase these items through the director at a cost, or in some instances they will be made available to you at no cost.
3. Your cue for the beginning of rehearsal is when you are called to "set." From this point until rehearsal ends, or a break is called, please refrain from excessive talking. For the remainder of the rehearsal, instructions will be given from various staff members.

In Rehearsal (Continued):

4. Interruptions of rehearsals, excessive talking, and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Members of the EHSMU are among the best students at Ephrata High School. It is a privilege to be a part of the organization. Don't waste rehearsal time, it is far too valuable.
5. Respect the authority and experience of the staff. Respect the student leaders as they are doing their jobs. Do not confront student leaders, especially in front of others. If you confront them when they are doing their jobs, or are being generally uncooperative, it is the same as being uncooperative with the director and staff.
6. Realize the job of the student leaders are to "get the job done." This can involve controlling a rehearsal, correcting errors, and complimenting great work. These actions should not be considered personal or friendship-ending. If a student leader is rude or out of line, it is the director's responsibility to address and correct this, not the individual members.
7. You will be expected to return the band room or practice field to its original condition at the conclusion of rehearsal. All instruments must be returned to the proper storage areas and all music must be put away in the appropriate locations. Percussionists must put all equipment away after each rehearsal.
8. Each rehearsal should allow the individual and collective members of the organization to improve. To achieve this, a positive attitude and energy are a must. Move quickly, move quietly, and work to achieve excellence.
9. Gum, food, and/or drink are not permitted in the band room, on the bus, in the stands, or on the practice field. The only exception to this is water, or if there is permission given by the director.
10. All members of the EHSMU are treated like mature young adults. As such, there is responsibility from all members. All actions can have positive or negative consequences; it is your responsibility to do your individual best to ensure the group's best effort each and every time. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link; don't weaken the chain by promoting irresponsible behaviors.
11. Expectations are always high, but anything worth doing should deserve no less.

In Performances:

As a member of the EHSMU, you are a public view of the students of Ephrata High School. The band is one of the most prominent public performers within the school. It is expected that all members, while with the band or wearing band logo clothing, will show how mature, responsible, and excellent the students of EHS are. Be sure to concentrate and do your personal best. With each performance, strive for excellence, be proud of the work you have accomplished, and commit to making it better each and every time.

EHSMU Handbook Signature Page

By signing this form, both parents and students acknowledge they have read and fully understand all information contained within and agree to follow all rules, regulations, and policies listed within. This sheet must be signed and returned, along with all other preseason paperwork, prior to the start of the summer rehearsal. No students will be permitted to participate without agreeing to this handbook.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____