Let's Talk About Participation in Band!

Why Should I be in the Winter Park High School Band?

The Winter Park High School Bands have a long tradition of being one of the most outstanding band programs in the state of Florida. For 85 years, the Bands have represented Winter Park High School with excellence at regional, state, and national performances. In addition, the Florida Department of Education has recognized Winter Park High School as a "Music Demonstration School." The Winter Park Bands represent some of the very best students at Winter Park High School.

Along with the musical experiences that come with being a part of the Winter Park Bands, this organization attracts some of the most outstanding individuals in the school. Over the years, some of the leaders among our students, including valedictorians, have been part of the Winter Park Bands, and being a part of the Band Program has an extremely positive impact on a student's high school experience. Life-long friendships are developed here, and this band is truly a family! And the benefits of participation in a high school band program go far beyond the social and musical aspects!

What Band Classes are Offered at Winter Park?

There are seven Band classes offered at Winter Park High School. All of these classes meet during the school day. The Marching Band is not a separate class – it is an extension (a co-curricular component) of Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Symphony.

Concert Band .. Only open to Freshman. There is no audition.
Symphonic Band .. Only open to Band students in grades 10, 11 & 12.
Wind Symphony .. Open by audition to Band students in grades 9, 10, 11, & 12. Freshman in Wind Symphony must also be enrolled in Concert Band unless they are in the Freshman Jazz Band.
Freshman Jazz Band .. Only open to Freshman, and there is no audition. Students must also be enrolled in either Concert Band or Wind Symphony.
Jazz Ensemble II .. Open to Band students in grades 10, 11, & 12. Students must also be enrolled in either Symphonic Band or Wind Symphony.
Jazz Ensemble I .. Open to Band students in grades 10, 11, & 12 who have passed an audition. Students must also be enrolled in either Symphonic Band or Wind Symphony.
Guard .. Open by audition to students in grades 9, 10, 11, & 12. Guard is a full year class with a mandatory Winter Guard component.

Do I Need to Audition for High School Band?

There is not an audition to be a member of the Winter Park Band Program unless you are seeking a position in the Wind Symphony or Jazz Ensemble I. There are no auditions for Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Jazz Ensemble II, or Freshman Jazz Band. Students do need to have successfully completed participation in a middle school band program.

Can Freshmen Audition for Wind Symphony?

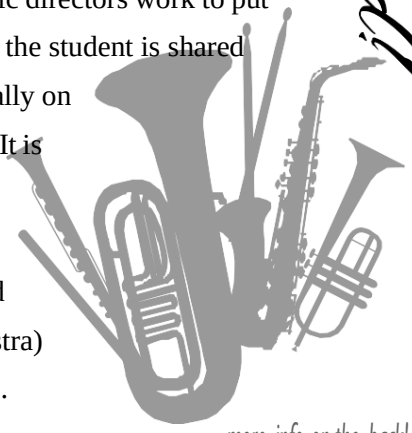
Yes! The auditions for Wind Symphony take place in the spring for the following school year, and information will be available prior to spring break. There are always freshman students in the Wind Symphony; however, those who successfully audition into the Wind Symphony do need to be enrolled in both the Wind Symphony and Concert Band (both take place at the WPHS Main Campus during 6th and 7th periods, respectively). The only exception to this is those students who enroll in the Freshman Jazz Band. And do not worry, the IB and AP schedules will allow for students to do both.

Can I be in Sports & Band?

Yes! Most of the coaches at Winter Park High School are very accommodating of the Band schedule, especially if they know in advance of potential conflicts, and we have just about every sport represented throughout the Program. In addition, it is the policy of the Winter Park Bands to be as flexible as possible with students juggling an extra-curricular activity and the Band schedule. We strongly believe that students learn incredible life skills through participation in both activities. There are rarely events that occur outside of the school day that would conflict with an athletic event, and some exceptions are made for fall sport participants when it comes to the marching band requirement.

What About Being in Chorus or Orchestra & Band?

We have several students each year who are shared between either Band and Chorus or Band and Orchestra. While a student will have "Band" on their schedule, the music directors work to put together a schedule where the student is shared between the groups – usually on an every-other-day basis. It is best that a student looking to do both should contact Mr. Clemente, and either Mrs. Bitters (Orchestra) or Mr. Campbell (Chorus).



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What Is Marching Band?

The Sound of the Wildcats Marching Band is made up of all students in the Winter Park Band (grades 9 through 12). They perform at varsity football games, Marching Band Music Performance Assessment (MPA) and three local parades. There are a few circumstances where the OCPS marching band requirement may be waived. If you have questions about this, please contact Mr. Clemente directly.

What is the Time Commitment for Marching Band?

Marching Band may sound overwhelming at first, but the schedule is designed to allow students to maintain an academic focus, while still producing one of the finest marching bands in the state of Florida. Most of the Winter Park Band students are enrolled in the IB or AP programs, as well as other activities outside of the school day, and Marching Band is very doable for everyone. The marching season begins with a required two-week marching band camp just prior to the start of the school year. After that, the weekly rehearsal schedule is Tuesday, 3:15 PM – 6:30 PM, and gamedays, 2:45 PM – 4:30 PM.

Tell Me about Balancing Band with Studying ...

Nearly all students in Band are taking Honors, AP, and IB classes. Band students learn to manage their time. The marching band only rehearses two days each week after school during the first marking period. There is ample time to complete homework – even if you have a very demanding course load, as most of our students do!

Following the first marking period, the obligations outside of the school day decrease dramatically. There is the occasional evening rehearsal, especially when we have a guest clinician or conductor working with the Band, but these are kept to a minimum, and are scheduled well in advance. It is important to understand that most students adjust to this schedule, and they enjoy the daily break from the traditional academic coursework. It doesn't mean that there isn't work to be done (practicing, sectionals, etc.), but it is "different" from the rest of the school day. It is also important to realize that, just about any activity in high school requires some time commitment, and this time management discipline pays great dividends for the students as they prepare for life beyond high school!

What is Color Guard & Winter Guard?

Color Guard is a class within the Band Program that uses props, flags, rifles, sabers, and movement, to express dynamic passages in music. Equipment choreography is layered over dance technique to create a new form of theatrical expression.

Color Guard is separated into two areas:

"Color Guard" takes place during the summer and fall, and performers are a section within the Marching Band, adding visual interest and helping to portray show themes and theatrics.

"Winter Guard" rehearses during the winter and early spring, and they perform to prerecorded music in an indoor setting. Along with the Marching Band rehearsal and performance schedule, the Color Guard also meets as a class for credit during the school day, and members are required to participate for the entire school year (not just the fall marching season). Wind players and percussionists can be in both Band and Guard.

What Does it Cost to be in the Band Program?

Every effort is made to keep participation in the Band Program affordable. The typical student pays around $275, spread over the school year. The incoming freshman students have slightly larger fees because of some first-time uniform purchases, however, this decreases for the last three years. And, again, these payments are spread across most of the school year – they are not all due up front!

The WPHS Band Boosters hold *several* fundraisers that allow students to earn credit toward their Band fees. With active participation in these fundraisers, it is possible to cut the Band fees by 50% or more. In fact, there are many students who cover 100% of Band fees each year through their fundraising participation! These credits "roll over" from one year to the next until they graduate.

Most importantly, we never want a student to be kept from participating in the Band Program due to a financial limitation, and we can work to accommodate any situation.