

WNHS Falcon Marching Band



Rookie Parent Handbook

Welcome to the Wheaton North Band Program! We are thrilled to have you join the Wheaton North Band family. The season promises to be both challenging and rewarding for your band member. We are excited that both your student and your family will have a chance to participate in marching band activities.

This handbook is intended to be an introduction for parents to the Wheaton North High School Band program. As parents, our role is to support the band throughout the entire season. Support and encouragement can come in many forms. There will be many opportunities to show your support. We invite you to be an active member of the Wheaton North Band family.

Band Camp:

The dates for band camp are usually announced by January. Band camp generally spans five days (Monday through Friday) during the last week of July into the first week of August. Band camp is an intense week of training that immerses members in learning basic marching skills and show drill. It provides a dedicated time to learn the competition show. The marching season begins immediately with the beginning of the fall semester.

Just as important, band camp provides time for the band to develop a sense of camaraderie. On the field the band strives to move as one unit. The best way to accomplish this is for the band to become a ‘team’ off the field. There will be team building exercises and small group/sectional exercises and practices. Pre-Season practices are for everyone, but especially for all new members.

Overall, the time at band camp is well spent and the benefits are many. Members meet teammates and begin building relationships that will last through high school and in many cases beyond. Once school begins, they find themselves walking through the halls with familiar faces smiling back at them.

Without a doubt, band camp will be a real work out for members! Here are a few tips to help your band member thrive at band camp.

- **Early is on time and on time is late.**Your camper will hear this many times over the course of the band season. It means exactly what it says. If band camp starts at 8am, the best time to arrive is 7:45am at the latest. This will give students plenty of time to get their instrument and music out, fill their water bottle if they need to, or apply sunscreen. This “rule” should be applied to all start times throughout the season.
- **Camp runs Mon-Fri 8am-9pm with mid-morning, lunch and dinner breaks.** Your student’s section may schedule a dinner at a private home one night during the week – consider offering to host if you want to meet the kids your kid is hanging out with!

- ***The lunch and dinner breaks are time for members to cool off, grab a bite to eat, and rest.*** If it is a hot day they need to stay indoors and cool off. Healthy, easily digestible meals are best...they will be back at practice that afternoon and evening working hard again. There are always a handful of members that over eat or get over heated and wish they hadn't. There will be an adult first aider available to help them through it, but it's easily avoided. The FBPO (Falcon Band Parent Organization) provides lunch for any child who chooses to participate. A menu will be posted on the website and facebook page before camp begins.
- ***Water, water, water!!!*** If there is one thing you can do to help your band member, it is to make sure they are well hydrated before camp starts. That means drinking plenty of water the weekend before camp. Everyone is required to bring a large water bottle. There are many, many water breaks given. Encourage your teen to drink at every break.
- ***Dress appropriately for the rehearsal.*** A large portion of band camp is held outside and can become highly physical at times. Athletic clothing is a necessity in marching band rehearsal; preferably moisture wicking shirts and running shorts with an elastic waistband. Please, no jeans in rehearsal. In addition, comfortable gym shoes with proper support and athletic socks are incredibly important for band camp. Appropriate dress throughout the week will be a major contributor to your child's enjoyment of camp!
- ***Hats and sunscreen are mandatory.*** Everyone needs to bring a hat to camp. This keeps the sun off the head and is just another way to ensure no one gets overheated. Sunscreen is also required as kids are in the sun during peak hours. Sunglasses would also be a wise acquisition for band rehearsal.
- ***Attendance is mandatory for all camp days.*** This is a team activity and performance. Everyone is expected to make a commitment to the band.
- ***"Eyes with Pride".*** This chant will end every band camp day, every evening practice, every football game and every competition day. If you are not familiar with it, it is a tradition of the *Wheaton North* Marching Band and many bands across the country. It is started by the drum major and goes like this:

○ <i>DM:</i> How are your feet?	<i>Band:</i> Together!
○ <i>DM:</i> Shoulders?	<i>Band:</i> Back!
○ <i>DM:</i> Head?	<i>Band:</i> Up!
○ <i>DM:</i> Eyes?	<i>Band:</i> With Pride!
○ <i>DM:</i> Eyes?	<i>Band:</i> With Pride!
○ <i>DM:</i> Eyes?	<i>Band:</i> With Pride!
- ***Marching Band Car Wash. Fundraiser.*** The Car Wash fundraiser is usually scheduled for a Saturday and is divided into two shifts: 9am-12pm and 11am-2pm. The Car Wash is held in the parking lot of Wheaton Bowl at the corner of Geneva Rd. and Gary Ave. Tell all your friends!

Marching Band Rehearsals:

Rehearsals are held twice a week from 6pm – 9pm. Check the band calendar on the website (wheatonnorthband.com) for scheduled practices. These rehearsals help to perfect the competition show and the football show. Here are some tips to having a successful rehearsal:

- Most of the practices require the band member to ***be on the football field ready to play by 6pm***. Early is on time and on time is late!
- An ***extra rehearsal*** may be scheduled during the week of a Saturday competition. Be ready for last minute schedule additions and/or changes.
- Some weeks the ***rehearsal may be held on a different day***. Please check the band calendar on the band website: wheatonnorthband.com/bandcalendar/
- Please have your student ***attend all band rehearsals***. All members of the band count on each other to actively participate.
- There is a ***waiver*** your child can turn in the guidance office substituting a study hall for PE. This will give them extra time to finish their homework during the school day. On the first day of school, have your child stop by the guidance office (off the Commons) to pick up a form. It will need to be signed by you, their PE teacher, and Mr. Krause. The sooner this is done, the sooner they can switch to study hall. Once marching band/football season is finished, your student, along with other band members and the members of the varsity football team, will need to report back to PE.
- ***Dress for the weather and bring a water bottle***. The weather during band season can be very warm and then very cold or rainy. Please have your marcher dress in layers; the evenings can be pretty cool on the football field. During football games or competitions, the uniforms can get very hot depending on the weather. Wearing shorts under their uniform is recommended.

Football Games:

During all **home** football games the band will be expected to perform. The evening starts with practice—arrival time is usually at 6 or 6:30pm (remember to arrive early). Prior to the varsity game, which kicks off at 7:30pm, the band will perform the National Anthem and the WNHS Fight Song. During the entire game, the band sits together in the stands. At half time the band performs their show for the crowd then returns to the stands. The evening usually concludes around 10:00 or 10:30pm; depending on when the game ends.

Competitions:

Competition days are long but fun! Depending on the performance time and location, the day may begin early morning and go late into the night. Before the first competition, Mr. Krause will make his expectations for the day clear.

Here are a few miscellaneous notes about competition day.

- A printed itinerary of the day will be available the week of the competition.
- **A bus takes the band to and from each competition**—as any band member will tell you, the bus rides can be quite entertaining.
- The band moves together as one unit and **everyone is expected to stay together.**
- **Water is the only food or drink allowed while in uniform; no gum!**
- **When not in uniform, all members are expected to wear their Wheaton North band shirt.** (They will receive these at the end of band camp or the week before the first competition).
- **Lunch is usually provided by the Falcon Band Parent Organization.** Specific details will be given before each competition. Concessions are available at each event; many kids bring money to purchase snacks.
- **If for some reason your student is sick on the day of a competition, please email Mr. Krause and have your child call or text their section leader ASAP.** The Director needs to know who is not coming and adjustments need to be made to the drill.
- **All band members are responsible for their uniforms.** Each member will have a **hanging** clothes bag. All uniforms and shoes are to be kept in the bag and stored in the band room. They will be expected to take good care of all the items as they are on loan to them. **Members are required to wear black socks.** This is the one item always forgotten. Most kids wear them to band versus carrying them and changing. Marching Band Uniforms are provided by the band. Students will be responsible for purchasing marching shoes through the band website at wheatonnorthband.com. Mr. Krause will announce the shoe ordering deadline in August.
- All band members are expected to take care of the props and equipment and to assist in putting everything away at the end of the day. **No one from band is excused until all the equipment is put away.**
- **What to bring on competition day:** Be sure students pack a bag including: instrument, concession money, water and healthy snacks, deodorant, extra socks and shoes, pants/band shirt/sweatshirt, phone/camera, and sunglasses.

Falcon Fest:

Falcon Fest is the Marching Band Competition hosted by the Wheaton North Marching Band and is an extremely fun day! Falcon Fest usually takes place on a Saturday in September. With between 15-18 bands participating, it is one of the largest competitions in the area. As hosts, the *Wheaton North Falcon Marching Band* performs at the end of the evening in exhibition only. Falcon Fest has been held every year since 1987!

All band members are required to work the entire day. Jobs include band hosts, runners, entrance gate, concessions, etc. Students will be given more information at practice.

As our largest fundraiser, Falcon Fest helps provide funds for equipment, uniforms, music, travel expenses, bus rental, meals, etc. Funds raised at Falcon Fest support all of the bands at Wheaton North. This includes Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Band, Jazz Ensemble, Pep Band and Marching Band.

Parent Specific Events:

- On the Friday evening of band camp, parents are invited to **'Parent Preview Night'**. Come on out and watch, from the stands, as the band runs through their drill. During that time, you'll have the chance to sign up to volunteer for many different opportunities.
- Mark your calendars for the **last rehearsal of the season**, usually sometime in October. Be ready to take part in a special band tradition--one **parent shadows** their band member on the field as they run through the drill! It's a fun way to end the season and a great way for you to see just how strenuous it is being a member of the Falcon Marching Band!
- At **home football games**, band parents & their friends show their support by sitting in a section near the band during the game. Varsity games are held Fridays with kick off at 7:30pm. Parent volunteers are needed on game nights to push Pit equipment, carry water, and hand out plumes for the shakos (marching band hats).
- Band parents also show their support by **attending or chaperoning competitions** and sitting together to cheer on our band. Most competitions charge an admission fee somewhere around \$10 per person. (We also charge a fee at the Falcon Fest competition). The bands you see at these competitions are extremely talented and creative; just like our own marching band! Parent chaperones and equipment/props pushers do not pay the competition admission fee.
- **It takes many, many adult volunteers to make Falcon Fest a success.** All band parents are encouraged to participate. It's a fun day and no job is difficult. Sign-up sheets will be available at preview night and are posted on the band website.

- **Marching Band Awards Ceremony.** This is the final event of the marching band season. This is where we celebrate our student's accomplishments, awards are handed out, we say good bye to our seniors, and watch the end of season video. You won't want to miss this.
 - **Attend FBPO meetings.** One sure way to know what's going on in marching band, and every other band in the band department, is to attend these meetings. They are held at 7pm on the **first Thursday of every month** in the WNHS Orchestra Room.
 - **Photos!** We are always in need of photos of all the band events. If you attend an event, bring your camera and snap away. An end of season video is created and the more photos we have the better.
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For more information about the Wheaton North Marching Band:

- Check the band website at wheatonnorthband.com. Don't forget to subscribe to the parent emails so you can stay informed.
 - Check out our Facebook page. Search for "Wheaton North Falcon Band and Band Parents." We'll be happy to add you as a member.
 - The Wheaton North Falcon Band Parent Organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the success of all the bands at Wheaton North. This includes Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, the Jazz program, and Marching Band.
 - FBPO Board positions are elected annually in the Spring. Board positions include President, Vice President, Treasurer(s) and Secretary. You can contact the Board with any questions about Curricular or non-Curricular bands by email at wheatonnorthband@gmail.com.
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