



Western High School

Pride of the Wildcats

## 2017 Band Parent Handbook

[www.freewebs.com/westernhighband](http://www.freewebs.com/westernhighband)

Welcome to the *Pride of the Wildcats* Marching Band family! Our marching band includes wind instruments, percussion and color guard. The information in this handbook will also cover Winter Guard and concert band, which begin shortly after marching season ends.

### **The Teachers**

Mr. Johnnie Tracey, our Band Director, has been at Western since 2004. Mr. Tracey is a graduate of Florida A & M University and has a degree in Music Education. Mr. Tracey led the band to the State Finals in 2014 where they performed as one of the top five bands in our class, performing at the Tropicana Dome in St. Petersburg. During the 2016 – 2017 school year our band earned a “Superior” rating at both marching band and district concert band Music Performance Assessments, the highest rating.

Our Percussion Instructor is Mr. Eric Levy, a percussion expert and composer. Under Eric’s leadership, our percussion section was undefeated in competition in the State of Florida in 2014. In early 2017, two of our percussion students earned spots with Reef International, a competitive percussion ensemble under the direction of Mr. Levy. Reef qualified and went to the Winter Guard International world championships in Dayton, Ohio, where they finished 11<sup>th</sup> in the world for their class.

Our Color Guard instructors are Mr. Anthony Miralles and Ms. Nicole Namour. Mr. Miralles graduated from Hialeah High School where he performed with various groups such as marching band, wind ensemble, orchestra, jazz band, and color guard. While continuing his education at Miami Dade College he also continued teaching and performing the arts. He marched with the front ensemble at Cloud Nine percussion, an SFWGA Independent A Class bronze medalist, and Stryke Percussion, an SFWGA Independent World Class gold medalist and WGI Independent World Class finalist. He marched with the color guard at Teal Sound Drum and Bugle Corps and Braddock Independent, an SFWGA and WGI Independent Open Class gold medalist, and he also marched with the horn line at FIU Winds, an SFWGA and WGI Independent Open Class gold medalist. With this experience, Mr. Miralles has taught at various high schools as a brass instructor, show designer, and guard director. Mr. Miralles is here to bring Western’s guard to the next level of the sport and to make finals a tradition and a trend.

Ms. Namour graduated from West Broward High School where she performed in the Color Guard for both marching band and Winter Guard, a WGI Scholastic A Class bronze medalist. While continuing her

education at Florida Atlantic University she also continued to teach and perform the art. She marched with The Guard Company, an SFWGA Independent A Class bronze medalist, Teal Sound Drum and Bugle Corps, and Braddock Independent, an SFWGA Independent gold medalist. Ms. Namour has been able to use all of her experience to teach marching band and Winter Guard at schools such as West Broward, Hialeah Gardens, Goleman, and Barbara Braddock High Schools. Ms. Namour is currently one of two guard directors at Western High School where she strives to make Western a band and guard of champions.

### **The Show**

Each year, Mr. Tracey selects a theme and commissions a marching show. The show includes three pieces of music (opener, ballad, and closer) and includes custom music for all instruments and the marching drill. Students begin to memorize the music and then add the marching drill and choreography until they can perform the entire show. It takes lots of hard work and dedication and the result is always very exciting to watch as they perfect their performance. There are often props needed for the show. *These are items the booster parents build and/or buy that are used on the field as part of the show to provide visual effects.*

The show is performed at half time for all home football games and in marching band competitions during late September, October, and November.

### **Broward Wildcats Band Boosters Association – a 501 (c) (3) organization**

Broward Wildcats Band Boosters Association is our band parent group. BWBBA is a 501 (c) (3) non profit organization registered with the State of Florida.

Mission: To provide financial support to the band and color guard programs at Western High School

Mailing Address:                   BWBBA  
  13762 SR 84, Suite 184  
  Davie, FL 33325

Email:                               western.bandparent@gmail.com

100% of the funds we raise go directly to cover the expenses of the band including the show program, transportation expenses, salaries for the color guard and percussion instructors, and so forth. Only Mr. Tracey's salary is paid by the school board. The rest is up to us!

*Volunteer Board Members:*

*President:* Kim Schnitzius      *Vice President:* Ed Baker           *Treasurer:* Debbie Ehrlich  
*Secretary:* Linda DiGennaro   *Social Media:* John Medina

### **Band Camp**

Summer Band Camp is held for two weeks prior to the start of the school year. Band Camp is mandatory and prepares current and new members for the marching season. They learn marching skills, the National Anthem, and the "stand tunes" they will play at football games. The students also begin work on the competitive marching show. Band Camp is an important opportunity for the band members to bond and get to know each other so that they can work well together as an ensemble.

## **Practice Schedules (Subject to change as needed)**

- After school practice during marching season is generally Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 pm to 6:30 pm, although they frequently run late if they are working on a challenging part of the show
- Mr. Tracey may call additional Friday evening, Saturday, or holiday practices prior to competitions
- Students need to wear comfortable shorts, t-shirts, and shoes and bring full water jugs, sunscreen, hats, and sunglasses for practices
- Depending on times of practice, students may also need to bring snacks or a lunch

## **Wildcat Wear**

Musicians will be provided with a show t-shirt that will be worn under their uniform for all performances and will also need to purchase a pair of Dinkles brand black marching shoes, black socks, and, depending on their section, a pair of black gloves. (We will have a few extra pairs of gloves available to purchase before the first performance.) Dinkles can be purchased on-line or at All County Music locations. Mr. Miralles will give instructions to the Color Guard students for their uniform requirements.

Students may also purchase a band jacket at cost, approximately \$50.00 depending on the vendor. We will have a committee set up to order the jackets during the beginning of the school year. The jackets are embroidered with each student's name, year of graduation, and section; they are worn with great Wildcat Pride.

For concert season, (in case you want to get your shopping done early!) musicians will need to wear all black. This means a black dress shirt with a tie, black pants, black socks, and black dress shoes, or a black dress with black shoes. (They can wear their black marching shoes in a pinch but dress shoes are preferred.) Winter Guard students will receive instructions about their performance uniform from Mr. Miralles.

## **Football Games**

The band plays stand tunes in the bleachers at all home games accompanied by Color Guard, who has specific stand choreography for each song. Prior to the start of the game, the band plays the National Anthem. The competitive marching show is performed during halftime at all home games.

### *2017 Home Game Schedule*

- 8/25 South Broward
- 9/8 Hallandale
- 9/14 Everglades
- 9/22 Flanagan (Homecoming)
- 10/27 Miramar (Senior Night)

We do not travel to away games due to lack of funds.

### *Game Day Schedule*

- Students practice after school (3-4:30 p.m.)
- Parents serve a pre-game meal after practice (approximately 4:30pm)
- Students dress and prepare for inspection (5:15 – 6pm)
- Students march to stadium (approximately 6:30pm)
- National Anthem, start of game 7pm
- Game ends at approximately 9:30 – 10pm
- Students march back to band room
- Mr. Tracey gives them feedback on the halftime performance
- Students put equipment and uniforms away
- Students are dismissed

### *Homecoming*

Homecoming is scheduled for September 22, 2017 and may include a parade and other festivities. The band sometimes performs in their show t-shirts during the school day.

### *Senior Night*

- Senior night is usually the last home game of the season, for 2017 it will be on October 27
- Seniors and their parents are honored
- Senior football players, band members and cheerleaders are escorted by their parents onto the field before the game and introduced
- We serve a special “Seniors Choice” pre-game meal from a restaurant they select from a short list
- We decorate a cafeteria table for the seniors with gift bags, balloons, and a cake
- Mothers pin a special pin given by Mr. Tracey onto the uniform of their senior son or daughter

More details will be provided soon. We need lots of non-senior parent help on Senior Night!!!

### **Competitions**

Our marching band competes against other bands of similar size in area competitions sponsored by FMBC, Florida Marching Band Championships (<http://fmbcstate.com/>). We receive a score for each performance and placement trophies are awarded to the top bands in multiple categories as well as overall placement.

We also participate in Music Performance Assessments (MPAs) conducted by the FBA, or Florida Bandmasters' Association, (<https://fba.flmusiced.org/>) for marching band then again in the spring for concert band, solo, and ensemble performances. MPAs are rated on a Good/Excellent/Superior scale and each band is judged only against itself since this is an academic assessment.

The marching band and concert band travels by bus to all competitions with the exception of solo and ensemble MPAs. Winter Guard is a competitive season for our Color Guard members; the Color Guard instructor will have further details about Winter Guard closer to the start of the season.

Parents can attend the performances and are encouraged to do so to support our Wildcats. Parents are also needed as chaperones and for other volunteer roles at each competition.

#### *Tentative Competition Schedule 2017*

- Sat. Oct. 7, FMBC Regional, Falcon Sound at Flanagan HS, Pembroke Pines
- Sat. Oct. 14, Lehigh (Fort Myers)
- Sat. Oct. 21, District 15 FBA Marching Band MPA, Coral Springs HS
- Sat. Nov. 4, Palmetto Ridge (Naples)
- Fri. – Sun., Nov. 17 – 19 FMBC State Marching Band Competition in Tampa/St. Petersburg

Our competition schedule is subject to change as Mr. Tracey decides on the best strategy for positioning our band for States. Dates may be added or dropped or the location may change to a competition at a different venue if those judges are more favorable for our students and their show. Use this as a general guideline only. It is best not to schedule any weekend plans during October and November that would possibly interfere with a competition.

#### *Competition Day Schedule (exact time TBD based on performance time)*

- Students generally practice Saturday morning until lunch or departure time
- Students will most likely have some free time for lunch prior to departure; if their performance time is early they will be able to eat at the concession stands after the performance
- Students dress and prepare to board buses
- Parents will pack large instruments, equipment, props, and our large coolers full of ice, water, and sports drinks in a rental truck for transport to the competition location
- Two parent volunteers will drive the truck to the competition venue ahead of the buses and will begin to unload upon arrival
- Buses depart school in time for a warm up prior to the performance
- Students perform, then remain at the competition until all bands have performed
- Band members will need some money to purchase a meal or snacks at the competition (there are concession stands at every event)
- Retreat (the awards ceremony) is held at the end of the competition
- The band stands at attention in their assigned bleacher location during Retreat
- Drum Majors and Band Captains go to the field to accept awards, then return to the bleachers to lead the band back to the buses
- Mr. Tracey receives the judges' comments and then joins the band on the buses
- Buses depart for Western High School
- Mr. Tracey gives the students feedback on their performance in the band room
- Students put away uniforms and instruments while parents assist with unloading props and putting them away; the coolers are also emptied, wiped out, and put away
- Students must return to school on the buses and then be dismissed

### *State Marching Band Competition – Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL - “STATES”*

- The band students take an in school field trip on Friday to rehearse for States and prepare for departure; they will not attend regular classes that day
- The band travels by coach bus to St. Petersburg on Friday afternoon
- Semifinals are held at a St. Petersburg area high school Saturday morning
- The top 5 bands in each category (A, AA, AAA, etc.) go to finals Saturday night
- Finals are held in the Tropicana Dome (where the Tampa Rays MLB team plays, also reverently referred to as “The Dome”). If the Wildcats make the cut they will perform in The Dome, if not, we will still go to watch the other bands.
- On Sunday the band goes to a theme park (usually Busch Gardens) to celebrate the end of marching season and all of their hard work, then we return to Western Sunday night
- Complete details and the exact itinerary will be provided closer to the trip
- Cost of the States trip is NOT included in Fair Share Band Fees; an additional fee will be charged to each student based on our group rates and will include transportation, hotel, meals during travel times, and theme park admission

### **Fundraising**

Our primary responsibility as band parents, through the band booster organization, is to raise money to cover all expenses for the marching and concert band seasons. (Winter Guard is budgeted separately; see Mr. Miralles for details.) We do this in several ways. First, the booster board of directors, a finance committee, and Mr. Tracey work together to establish a budget for the year and to set a Fair Share amount. Next, Fair Share is presented to the parents with the expectation that it will be paid promptly. Finally, we plan multiple fundraisers, because Fair Share will not cover all of the expenses for the band program and we face a large shortfall every year. Some of our fundraisers are listed here:

To help families cover Fair Share:

- BB&T concession stands (every student must have one adult participate at least once each year, the money raised can be used to cover Fair Share expenses; it will not go to cover the shortfall)

To help cover the shortfall between Fair Share and actual program costs:

- Car washes
- Football parking and food concession for the first pre-season game of the year
- Donations at our Holiday and Spring Concerts
- Movie nights
- Restaurant spirit nights
- Zumba with the Color Guard (tentative, depending on school approval)
- Other fundraisers TBD (and we are always looking for new ideas!!)
- Grants

Money earned through these fundraisers will benefit the entire band through scholarships, covering some chaperone expenses (the students are not allowed to travel without chaperones and some of our most

dedicated volunteers need a bit of financial assistance to enable them to attend States), reducing the cost of the States trip for each student, reducing the cost of the band banquet, and so forth.

ALL of our band families are expected to participate in the fundraisers, even if you are financially able to write out a check for the full amount of your Fair Share on the spot. The band is a team and a family and the fundraisers benefit everyone so we all need to participate. We can NOT perform our show without EVERY student so we all need to pitch in to make sure that EVERY student's Fair Share is covered. This includes participation in our BB&T fundraising program where we MUST have a team of 14 people for every date.

### *Amazon Smile*

Please designate "Broward Wildcats Band Booster Association Inc" as your non-profit for Amazon, and always remember to shop at <https://smile.amazon.com/> !!

### *BB&T Fundraisers*

In 2015 our booster board signed a contract with Centerplate, the food service company at the BB&T Center, to run a concession stand for 10 to 12 events during the hockey season each year. In return, we earn 10% of the stand's proceeds for each event. In order to continue participation in this incredible opportunity our band has to come up with 14 alcohol trained adults for each of our events during the season. EVERY STUDENT needs to have at least ONE adult take the required two hour alcohol training class then work at least ONE event. Working at BB&T is a great team building activity for the parents where we also happen to earn money for the band- it's a win-win all around!

Please send the email address of the adult who will represent your student by working at BB&T to [western.bandparent@gmail.com](mailto:western.bandparent@gmail.com) to be placed on the BB&T mailing list. It does not have to be you, it can be any adult willing to represent your child. BB&T volunteers will be notified of the fall alcohol training dates, they will need to RSVP for one of them, then they will be notified of the dates we will be working. There are a couple of weekday hockey games in the fall then weekend dates after the holidays. We may occasionally be offered an extra date here or there at the last minute as well, those are usually concerts where we can make more money. For more information, please check the band's fundraising page at: <http://www.freewebs.com/westernhighband/fundraising.htm>

## **Volunteering**

*Volunteer Booster Association Board Members:*

*President:* Kim Schnitzius      *Vice President:* Ed Baker      *Treasurer:* Debbie Ehrlich

*Secretary:* Linda DiGennaro      *Social Media:* John Medina

- If you did not have Level 1 clearance last year follow this link and fill out the Broward County application form:
  - [https://webapp.browardschools.com/sbbc\\_volunteer/VolunteerForm.aspx](https://webapp.browardschools.com/sbbc_volunteer/VolunteerForm.aspx)
- Once you are cleared, you go to the front office at Western (or any Broward public school) for your photo ID.

- More information about completing clearance for Level 2 will be provided via email as soon as we get instructions from the school office. Level 2 is needed for our overnight State Competition trip in November.
- Since it takes a bit of time, it is important to begin the Level One on-line process as soon as possible so that we are all set for supporting the students this season. If you wait until the start of the school year, when everyone else is also applying for Level One, it will take longer for your clearance to come through.

### **Volunteering Needs**

We need help from every parent in order to support our Wildcats. Volunteers are needed for home games, competitions, fundraisers, and concerts. We also need parents to join committees to help with things like planning the band banquet and Senior Night, working out our budget, and running the booster organization. Here are some examples of things our volunteers do:

#### *Home Games*

- Procure, set up, serve, and clean up the pre-game meals
- Water/sports drink preparation and distribution during games
- Roping off the band's area of the bleachers prior to games
- Escorting students to the restroom during games
- First aid in the stands
- General assistance to students and Mr. Tracey

#### *Competitions*

- Bus chaperones
- If the boosters are providing a meal, procure and set up the pre-competition meal
- Provide snacks
- Water/sports drink preparation and distribution
- Load and unload the rental truck
- Drive the truck to the competitions
- Props – design, build, load, transport, unload, set up, break down
- First aid

#### *Fundraisers*

- Distribute flyers and advertise fundraisers on social media
- Collect and distribute orders for product sales
- Generate new fundraising ideas
- Chaperone and assist at fundraising events
- Work at BB&T
- Work at the school's football concession and parking concession on our date
- Work at the concession table at the Winter and Spring concerts



### *Concerts*

- Pre-planning for concessions and any intermission events/fundraisers
- Make flyers (check with Mr. Monse first, he sometimes makes the flyers)
- Take donations at the door
- Pass out programs (Mr. Monse usually makes the program)
- Solicit food donations for the concession table, bake items for the table
- Decorate and set up the concession table
- Special fundraisers or presentations (such as an intermission “cake auction” or other event)
- General set up/break down
- Get ice in the cooler for drinks for the concessions table/empty and put away cooler at the end of the night

There is a list of all volunteer positions on the band website at:

<http://www.freewebs.com/westernhighband/volunteer>

### *How YOU Can Help*

There are many open jobs; committees can always be expanded to involve more volunteers, so even if there isn't a blank space on the web page, there might be a job to do! If you see a job you can take on for our kids or a committee you would like to join, please send an email to [western.bandparent@gmail.com](mailto:western.bandparent@gmail.com) .

If you are interested in joining our Board of Directors, we have a self-perpetuating governance system, which means the board will nominate candidates for the various positions then the current board votes on who will fill the job for the next year. We have yearly elections and the way to be a part of it is to get involved in other ways such as working at BB&T, volunteering to help at games or competitions, or signing up for a committee. (Preferably all of the above!) This way the current board gets to know you and can see your dedication to our students, which is the ultimate proof that you should be a board member.

### **Band Banquet**

The band banquet is held in the spring and is a celebration of the students and their hard work throughout the year. Mr. Tracey presents awards to the students in various categories; the students also present their own “Superlative” awards. The students enjoy a meal and this is all followed by dancing the night away. If you are interested in helping out with the band banquet please join our band banquet committee.

### **Band Banquet Program**

The boosters are working on a commemorative program this year. Ads can be purchased and the book will be distributed at the Band Banquet, which allows us to include photos from our State trip and competitions as well as the Winter Guard and concert seasons. Please join our program committee if you are interested in helping with this effort. We need everyone to help us sell ads this year!

## **Non-profit (501-c-3) Designation**

Certain contributions to BWBBA are tax-deductible since we are a non-profit organization. Any donations over the Fair Share amount are deductible; consult a tax expert for additional information and confirmation. The booster organization is tax exempt as a non-profit.

*Note:* Many companies will make a monetary donation to a charity/non-profit if an employee performs a certain number of volunteer hours. Please check with your company!

## **Band Fees for 2017 – 2018**

Full Fair Share is \$450 per student

- Fair Share does NOT include States, Color Guard uniforms, the band banquet, and concert season expenses

Methods of payment

- Paypal via the band website at [www.freewebs.com/westernhighband](http://www.freewebs.com/westernhighband) ; there is a service fee for Paypal payments
- Checks made payable to Broward Wildcats Band Booster Association, Inc.
- Credit Card; there is a service fee for credit card payments
- Cash given directly to the treasurer, financial secretary, or president (you will receive a receipt!)

Checks and cash must be hand delivered to the board treasurer, financial secretary, or president. Checks can be mailed to: BWBBA, 13762 SR 84, Ste. 184, Davie, FL 33325

\*PLEASE do not send cash in with your student if you can help it. This includes money for Fair Share and product sales. If this is the only option, please let the band booster president, financial secretary, or treasurer know so that they can go to school during band class to take payment and provide a receipt. We want to avoid having the students carry large sums of money around all day. DO NOT leave cash payments in the band room or try to give them to Mr. Tracey or the instructors- they are not supposed to handle money per school board regulations.

## **Health Concerns**

**A medical form is required to attend field trips, but please discuss any medical issues in person both with Mr. Tracey and the designated first aid trained adult for each field trip. It is all too easy to miss an item on a form that's turned in with a pile of other forms!!!**

**Please let us know about:**

- Any special dietary needs
- Any allergies (e.g. peanuts, etc.)
- Any medications (they must be turned in to the First Aid person with a parent note)
- Any health concerns of any kind

Please make sure that Mr. Tracey's emergency contact information is up to date. He will print out a roster with this information on it for every field trip; it is far quicker to search the roster rather than the forms if we need to get in touch with a parent or guardian quickly.

### **In Closing**

You are now part of the Western High School *Pride of the Wildcats* band family! The two months of marching season are intense, but we get to know each other during that time, and the students bond and become best friends. If your child is ever in need of help in a class, one of the older students can probably give some tutoring assistance. If your child is ever in need of a ride to or from practice, there's probably a willing band mom or dad who will help out. If you need help paying Fair Share, then the boosters have arranged for BB&T to help you raise the money. We all support each other because we all want to see the students have their best year ever!

Thank you for supporting our SUPERIOR Wildcats Marching Band!