

# MASON HIGH SCHOOL

# MARCHING BAND HANDBOOK

## 2017 SEASON

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## Table of Contents

### MARCHING BAND STAFF POLICIES

#### Attendance Policy

#### Grading Policy

#### Reserve Marcher Policy

- What is a reserve marcher or “shadow”?
- Who selects a competitive marcher versus a reserve marcher?
- *What are the minimum criteria for **competitive marcher status**?*

#### Code of Conduct

#### Minimum Behavior Expectations

#### Discipline Procedure

#### Attire

- Practice Clothing
- Tour Shirts
- Color Guard Uniforms
- Summer Marching Band Uniforms
- Competitive Marching Band Uniforms
- Uniform Inspection

#### Student Leadership Teams

#### Modes of Communication

### FINANCIAL INFORMATION

#### Financial Responsibility

#### Fees

#### Personal Items and Additional Costs

#### Refund Policy

#### Fundraising

### SCHEDULE INFORMATION

#### PSAT, SAT, and ACT Test Dates

#### Marching Band Camp

#### General Scheduling Notes

- Typical Fall Practice Schedule
- Schedule Changes
- Summer Performances
- Football Games
- Band Competition & Exhibition Performances
- TBA Times

# MARCHING BAND STAFF

## Mason City Schools Band Program Directors

Susan Bass	Zach Hinson
Micah Ewing	Avious Jackson
Chad Fourman	Jason Sleppy
	Ben Loyer

## Marching Band Design Team

<b>Program Coordinator</b>	Wes Cartwright	<b>Guard Director</b>	Mark Moreno
<b>Music Designer</b>	Will Pitts	<b>Visual Coordinator</b>	Susan Bass
<b>Drill Designer</b>	Leon May	<b>Percussion Designer</b>	Jim Wunderlich
<b>Dance Designer</b>	Michael Rosales	<b>Dance Designer</b>	Kelly Mitchell

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## POLICIES

### Attendance Policy

- All rehearsals and performances are mandatory.
- Attendance will be taken at all rehearsals and performances.
- All anticipated absences must be reported via email at [masonmbattendance@gmail.com](mailto:masonmbattendance@gmail.com). He will email a reply and record your excused or unexcused absence status in Charms.
- Following an unexpected absence, a parent should send a note of explanation via email at [masonmbattendance@gmail.com](mailto:masonmbattendance@gmail.com). Students may not resume activities without approval from the band directors.
- Students who are tardy to any scheduled event will need to present an explanation/excuse before joining activities.
- All working students should provide their employers with the summer and fall marching band schedules to avoid conflicts. Work will not be an excused absence, and your grade will be impacted.
- Conflicts with other school organizations **may** be taken into consideration provided:
  - the student submits an email to [masonmbattendance@gmail.com](mailto:masonmbattendance@gmail.com) one week in advance of the conflict
  - the student is in good standing according to the rules and regulations and grade requirements of the organization
- **Unexcused absence(s) from rehearsal(s) may result in the loss of position, suspension from upcoming performances, loss of points in grade, and/or expulsion from the group.**
- The consequence of unexcused absence(s) is at the sole discretion of the band directors.

## Grading Policy

### Rehearsals-30 pts.

Punctuality-10 pts.

Materials-10 pts.

Rehearsal Participation-10pts.

Most rehearsals are split up into blocks of three hours. Band Camp/Mini Camp rehearsals are worth 30 points per three-hour block. Unexcused tardies or absences will result in loss of points for missed time.

### Football/Competitions Performances- 300

Punctuality-20 pts.

Materials-30 pts.

Participation-250 pts.

**Punctuality**- Punctual means being prepared with all materials at the specified call time. This does not include walking into the building or getting your instrument at the call time. Students who are not in their spots at the specified time will be considered late and will not receive the punctuality points for that rehearsal or performance.

**Materials**- These are all of the things that are necessary to be successful. These things include properly functioning instrument, dot books, music books, and other items required by directors.

**Participation**- This is defined as following the proper rehearsal procedures as well as completing assignments given.

## Reserve Marcher Policy

### **What is a reserve marcher or “shadow”?**

As with most competitive, large, high school marching bands, the Mason High School Marching Band has a reserve marcher policy. In order to design a particular musical and visual effect, a competitive marching show is written for a specific number of marchers. A competitive show is always written with fewer positions than there are members in the marching band. A reserve marcher is a student who has not been assigned to a specific position in the competitive marching show. In some ways, a reserve marcher is analogous to that of a 2nd string player in competitive sports in that the reserve marcher is in good standing and ready to perform when called up to the field.

Specifically, the reserve marcher will:

- learn all fundamentals
- memorize all music
- learn a position in the show (“shadow” a competitive marcher)
- assist with props for performances
- be ready to take another marcher’s position
- be involved in all trips, football games, pre games, parades, and special performance opportunities

In short, a reserve marcher does everything that a competitive marcher does except march 100% of the time in the competitive show.

### **Who selects a competitive marcher versus a reserve marcher?**

The staff that is hired by Mason City Schools will consult with **the band directors** and offer their recommendations. **The head Marching Band Director**, will make all the final decisions. Attendance record, music and drill memorization, body coordination (marching and dancing), and a healthy cooperative attitude will be among the criteria considered for competitive marcher status.

### **Why do we have reserve marchers?**

There are two reasons for creating reserve marchers.

First, the show has been written for a specific number of students. In order to commission music and

drill, an estimated number of students in each section and the entire band must be submitted months in advance. Otherwise, drill maneuvers and music would be received late, creating a “catch up” form of rehearsal. That process would always put our students at a competitive disadvantage compared to other bands. An effort to create a position for every student that registers for band at the beginning of summer band camp would mean that our drill may not be ready until as late as October, leaving only a few weeks of season remaining.

Secondly, we have occasionally experienced attendance difficulties, lack of music or drill memorization, and work ethic issues that make it impossible for the band as whole to remain competitive. When one person is missing from the field or out of position, it affects the entire group. It is vital that all marchers on the field be well prepared to march and perform as a cohesive unit. The reserve marcher policy will ensure that every marcher on the field is completely dedicated to the success of the entire band.

### **What are the minimum criteria for competitive marcher status?**

#### Music:

*During Week1 of Band Camp:*

Memorization of:

- Fight Song
- Alma Mater
- God Bless America
- Star Spangled Banner
- Hang On Sloopy

*During Week2 of Band Camp:*

Memorization of music for competition marching band show

#### Drill:

Students will perform drill as directed.

#### Attendance:

Students will be in attendance at all mandatory camp events and rehearsals unless **he/she has an** excused absence. Submit an email requesting an excused absence/tardy/dismissal one week in advance of anticipated conflict or submit a signed note of explanation after an illness or emergency to request an excused absence. Excessive tardiness or missed rehearsals/performances will subject the student to reserve marcher status.

#### Summary:

Students may be moved from reserve status to competitive status or visa versa throughout the marching season. All students will march in all parades, community events, and football pre-game shows. Staff will make every effort to involve all students in some portion of our competition marching show.

#### Special Notes:

- A marcher’s status will **NOT** be determined on the basis of parent involvement or donations.
- A delinquent, required payment may subject a marcher to reserve status.
- A history of on-time full payment **does not guarantee** that a marcher will be given competitive status at any time during the season.
- All part assignments and positions are subject to change for the benefit of the band and the individual.

## **Code of Conduct**

A firm and fair policy of enforcement is necessary to uphold the regulations and standards of the Music Department. The community, school administrators, and the music staff feel strongly that high standards of conduct and citizenship are essential in maintaining a sound program in Music Education. The welfare of the student is our major consideration and transcends any other consideration.

All band members shall abide by a Code of Conduct, which will earn them the honor and respect that participation in the Co-Curricular Music Program affords. Any conduct that results in dishonor to the musician, the Marching Band, or the school will not be tolerated. Acts of unacceptable conduct include

but are not limited to theft, vandalism, disrespect, immorality, or violations of law. Tarnishing the reputation of those associated with Mason City Schools and the Music Program will not be tolerated.

Students participating in the Marching Band must conduct themselves as mature young men and women. Participation in co-curricular programs is a privilege and not a right. Any band member whose conduct could discredit the band and/or the school will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by the music staff and/or administration. Issues of misconduct, which are not directly stated within this document, will be dealt with on an individual basis. ***This is an extension of the Mason City Schools Student Code of Conduct.***

## Minimum Behavior Expectations

1. Treat all members, chaperones, and staff with respect.
2. Profanity or insubordination will not be tolerated at any time.
3. Each member is responsible for having all equipment and other necessary items at all events (instrument in good repair, drill books, music, pencils, etc.). Likewise, at the end of any event, each member is responsible for returning equipment to its proper place and leaving the area as clean as it was on arrival.
4. Be punctual and in your designated area at all times. It is necessary to arrive at school at least ten minutes prior to the scheduled starting time in order to be ready "on time". In the realm of marching band—to be early is to be on time; to be on time is to be late; to be late is to be left behind.
5. The only public display of affection (physical contact) between significant others allowed while under the jurisdiction of the Mason High School Music Staff is that of holding hands.

## Discipline Procedure

1. Records will be kept concerning all violations of the rules in this handbook. Should it be necessary to reprimand any student for violation of these rules, we will follow these guidelines:
  - A. The **first** violation of any rule will result in a verbal warning.
  - B. The **second** violation of any rule will result in a verbal warning and an extra duty assignment handed out by the directors.
  - C. The **third** violation of any rule will result in a verbal warning and an extra duty assignment handed out by the directors, and the loss of third quarter privilege.\*
  - D. The **fourth** violation of any rule will result in the suspension from a performance (i.e. pre-game, half-time, or contest).
  - E. The **fifth** violation of any rule will result in the loss of position, and suspension or expulsion from the group.

**(Note:** Directors and school administration will handle any **severe** violation **immediately**.)

Student's parents will be contacted after the second violation and each subsequent violation. We believe open communication with parents is an essential part of the success of the student in our organization.

2. In order to establish an organization with pride, unity, and self-discipline, we must enforce the rules set forth by the directors and members of this organization. Every effort will be made to be fair and just with all members. Should any student or parent have a question concerning any disciplinary action, contact the director(s) immediately.

\*During third quarter of football games, band members are permitted to get refreshments and meet with friends. If a student loses third quarter privileges, he/she must sit in the bleachers for the duration of third quarter at the next football game.

## Attire

### Practice Clothing

1. Wear close-toed athletic shoes at all times. No sandals, dress, or street shoes.
2. Clothing must not be binding to allow for active practice.
3. Wear cushioned socks to avoid foot injury such as blisters.
4. Due to the risk of personal injury, no dangling jewelry (i.e. earrings) will be permitted at any time.
5. Hair longer than shoulder length should be pulled back securely. **Guard members MUST** pull hair back and away from the face **before** practice.

### Tour Shirts

Each student will be provided with a tour shirt (usually mid-August). Each year a new tour t-shirt is designed to promote the season's show. Students are expected to wear their tour shirts when traveling. The shirt helps chaperones identify Mason Band students. More importantly, it demonstrates school spirit and pride in the band. Parents and family members will have the opportunity to purchase tour shirts as well.

### Color Guard Uniforms

The color guard marching uniform changes each year depending on the show design. The band purchases most of the uniform, but there may be some individual items that each member will need to provide. Individually purchased items will remain the property of the student at the end of the season.

### Summer Marching Band Uniforms

- short-sleeve, collared band summer shirts (purchased from the band)
- khaki shorts or pants (depending on the weather)
- white socks
- white tennis shoes
- It is the student's responsibility to secure the necessary uniform pieces before the first summer performance.

### Competitive Marching Band Uniforms

Provided by the band:

- jacket
- high-waisted pants
- gauntlets
- hat
- plume

Note: The Uniform Committee will do fittings and alterations during the summer months.

Provided by the student and remain the property of the student at the end of the season:

- black marching shoes (purchased from the band and stored at school during the season)
- black socks (to cover ankles)
- black lycra long-sleeve undershirt (purchased from the band)
- marching gloves (purchased from the band)

Required attire **under** the uniform:

- black long-sleeve undershirt (maintained by the student)
- shorts (provided by the student)
- This attire is necessary as there is no privacy when changing into uniforms. At competitions, students will dress in the parking lot. For football games, students will dress in the band room.

### Uniform Inspection

Prior to each performance, members must pass an inspection of their uniform and equipment. This ensures that the band maintains a cohesive, consistent appearance. In addition, we hope to foster

good personal habits and pride in the band. The following criteria have been established for achieving a clean and uniform look in our band:

1. No jewelry is to be worn while in uniform.
2. No nail polish is to be worn while in uniform.
3. The black long-sleeve undershirt must be worn under the uniform coat. This is necessary for proper personal hygiene and uniformity.
4. Black socks to cover the ankle will be worn while in uniform.
5. Hair must not cover the collar when hats are worn. If necessary, members must pin up hair to avoid allowing hair to cover the collar.
6. All uniform parts must be worn as instructed.
7. When not performing, but still in uniform, all members may remove only gloves and hats unless the staff issue another directive.

## Student Leadership Teams

The Marching Band Leadership Team is comprised of students who have submitted an application packet. The band directors review all of the applications and choose students who can support the band with their musical, technical, and interpersonal skills. Membership on the team is an opportunity for students to take on additional responsibilities that develop leadership skills. Student leaders support communication between directors and band members. Band members may ask student leaders for help with their concerns before approaching directors. The student leader will consult with the leadership team and/or director to suggest a solution. Because the student leadership team is very familiar with the schedule and procedures, they can be a great source of information. If you or your student has any questions, ask one of the student leaders.

## Modes of Communication

1. Website: [www.masonbands.com](http://www.masonbands.com)
  - a. Click on the “**Blog**” link in the top right hand corner to see the archive of announcements.
  - b. Click on the orange “**Calendar**” button to access a monthly calendar.
  - c. Scroll down to the bottom right hand corner to view a scrollable listing of the **calendar**.
2. **Email and Text messages**
  - a. Email addresses and cell phone numbers registered in Charms will be used to communicate on a regular basis.
  - b. To change your email address or cell phone number or any other data in your Charms profile, send an email request to [charmsadmin@masonbandboosters.com](mailto:charmsadmin@masonbandboosters.com).
3. **Booster Meetings**
  - a. Usually held the 1st Thursday of each month in the MHS band room at 7:30 pm
  - b. Changes to the time, date, or location of the meeting will be posted on the website.
  - c. All parents are Boosters!
  - d. Please attend and participate. 😊
4. **Students** are also given information verbally or in print at rehearsal and during class. Please ask your student for information.

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## Financial Responsibility

1. Marching band fees are paid to Mason City Schools unless otherwise instructed, via check, or EZpay (during specified window of time).
  - a. To ensure credit for the payment check must be labeled with the student's first and last name and student ID on the memo line.
  - b. Please use the Band Dropbox for check payments, located across the hall from the MHS Band Office in D154.
2. Any member who enters the program and later decides to stop participating is still responsible for all debts incurred for the program.
3. Financial hardships may be brought to the attention of the band directors for consideration of financial assistance by July 1st. All correspondence will be strictly confidential. Please email [bass@masonohioschools.com](mailto:bass@masonohioschools.com)

## Fees

1. A **deposit of \$100** is due with the spring Commitment Form by March 3, 2017 to register for marching band for the following fall. This initial deposit is not refundable. **Make checks payable to MASON CITY SCHOOLS**.
2. A **second** non-refundable payment of **\$150** for mini band camp is due by April 7, 2017.
3. The **school/camp fee** for the season is **\$500**. This amount must be paid in full by **July 21<sup>nd</sup>**, the Friday before the first day of band camp, for participation. Fees are subject to change based on district policies. You may pay with cash or check **payable to MASON CITY SCHOOLS**. If you prefer, EZpay will be open to pay marching band fees from July 11-July 22, 2016.
4. An estimated **\$445** fee is **payable to Music Travel Consultants** via the MTC online payment system in installments. These fees cover the costs of the Grand Nationals trip. Instructions will be provided as soon as they become available.
5. Marching band fees, plus funds raised by the Boosters, will cover band camp, music, drill, admission to competitions, hotel accommodations, meals, charter buses (when required), and other small expenditures. The Mason Band Directors and Boosters will maintain the budget.
6. The estimated **total marching band fees** (deposit + school fee + MTC fee) is **\$1195**.
7. **CHECKS ONLY** will be accepted for the initial two payments -- no cash will be accepted. The \$500 school/camp fee can be paid by check or by credit card via EZPay. The travel fee to MTC should be paid via credit card to MTC (information will be provided at a later date).

## Personal Items and Additional Costs

Each band member will be **required** to purchase band shoes, a black uniform undershirt, gloves, a summer shirt, and black socks. If maintained properly, most items should last four years of marching band.

These items will be purchased through the Band Boosters (except the black socks).

*Estimated* costs of **required** personal items:

Band Shoes	\$ 33.00
Black Undershirt	\$ 45.00
Gloves (per pair)	\$ 4.00
Band Shirt	<u>\$ 15.00</u>
	\$ 97.00

In addition, there will be some **optional** costs throughout the season. Students and parents should carefully discuss these potential expenses.

Examples of **optional** costs: Mason Band Jacket, spirit wear, section t-shirts, secret buddy surprises

## Refund Policy

With written notice to the band director, the refund policy is as follows:

WRITTEN notice received before:	Refund amount
Last day of band camp	\$200
Last day of August	\$175
Last day of September	\$100
October 1 <sup>st</sup>	NO refunds past this date

## Fundraising

Many fundraising events are planned to offset the expenses incurred by the band program and to keep students' fees as low as possible.

1. All band families are expected to participate in fundraising activities.
2. The funds raised benefit ALL band students.
3. Student AND parent participation are crucial.
4. Mandatory fees may be charged if funds are not raised to cover band expenses.
5. Expenditures of Booster funds are approved by the band directors, board members, and Boosters.  
*Please attend Booster meetings for a monthly budget update and the opportunity to propose solutions to fundraising and fee concerns.*

## Schedule Information

Refer to the calendar posted on the website for the most up-to-date and accurate information. This portion of the handbook gives an overview of typical scheduling concerns.

### PSAT, SAT, and ACT Test Dates

Please try to schedule the test dates around the marching band event dates. While an absence from practice may be necessary, absences for these tests will not necessarily be excused for the purposes of deciding marcher status. Any student not prepared for or in attendance at a competition has a significant overall effect on the performance.

Please refer to the band calendar posted online and the official test registration websites when considering testing dates:

<http://sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-dates>

<http://www.actstudent.org/regist/dates.html>

### Marching Band Camp

Refer to the "Band Camp Packet" posted on [www.masonbands.com](http://www.masonbands.com) for complete details. Choose "Courses & Programs" from the navigation bar, then "Band Camp" from the left navigation. The Band Camp Packet will be posted as soon as it becomes available.

Band Camp is a time for the students to get to know one another as well as learn their marching fundamentals, music, and drill (the designed show). The band starts to put together the best performance that they can as a single unified team.

If students miss any portion of band camp, they can have a difficult time catching up and feeling like a part of the group. Therefore, **all students are asked to set aside those two weeks of their summer and devote it completely to band camp.** Please do not schedule any work or vacations during these two weeks. Refer to the calendar on the [www.masonbands.com](http://www.masonbands.com) website for dates.

Band camp is also a time for parents to volunteer and meet other band parents. Parents can

expect to attend at least one mandatory evening event during band camp each year. At that time, parents will learn more about their roles as Booster members and the various ways in which they can support the band. Parents provide invaluable services during band camp and the academic year to support the Mason Band Program. Among other things, parents may help during band camp by supplying water and snacks, moving equipment, watching over the building during free time, being surrogate moms and dads, providing a friendly face for a stressed out marcher, and being a support to the directors.

## General Scheduling Notes

### Typical Fall Practice Schedule

- one afternoon Sectional rehearsal per week
- one afternoon Full Band rehearsal per week
- one evening Full Band rehearsal per week

In the event that the members have not made the most of scheduled rehearsals, **additional** practices may be added to the schedule.

### Marching Band Practices

The after school and evening rehearsals are very important. They allow the students to continue to refine and polish the music and drill learned during band camp. Drill and music are constantly being refined/changed to make the show the best it can be, so please ensure that your student regularly attends.

Parents are welcome to sit in on a marching band or guard rehearsal. It is fun to see the marching band go from 300+ individual marchers to a cohesive unit. When you visit, we ask a couple of things:

1. Please be as quiet as possible and stay away from the immediate marching area.
2. Please be flexible enough to help out if needed.
3. Please do not interrupt students or staff with questions or directions during practice.

Visiting may give you a better understanding of some of the stories you hear from the students and other parents. It will also show you the dedication of the students and directors. Many parents find that their student is far stronger and more dedicated than previously thought. It is interesting to look back over the years and notice that many of the students with the biggest worries and complaints at the outset grew to be the best band members and leaders in the later years.

### Practice/Performance Schedule Changes

Much time is spent putting together a band schedule and deciding all dates and times as far in advance as possible so students and parents can plan accordingly. We endeavor to change the schedule as seldom as possible. A few reasons for schedule changes include:

- a) The students have not been working as diligently in practice as expected and additional practices need to be scheduled or practice time extended. An additional practice may be called for a section or the full band.
- b) A competition or game has been canceled or rescheduled which is out of the director's control.
- c) New opportunities to showcase the students' talents become available after the schedule is published.

Changes to the schedule will be announced to the students and posted on the website as soon as the change is confirmed. As needed, a **Remind text will be sent to students and/or parents.**

## Summer Performances

Traditionally the Marching Band participates in community events, including:

- Memorial Day Parade
- Heritage Day Parade

The attire for these performances is the Summer Marching Band Uniform as described above. Refer to the calendar on the [www.masonbands.com](http://www.masonbands.com) website for dates.

## Football Games

MHS Marching Band performs at every home football game and selected away games. They perform portions of or the entire Marching Band show at halftime. Each performance is an opportunity to work on perfecting the show and learning to perform to an audience. Every student is required to attend these games, and any absence needs to be discussed with the director.

During the game the band sits together, plays pep tunes, and generally has a lot of fun. After performing during halftime, students are allowed to leave the stands during the third quarter to get refreshments, visit friends, and relax.

All students remain in their uniforms during the entire game unless otherwise directed by the band staff or chaperones.

Parent volunteers are needed at every performance. Among other things, volunteers help in the band room to get students into uniforms, chaperone during the game, clean up after the game, and work concessions.

## Band Competition and Exhibition Performances

Parents and families are always invited to all performances. We try to sit as a group at a competition or performance to support our band. Students love nothing more than a standing ovation from the parents and fans, acknowledging all their hard work. Not only do the parents support the students by coming, but there are always volunteer opportunities to help get the students into uniforms, distribute meals, help load and unload, etc. Each volunteer position is a rewarding way to be a part of our band family.

Maps or directions to competitions are usually available several days prior to the event. These will be emailed or posted on the website for printing at home.

## TBA Times

For some events, particularly competitions, the band directors are NOT informed of the performance time until **about a week before** the performance. Therefore, the schedule will indicate to keep the day open. **The specific times will be announced to the students and parents as soon as the director has confirmation.** This can be frustrating for overall scheduling for families, but it is out of the director's control.

**Rule of Thumb: If the day is scheduled for a band performance or practice with no time, keep the entire day open until the report times become available.**