

Brewer High School

Fightin' Bear Band

Drum Major Handbook

Name: _____

A word from your directors:

A lot is expected from the leadership of the Brewer High School Band Program. In the past, we have had members who sacrificed a good deal of their time and energy in helping this band to grow into a successful program. There have also been some who have not taken their jobs seriously, and have caused damage to the program, letting down their fellow members and the directors. The program did not live up to its potential under their leadership.

Before you fill out and return an application, ask yourself this question: Are you doing this for the betterment of the program, or to feed your ego? Are you applying for a position because you think it will be glamorous or make you popular within the band? Or are you truly interested in helping out where you are most needed? Are you applying for the right position, the one that you are best suited for?

Every year the applications come in and everyone goes for the high status positions. The other positions are a struggle to fill with qualified and dedicated individuals because they are deemed unimportant by the membership. Please remember the old adage: "If you find someone doing little things well, put him/her in charge of bigger things." Special consideration will always be given to those who have demonstrated the ability to do the "little" jobs well. Keep that in mind if you are a younger member of the band and would like to be a leader, a band president or drum major someday. Understand your limitations and don't apply for a position you know you aren't ready for.

Please remember that as a leader, you will be expected to be at ALL rehearsals and performances. Excuses like work, doctor visits, college visits, outside clubs, sports, family events and the like are not acceptable. If you do not understand the necessity for this policy then you are not ready to be in leadership. Those who have been awarded leadership positions in the past and who have not lived up to their tasks ***need not re-apply.***

Andrew Williams

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I went on a search to become a leader. I searched
high and low. I spoke with authority; people listened.
But alas, there was one who was wiser than I, and they
followed that individual.

I sought to inspire confidence, but the crowd responded,
“Why should I trust you?” I postured, and I assumed
that look of leadership with a countenance that flowed
with confidence and pride, but many passed me by
and never noticed my air of elegance.

I ran ahead of the others, pointed the way to new heights.
I demonstrated that I knew the route to greatness.
And then I looked back, and I was alone.
“What shall I do?” I queried. “I’ve tried hard and used
all that I know.” And I sat down and pondered long.

And then, I listened to the voices around me. And I heard
what the group was trying to accomplish. I rolled up my
sleeves and joined in the work.

As we worked, I asked, “Are we all together in what we
want to do and how to get the job done?” And we thought
together, and we fought together, and we struggled towards our goal.

I found myself encouraging the fainthearted. I sought
ideas of those too shy to speak out. I taught those who
had little skill. I praised those who worked hard. When
our task was completed, one of the group turned to me
and said, “This would not have been done but for your leadership.”

At first, I said, “I didn’t lead. I just worked like the rest.”
And then I understood that leadership is not a goal. It’s a
way to reach a goal.

I lead best when I help others to go where we’ve decided
to go. I lead best when I help others to use themselves
creatively. I lead best when I forget about myself as
leader and focus on my group...their needs and their goals.
To lead is to serve...to give...to achieve together.

---Anonymous

General Criteria

These guidelines will apply to **every officer, including guard captain(s)**. Only those students who meet the following criteria need apply for these positions. Selection for these positions will be determined by interviews and auditions.

“LONG TERM” BEHAVIORAL CONSISTENCY (not just before the tryout)

- Great Band Citizen
- Always supportive of the directors and the vision for the program
- Always eligible – never close to failing
- Dependable, Organized and Punctual
- Positive Attitude
- Able to remain positive and innovative when the going gets tough

MUSICIANSHIP

- Dedicated to improving personal musical performance level
- Chair Placement; solo and ensemble; region band (area, state)
- Musical Pride

PERSONALITY AND PERSONAL BEHAVIOR

- Maintains exemplary personal lifestyle standards in & out of school
- Displays emotional stability even in difficult situations
- Able to set aside personal problems during class and when on duty
- Friendliness
- Strong character, ethics, and ideals at all times
- Able to stay upbeat in the presence of the band

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- Can relate to and communicate with band directors
- Can relate to and communicate with student peers
- Previous success as a student leader.

“Leadership is getting someone to do what they don't want to do, to achieve what they want to achieve.”-Tom Landry

"A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."-Rosalynn Carter

“Small seeds grow into huge weeds if allowed to flourish.”

“You can't reason with an unreasonable person.” -OT Ryan

“Empty threats are often worse than saying nothing at all. It's like leading from behind. Eventually, no one thinks you're leading at all. And after a while, no one is even listening.” -Kathleen Troia McFarland

“To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing.”- Elbert Hubbard

Twelve skills that a leader should have!

Good leadership is a result of the careful application of 12 skills that any leader can learn to use. With practice, these skills can become part of your leadership style and will improve helpful and exploring and all leadership situations.

- 1. Setting the example***
- 2. Representing the band***
- 3. Understanding the needs and characteristics of the band***
- 4. Knowing and using the resources of the group***
- 5. COMMUNICATING***
- 6. PLANNING***
- 7. Effective teaching and learning***
- 8. Controlling the bands performance***
- 9. Sharing leadership***
- 10. Counseling***
- 11. Evaluating***
- 12. Supporting your leader***

1. SETTING THE EXAMPLE

Setting the example is probably the most important leadership skill. It is the most effective way to show others the proper way to conduct themselves, and is even more effective than verbal communication. Without this skill, all the other skills will be useless. One way to think about setting the example is to imagine yourself as part of a group and think about how you would like your leader to act. By setting the example, others will know what to do without you needing to do anything. Keep in mind that everyone in the band looks up to you.

“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.” – Abraham Lincoln

2. REPRESENTING THE BAND

Where do you represent the band? Initially, officers represent the band in rehearsals, performances, community events, officer meetings, and anytime you are wearing a band shirt. Eventually, when people know you are an officer with the band you are representing the band AT ALL TIMES and EVERYWHERE YOU GO! (Even when you think no one is watching.)

3. UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF THE BAND

Each individual that is part of the band has certain needs and characteristics.

- Every leader should understand his or her personal needs & characteristics.
- A leader should understand the needs and characteristics of each member of the band. This helps the leader to deal with each person as an individual in order to treat that individual with respect and to help the person grow. This understanding creates respect, trust, friendship & builds confidence among group participants.

A great way to understand the members of this band is to go around asking simple questions, for example:

- Why did they join band?
- What do they expect from band?
- What are their major interests?
- What are their plans for the future?
- What do they want to get from this experience?

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it"- Dwight Eisenhower

4. KNOWING AND USING RESOURCES

Resources include all those *things* necessary to do a job. Resources also include *people*, because people have knowledge and skills. Knowledge is what a person learns through familiarity or experience-what you know. Skill is the ability to use what you know. Attitude includes the desire to do something-motivation-and the belief that you can do it-confidence. When the leader uses the knowledge and skills of group participants to get a job done, the participants gain experience and improve skills. They also develop a positive attitude toward using a skill.

- Survey the participants' parents; include them in your program capability inventory. Can someone's parent sew? Can a parent help with uniforms? Can a parent help with loading?
- Find out the member's skills, interests, and resources.

"Think like a wise man, but communicate in the language of the people."– William Butler Yeats

5. COMMUNICATING

To improve your skills in getting information:

- Pay attention and listen carefully.
- Make notes and sketches.
- Ask questions and repeat your understanding of what was said.

To improve your skills in giving information:

- Be sure others are listening before you speak.
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Draw diagrams, if needed. Ask those receiving information to take notes.
- Have the listeners repeat their understanding of what was said. Encourage questions!
- Keep it simple! Too much elaboration tends to be confusing.

6. PLANNING

Planning is an important part of everything we do. The following is a simple process for planning:

- Consider the task and objectives. What do we want to accomplish?
- Consider the resources-equipment, knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- Consider the alternatives. Brainstorm.
- Reach a decision, evaluating each option.
- Write the plan down and review it with the leadership.
- Execute the plan.
- Evaluate the plan.

“Leadership & learning: Indispensable to each other.”– John F. Kennedy

7. EFFECTIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

Effective teaching is a process to increase the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the group and its participants. The focus is on learning, not teaching. *For teaching to be effective, learning must take place.*

The steps of effective teaching include:

- Choosing the learning objectives
- Providing an experience that helps the learner understand the need for the skill
- Demonstrating or explaining the skill
- Allowing the learner to practice the skill
- Evaluating the process by watching the progress of the members performing

8. CONTROLLING BAND’S PERFORMANCE

A leader influences the performance of the band and individual participants through his or her actions. Why is control needed? A band works together effectively when everybody is headed in the same direction. If a plan is to be properly carried out, someone must lead the effort. Control happens as a result of recognizing the difference between where the band is and where the band is going. Setting the example is the most effective way of controlling the group. When working with members, do the following:

- Continuously observe the band. Know what is happening and the attitude of the band.
- Make your instructions clear and pertinent.
- Pitch in and help.
- Quickly deal with disruption. Guide the band toward self-discipline.

9. SHARING LEADERSHIP

While there are various ways to exercise leadership, the goal of leadership is exemplified in the following quote by John Quincy Adams: "*If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.*"

The officer should teach the band members about the skills he or she possesses. Officers should never use those skills in ways that keep the band weak or dependent. He or she offers leadership opportunities to members and teach them the skills they need to become future leaders.

"I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people". - Mohandas K. Gandhi

10. COUNSELING

Counseling is important. ..

- To help people solve problems
- To encourage or reassure
- To help a member reach his or her potential

Counseling can be effective when a person is:

- Undecided-he or she can't make a decision
- Confused-he or she doesn't have enough information or has too much information
- Locked in-he or she doesn't know any alternatives

How do you counsel?

- First, try to understand the *situation*. Listen carefully. Check the facts.
- Second, help list as many *options* as possible.
- Third, help list the *disadvantages* of the options.
- Fourth, help list the *advantages* of the options.
- Finally, let the person decide on a *solution*. The counselor's role is to give encouragement and information, not solve their problems.

***Important-** Please **NEVER** let someone else's problem cause you to not be doing your job! Just like when a plane is crashing, you are supposed to take care of yourself first (put your air mask on first) before you help those around you. Never let someone else's emergency become your problem. They got themselves into the problem through their choices, don't let their choices cause you to not be in your spot when you are supposed to be, it makes you look bad! You are still a member of the band with expectations just like all the other members and you must meet them no matter what.

11. EVALUATING

Evaluating helps measure the performance of a band in getting a job done and working together. It suggests ways in which the band can improve its performance. There are two basic categories of evaluation questions. After any event or activity, ask these questions:

Quality of the Job-

- Was the job done?
- Was the job done right?
- Was the job done on time?

Emotional Stability-

- Were relationships between band participants helped or hurt?
- Was participation equally distributed among band participants?
- Did the band enjoy the activity?
- Did the band handle conflicts well?

"True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information". - Winston Churchill

12. SUPPORTING YOUR LEADER

- Are you a model of what a follower should do for your leader?
- Do you bad mouth the directors or other student leaders?
- Do you show respect to your leader?
- How can you expect others to respect you as a leader, if you disrespect your leaders?

To be eligible to audition for Drum Major, you must be:

- an incoming Junior or Senior.
- a strong academic student. If you have ever had a grade issue that has kept you from being able to perform with the band, you need not apply for Drum Major.
- a model student. If you have ever been suspended, placed in ISS or OSS, or had any issues with behavior in the band, you need not apply for Drum Major.
- a reliable band member. If you have ever had an attendance or tardy issue, you need not apply for Drum Major.
- a member of the Marching Band each year that they have been at BHS in good standing with the Director(s)

If you cannot accept the reality that you may not be chosen, then you should not try out for this position. Your intentions must be for the good of the band, not for yourself.

You will be required to attend Region, Solo and Ensemble, take lessons, go to Drum Major Camp, and be at every band event throughout the year. Your position does not end after marching season.

Requirements to be demonstrated:

- All facets of marching, including but not limited to marking time, 8-to-5 step (forward and backward), slides, flanks, and turns.
- Conducting (A CD will be provided for the applicant to practice with and conduct to for tryouts. Applicant must demonstrate the ability to cue, keep accurate time, and use a beat pattern that can be seen and understood). Conduct other leadership candidates while they play live. You will play when you are not conducting.
- A salute of your own creation is required. Keep it simple and short...you are not the show, the band is. Always remember that.
- Vocal Commands, including but not limited to: Attention, Parade Rest, Mark Time, Halt, Horns Up and Down. Voice projection and clarity are important factors.
- Interview.

The Role of the Drum Major:

The most important position in the marching band is that of the drum major. This person is the leader on the field and the liaison between the directors and students. The drum major exemplifies the spirit, dignity, and honor of the entire band, and therefore should possess these qualities to the highest degree. Go out of your way to make sure each member of the ensemble succeeds, including giving rides, tutoring, or counselling. You will do the bulk of the work, but you will also delegate and oversee tasks are completed correctly.

Duties of the Drum Major include but are not limited to:

A. Marching Rehearsals

1. Consults with directors prior to each rehearsal for instructions concerning the rehearsal plan.
2. Leads the band through the warm up routine.
3. Assists directors in the teaching of marching drills and helping students find their dots and runs the met when needed.
4. Help individual band members with difficult sections of the drill when problems arise.
5. Acts as proper example for all students.
6. Maintains discipline and a proper learning environment at all times.

B. Music Rehearsals

1. Consult with the director prior to each rehearsal and make every attempt to be thoroughly acquainted with all aspects of the music to be rehearsed, including conducting techniques and possible problems that may be encountered in rehearsal or performance.
2. Lead the band through preliminary warm-up routine.
3. Be prepared to take charge of specific groups for sectional rehearsals.

C. Performance

1. Make sure the band is assembled in the proper formation at the pre-designated time and place.
2. Take attendance and assist with general inspection.
3. Be responsible for moving the band from one area to another in an orderly fashion.
4. At football games, make sure that the band is seated in a predetermined formation, and that order is maintained.
5. Conduct the band when they play pep tunes in the stands or at pep rallies.
6. Prior to a parade, become familiar with the parade route and be aware of the location of the reviewing stand.
7. Understand the fundamentals of drum major etiquette, and be prepared to render the proper salute when necessary. (when receiving a trophy at a competition)
8. Know when to bring the band to attention.

9. Give all the commands during performances.
10. Conduct and control all aspects of the field show.
11. Set the perfect example at all times in dress, leadership, punctuality, alertness, marching, & spirit.

D. Training Sessions

During the final weeks of service, organize drum major training sessions to help prepare prospective candidates for Drum Major auditions. Tell them about your experiences, both good and bad, and make them understand what the position entails. Begin to seek replacements for your position and encourage them to try out.

Desirable Qualities of a Drum Major

The individual should be intelligent, and should have the capability to think quickly under pressure.

A strong dedication to the band program by the individual is vital.

The individual's musical ability should be of the highest level.

The position is leadership-oriented; outstanding leadership qualities should be evident long before auditioning.

The candidate should possess a good personality and should get along well with others.

Candidate should be very dependable.

The Drum Major is placed in a conspicuous position and is subject to criticism and therefore should "look" the part at all times in body language, attitude, and presentation.

Exhibiting a good attitude and encouraging good morale within the band is a major responsibility.

The Drum Major must be enthusiastic in his/her dealings with the band.

The Drum Major must be prepared to take responsibility for any conduct on the field, in the stands, or at contest/festival sites.

By returning this application you are showing that you understand what is being expected of you should you become drum major. A Drum Major is not expected to be at all rehearsals, he/she is REQUIRED to be at them all. You will be held to a much higher standard than a regular band member, and you will be asked to make sacrifices for the good of the band program. Do not return this application unless you have absolutely no hesitations about what this position entails and that you meet the requirements.

It is understood that if I am selected to Drum Major, I will be expected to:

1. Support the Band Directors and other Staff with the utmost dedication, respect, and loyalty.
2. Maintain a strong dedication to the entire band program.
3. Will not miss any rehearsal, performances or functions of the band.
4. Up-hold the highest possible standards as an example for all band members.
5. Participate in all special band events (pep band, special performances, competitions, concerts, or any event in which help will be needed all year long).
6. Demonstrate the highest level of musicianship throughout the entire year. Including but not limited to, region, solo and ensemble participation, and taking lessons.
7. If not chosen, I will assume my regular role in the band and give full cooperation to the other members selected and Director.