Countryside High School Band Handbook

2025-2026

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Preface

This handbook has been written to provide students and parents with information concerning the various phases, activities, and policies of the band program at Countryside High School. It is impossible for this handbook to cover the answers to all the questions that may arise. All students and parents will need to read this handbook carefully, fill out the handbook contract form included in the back of this handbook, sign it, and return it to the band office. School rules and policies are always enforced when a student is directly, or indirectly, involved with any activity sponsored by, or in the name of, Countryside High School. The band director shall have authority to suspend or amend any policy, at any time deemed necessary, in the best interest of the overall program.

Things to do TODAY

Physical Exam

Students must attend a sports physical examination before participating in Band Camp. This can be done at your primary care doctors office or most clinics.

Sports Form

Pinellas county has a form required to participate in sports, this no longer requires a notary so you will just turn it in on Day 1 of Band Camp. There is a new form called the “EL2 Physical Form” that can be found on the internet, the BAND App, and the Band Website

Insurance Card

All students that participate in sports in Pinellas County are required to have insurance through the county, this can be obtained at pcsb.org/StudentInsurance . The plan is very affordable ($6 for the whole year) and has great coverage.

Goals & Objectives

1. Provide a high level musical experience for all members
2. Represent ourselves as an important part of our school and local community

3. Create a positive atmosphere where each member is expected to reach their highest potential as a musician and a person
4. Foster a culture of respect for our peers, school, community and families
5. Create well rounded musicians with skills to succeed in any pursuit after high school

Band teaches more than music - it teaches timeliness, responsibility, integrity, leadership, teamwork, and more. As we learn as a band we must have a positive social environment.

Expectations for Members

1. Be on time and prepared
2. Treat **everyone** with respect
3. Be responsible for your own actions and preparedness
4. Meet all challenges with a positive attitude
5. Represent yourself as a mature and productive individual in band, in school and online
6. Keep your instrument and work space in a professional and clean working order

Lockers / Cubbies

The storage room has been deep cleaned, thanks to the help of students in the band. Students will be assigned one cubby for their equipment and materials. Students may not store food and drinks in their cubby. At the end of the day the only items in your cubby should be the materials needed for the next.

Performance Requirements

To maintain performance eligibility students must meet the personal expectations and academic expectations required for all members.

1. Students may be withheld from any performance in any case where basic member expectations and academic expectations are not met.
2. Co-curricular event eligibility (concerts, football games and evaluations) will be addressed by the band directors with the interest of the student's future success in mind.
3. Ineligible students will be assigned alternative assignments for full or partial class credit depending on the situation.
4. Students who miss an excessive amount of rehearsals may be removed from performances or the marching band production for the benefit of their peers.

Class Descriptions

Concert Band (1, 2, 3)

Concert Band is dedicated to musical growth through some of the most important years on your instrument. Concert Band will play in Marching Band, and pair up with Symphonic Band for all performances, but will have a bigger focus on fundamental growth and understanding of our

instrument. We will rehearse *every day*. Students will have their instruments and accessories *every day*.

Concert Band 2 (4, 5 honors, 6 honors)

Symphonic Band is dedicated to students who need more challenges on their instrument. This band will team up with Concert Band for performances but students will be expected to perform (in class or at a concert) with their chamber ensemble. While homework will be minimal, students will learn more about music theory, arranging, and composing. We will rehearse *every day*. Students will have their instruments and accessories *every day*.

Marching Band

All band students are expected to participate in Marching Band. Marching Band is a core component of Florida's instrumental music curriculum. This is an additional meeting outside of our normal class time on school weeks, and occasionally on weekends. Rehearsals will be every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00pm to 8:00pm unless otherwise noted. Other events like football games and competitions are marked on the calendar.

Marching band regularly has staff that are hired via the Booster Organization and Band "Binder" funds. They will all have the necessary background checks and experience to work with the students. If there are ever ANY issues with the band staff or chaperones, please report them to Mr. Bernhardt immediately.

Required Material

Students must have all necessary playing materials, including their instrument, mouthpiece, reeds, valve oil, key oil, and cork grease, daily. Replenishable items such as valve oil and reeds can be purchased from any music store; however, our preferred vendor is "Tate Music," located directly across the street from the school. Mr. Bernhardt may have these materials on hand but the expectation is that you provide your own.

BAND App

The BAND App facilitates efficient communication of dates, schedules, and critical information to students and parents. This application enables the immediate dissemination of information and reminders, as well as convenient collection of student and parent feedback regarding logistical details. While not mandatory, joining the BAND App is highly recommended for both students and parents.

This QR code will redirect you to download the App as well as join the group.

Attendance Policy

Excused

Students will be excused for three primary reasons per the county

1. A conflicting school activity
2. Sickness
3. Family emergency

However, if you have another reason *please* talk to Mr. Bernhardt. I want to work with you!

Unexcused

Anything outside of excused will be marked as unexcused. If a student has an excess of unexcused absences then they could be withheld from performances, travelling, or other opportunities. This is subject to the band director's discretion.

Tardies

Tardies are coming late to class or rehearsal without the reason being one of the approved excused absences.

Missed performances

Performing is what we do, performances are the most important part of attendance and missing a performance without an approved excuse could cost a whole letter grade. (i.e. A- to B-). Performances times and days will be given out well in advance.

Conflicts

Some students may have conflicts with Marching Band's rehearsal time. I am fluid but a student may not miss more than 3 hours of Tuesday / Thursday rehearsal a week. Students with conflicts may not miss *any* rehearsal on Friday or Saturday, performance days. If a student has a conflict and is unable to march their spot, they may be asked privately to not march a show. *This is not a reflection of the capability of a student to learn music or be a musician, but the integrity of the group must be maintained.*

Band Camp

July 28th - August 1st

All members who participate in the Marching Band are expected to participate fully at Band Camp. Band Camp is where we begin learning how to march, play and march, and the show. If you have a conflict please email Mr. Bernhardt.

During Band Camp, the school will employ staff. Each staff member has been interviewed and hired and has passed a level 2 background check. Each staff member has experience in their instrument or practice, they are to be treated as any other instructional staff at school, with respect.

Rehearsal Procedures

Practices are held every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, unless otherwise indicated on the calendar or due to a school holiday. Additional practices may not be scheduled with less than two weeks' notice. Practices are subject to cancellation.
Rehearsals are scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays, commencing promptly at 5:00 PM. Students are required to have their instruments in the band room no later than 4:50 PM to ensure a timely start. Detailed daily schedules, including sectional times and locations, as well as field rehearsal readiness expectations, will be disseminated via the BAND app.

Dress Code

Marching Band Rehearsal

- School appropriate T-Shirt on Tuesdays
- Dri-fit Rehearsal shirts on Thursday
- School and weather appropriate shorts / pants
- Sunscreen
- Hat (optional, but recommended)
- Sunglasses (optional, but recommended)

Performance Dress Code

- Long-Sleeve Button-Down Dress Shirt – Solid Black (No patterns, logos, distracting embellishments, etc.)
- Long Dress Pants – Solid Black (No denim, patterns, visible logos, holes, rips, tears)
- Dress Belt – Solid Black (No distracting buckles, sport belts, seatbelt belts, studs, etc.)
- Solid Black Long Dress Socks (No patterns, logos, phrases, etc.)
- Solid Black Dress Shoes/Flats (No Converse, Vans, Jordans, etc.)
- No sunglasses, hats, coats, jewelry, or uncovered facial piercings (earrings are acceptable)
- There are many distributors of “concert black” dresswear. I like “Southeastern Performance Apparel”, if you need help with finding or purchasing clothes please reach out to Mr. Bernhardt. If a student chooses to wear dresses then they may purchase them from that vendor, please refer to the school dress code and dress appropriately.
- If a student is not dressed appropriately they may be asked to not perform.

Football Games / Competitions

I am currently waiting for the school to notify me of how many away games are covered by the school as well as expectations / requirements. I do not know what away games we are going to but you should mark them on your calendar
AWAY - August 15th vs St Pete Catholic
AWAY - August 22nd vs Dunedin High School

HOME - August 29th vs Gibbs High School
HOME - September 5th vs Dixie Hollins High School
HOME - September 12th vs Seminole High School
HOME - September 19th vs Palm Harbor High School
EVENT - September 20th HOT Band Day (Information will be sent out)
AWAY - September 26th vs River Ridge High School
COMPETITION - September 27th - Seminole Sound
COMPETITION - October 4th - East Lake Competition
HOME - October 10th vs Gulf High School
HOME - October 17th vs Osceola High School
AWAY - October 24th vs Clearwater High School
COMPETITION - October 25th - Tarpon Springs Invitational
AWAY - October 31st vs East Lake High School
FBA - November 1st - Palm Harbor University High School

Parental Responsibilities

Due to the size of the band program, it is expected that every parent volunteer for at least one event. This may be sitting and chaperoning the band during games, or working the concessions stand at a football game
The state and county do help subsidize the cost of band programs but the help they are able to provide is minimal. In order for you student to have the best experience possible we need your support through these events.

Booster Organization

Our boosters are the backbone of the band, they are parents that volunteer their time and energy into making sure we have the means to continue to meet, compete, and stay active in the community.
If you are interested in volunteering for the Booster Organization on a higher level please reach out to either Mr. Bernhardt or the booster president.

Band “Fair-Share”

The annual “Fair-Share” this year has been halved to **$250.** This puts some more financial and time burden on parents on the Booster organization board. This fair-share is not like other band programs where the entire budget is divided by the members of the band, this cost does not cover all of the costs associated with each student, this helps pad the costs associated with the start of the year.
You can submit this as a cash, or check. Please have your student drop it off in the drop box in the classroom, or hand it to Mr. Bernhardt directly. Please have this in no later than August 22nd, if you have any problems please reach out to Mr. Bernhardt to discuss.

2025 – 2026 BAND HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

PARENT GUARDIAN: I understand the requirements and responsibilities for membership in the Countryside High School Band Program. I have read and understand the special policies concerning grading, behavior, and attendance. I realize that my student is enrolled in a performance-based curriculum for academic credit and I understand that all of these rules and expectations are at the Band Director's discretion.

NAME OF PARENT:

_____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT:

_____

EMAIL OF PARENT:

_____

- ☐ I AND/OR MY STUDENT WILL JOIN THE BAND APP TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATION ABOUT BAND EVENTS
- ☐ I WILL MAKE A PAYMENT OF $250
- ☐ I WILL EMAIL MR. BERNHARDT (bernhardtc@pcsb.org) AND WORK OUT A PAYMENT PLAN OR OTHER SOLUTION

STUDENT: I have read and agree to abide by the principles, ideals, procedures, and guidelines set further in this handbook. I AM COMMITTED!

NAME OF STUDENT:

_____

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT:

_____

I was hoping that I could get more information or clarification on:

_____

_____

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN NO LATER THAN MONDAY AUGUST 15th, 2025