

Lake Belton High School Colorguard 2024 - 2025

Welcome from the Instructor

Congratulations and Welcome to the Lake Belton High School Colorguard program. We have an exciting season ahead of us and I am looking forward to working with all of you. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me via email. I always like to know what the parents and students of our organization are thinking. I am really hoping to get a lot of parent participation this season. In my experience, the more parents and family are involved the more our program benefits. I hope this packet is informative and I will be happy to answer any questions. Also, please visit our website where you can find most of the information that you need about our program!

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Color Guard Director

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Dear Parents, Students, and Colorguard Members! The following pages have been put together to answer any questions you may have about the program, even some questions you may not have known to ask. All parents and students should review this handbook as some policies may have changed.

Our goal is an easy one, "BE KIND AND WORK HARD!" This goes for rehearsals, class time, and performances. If you do the best job you are capable of doing and enjoy your time with your teammates, you'll have an enjoyable and successful experience with this program.

Upon receiving this handbook, please take the time to read it thoroughly and completely.

Once you have read it, please sign and return the Lake Belton High School Colorguard Contract located in the back of this packet.

Work Hard & Have Fun!!

Sincerely,

LBHS Band Staff

Explanation

What is Color Guard?

The roots of Color Guard extend far back into history. Flags and pennants were common sights in pageantry events and ceremonies. In more modern times, the National Flag and its guarding weapons played a significant role in patriotic and military ceremonies. From this influence, Color Guard began to grow. Color Guard still utilizes the traditional aspects of guarding the colors through executing precision movements and marching drills, but adds to it more modern aspects of the performing arts, such as theater and dance. Their combined effects make a competitive art form requiring total control of the body and mind. Color guard performers are part of high school and college marching bands, drum and bugle corps, and winter guards. Members perform with flags, rifles, sabers, and other props to enhance the visual element of the performance.

Color Guard Skills

Whether doing a field show, parade, or indoor show, a color guard member must know a variety of skills. The typical rehearsal begins with dance training. Performers learn skills in ballet, modern, and jazz dance classes. In addition to dance movement skills, performers with bands and drum corps also work to develop marching basic skills. These marching skills include understanding placement on a football field or gym floor and dressing various forms. The performer must also be skilled on equipment. All performers learn basics on flag (also called "silk"). More advanced students also learn how to spin rifles and sabers. Rehearsals often include a series of basic exercises to refine technique on the equipment. These exercises include spins, carvings, extensions, flourishes, and tosses. They are often combined with body movements such as a plie or a tendu.

Policies

Attendance**

Due to the participatory nature of color guard, attendance is mandatory at all rehearsals and performances, both during and outside of school time. In most academic courses, absence from class only hurts the individual, in color guard, the entire group is affected. It is expected that each student has commitment to being at each and every rehearsal and performance. Participation in rehearsals and performances outside normal school hours is a required part of color guard. Excused absences will be granted for personal illness or death in the family and occasionally if prior arrangements are made with the director. Where possible the student must give advance notice to the director (not another student) of any absence. "I didn't know we had rehearsal", babysitting, and not having a ride to rehearsal are not excuses that are accepted. You will be given a calendar to plan around and I hope that, in the event of a conflict, the student or parent communicates with a director, so we can find a quick solution.

**Unexcused absences from class or from any rehearsal or performance may result in a lowered grade, demotion in rank, a failing grade, removal from the organization, or a combination of these at the discretion of the director(s). No penalty is given for missing any activity if the student is prevented from participating because of ineligibility reasons.

The following guidelines should be used for any absence:

In the event of sickness or emergency, the student should email a director and leave a detailed message with them. A note signed by a parent should be brought to the director on the next day in order that a record of absence is on file. Upon return, the student should meet with the director and see if any make up work is in order. Medical and dental appointments are to be scheduled around winter guard activities unless an emergency occurs. Do not assume that any activities are an excuse to miss a rehearsal or performance. Do your best to schedule your activities around guard and communicate early with your director. I do my best to schedule around other activities when they are known in advance. Punctuality—Students should be prompt for all guard functions! Tardiness will be defined as being unprepared to begin the activity at the designated time and place with all necessary equipment. Golden Rule of Punctuality: To be early is to be on time. To be on time is to be late. To be late is to be in trouble!

Eligibility**

No Pass/No Play—Basically, if a student fails at any period then they are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities during the next grade cycle. Of course, it is important to our program that students stay academically eligible. Please ask a director for more information about current eligibility rules and how they affect participation.

**If you fail a grading period, you will automatically become an alternate for the next grading period until you can show that you are able to handle the responsibilities of school and guard. Alternates are still expected to come to rehearsals but are taken out of the show for the grading period. Due to the nature of our activity, if one student fails, it can change the entire show and that hurts the entire group.

Performance Policy

Any unexcused absence from a scheduled performance will result in the removal of the student's performance spot as well as the student receiving the appropriate number of demerits. Students are expected to never be in "partial uniform", No cursing, running, or eating will in uniform, to be on best behavior especially while at a performance venue, No negative comments about other performing groups, while walking to and from each performance area you are NOT to talk, laugh, or become distracted from what we came to do, and members are to never be alone in other words always with the team in the stands during the contests or with a buddy from Lake Belton Winter Guard.

Students may be asked to sit out a performance for ANY of the following reasons:

- Wearing the uniform in an inappropriate manner
- Hair is not worn properly
- Failure to remove all visible jewelry
- Behavior infractions
- Do not have all equipment needed to perform
- Chewing gum
- Failure to return ALL forms and information
- Unprepared due to excessive or extended absences
- Missing a practice prior to a performance
- Inability to perform routine in style and technique taught
- Exceeding number of demerits allowed
- Other circumstances deemed applicable by the director

Rehearsal Policy

Each rehearsal missed (unexcused) after school during the season will result in the appropriate number of demerits. Coming late to a rehearsal (unexcused) will result in the appropriate number of demerits. Directors and instructors will determine unexcused absence. If a student cannot make a rehearsal (after school), please communicate with Mr. Arbolay ASAP. Failure to do so may result in an unexcused absence. Students must be prepared for each rehearsal as the regular three hour rehearsals are not an ample amount of time, so being prepared for each rehearsal is necessary. ALL members must wear all black moveable clothing to all rehearsals. Absolutely NO CELL PHONE USE during rehearsal or during class, unless during breaks, but hydrating should be the main focus at that time. Hair must be pulled up and out of the face. Most importantly give 100% in everything you do and have fun and cherish every moment; remember that there are always eyes on you. Gain the respect of you peers and your community through your work ethic.

Behavior Policy

Guard members are expected to follow ALL Band and Colorguard policies regarding appropriate student behavior. Violation of the following will be handled through existing school policy: Boy/Girl relationships, class cut, destruction of school property, disrespect, drugs, fighting, gambling, knives or weapons, profanity, sexual harassment, smokeless tobacco, smoking, and stealing. In the event a negative student behavior is not covered by existing school policy, that behavior will be evaluated by the band director and staff and appropriate disciplinary action will be determined based upon the severity of the incident and its impact on the winter guard. Discipline may include sitting out of one or more performances, letter grade reductions for that grading period, exclusion from a special winter guard/band trip, or may result in expulsion from the program.

Things to Bring to Rehearsal

- **Water Jug**
- **Ponytail Holders**
- **Inhalers**
- **Deodorant**
- **Equipment**

Winter Guard Rehearsal Expectations:

- All members should be at rehearsal and ready to begin at the scheduled start time. Walking in and/or not being prepared at the start time is the same as being late.
- It is the responsibility of each member to make sure they have the necessary equipment needed for rehearsal as dictated by the staff.
- All guard equipment will be treated with care and not abused.
- Guard members will dress appropriately for every rehearsal. Shorts or dance pants, t-shirt, and appropriate shoes. No super baggy clothes or jeans are ever allowed. Hair should be worn up off the neck, and out of the performers face. Weather will dictate dress as much of the fall rehearsals are outside. Always ask a staff member if there are any questions.
- If a member misses a rehearsal notice must be sent to a staff member as soon as possible and an email must be sent to the band director from a parent to inform them of the reason for the absence. Please see the Band Handbook for more information on the attendance policy.
- If a member misses a rehearsal it is their responsibility to work on or learn any work that was covered. They must work with their squad leader or guard captain to arrange a time to do this.
- Every guard member will treat each other and the staff and parent volunteers with respect. Insensitive or bullying behavior is unacceptable and may result in the student forfeiting their spot on the guard. Any issues should be brought to the Guard Instructors attention as soon as appropriate.
- Water should be brought to every rehearsal.

Special Trips

One of the bonuses of being in the winter guard involves special travel opportunities. While many organizations dream about taking trips together, we are in a position to make these dreams come true. It serves as positive testimony to the work ethic of our band members, and is one of the privileges we enjoy as a group. There are additional expectations attached to group travel. When we accept an invitation to perform away from our home, we also assume the responsibilities of being ambassadors and representatives of our band, our school, and our community. The term good behavior takes on an all-new meaning as we assume the role of musical emissaries. There are no second chances at a first impression; therefore, we must pledge ourselves to emulating excellence both in our musical and our social performances. Should there be any need for disciplinary action, we will simply ask those in question to return home immediately so the problem can be addressed following the trip.

*A separate Hand Out will be given to the specific students who will be staying overnight for out of town trips at least two weeks in advance.

Students are expected to travel with the guard to and from ALL activities. In the event a parent finds it necessary to drive a student to or from a band activity (where group transportation is provided), the following policy will apply:

- Prior written notification must be received and approved by the director.
- Students will only be permitted to leave with their parents or an adult authorized by the parents.
- Students WILL NOT be permitted to come or go with boy or girl friends, classmates, etc.
- Students ARE NOT allowed to transport themselves to and from contests.

Letter Requirements

Letterman Jackets can be earned through colorguard. There are a few different ways this can be earned. Once the letter is earned you have THAT year to get one. If you wait, you will have to re-qualify to earn one.

Ways to Letter:

- Perform in a state performance for Stampede Marching Band
- Reaching the pinnacle, or final step of a winterguard season (i.e. Earning a Medal, Making State Finals, Making State)