

**Bremen High School  
Band Handbook  
2024-2025**



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## **Mission Statement**

The Bremen Marching Band strives to make a positive difference in the lives of its members by providing musical experiences that enhance their understanding and appreciation of the arts and the world around them. The BMB strives to develop character, confidence, professionalism, pride, dedication, cooperation, responsibility, and musicianship in each of its members, in a safe and fun learning environment. The BMB endeavors to provide high quality musical performances that reflect the talent and passion of its members.

## **Foreword**

The purpose of this handbook is to provide valuable information about the Bremen Marching Band and its rules, procedures, protocols, and purpose. To consistently achieve and maintain the high standard of excellence desired by this organization, each member and his/her parent/guardian must familiarize themselves with the policies, procedures, and expectations associated with the BMB.

Members are required to follow the rules and regulations of Bremen High School. School rules and policies are in force at all times that a member is directly or indirectly involved in any activity sponsored by or in the name of Bremen High School or the Bremen Marching Band. School policy shall have priority over band policy in the inadvertent event of any policy conflict.

Any exceptions to the policies, procedures, and expectations found in this handbook will be at the discretion of the director and will be handled on an individual basis. The director has the authority to suspend or amend any policies, procedures, or expectations at any time deemed necessary in the best interest of the BMB and its members.

## **Marching Band Membership**

Any student who is enrolled in Intermediate Band, Exploring World Percussion, Honors Exploring World Percussion, Concert Band, Symphonic Band, or Honors Symphonic Band is a member of the Bremen High School Marching Band. Any member of the Bremen Color Guard is a member of the Bremen High School Marching Band. Any other members will be admitted only with the band director's permission.

## **Color Guard Members**

Any member of the Bremen Color Guard is a member of the Bremen Marching Band. This handbook is also the handbook for the Bremen High School Color Guard.

## **Non-Marching Band Instrumental Ensembles**

While this handbook often refers to the Bremen Marching Band, all Bremen High School instrumental ensemble members are bound by the information in this handbook. The term "Marching Band" is interchangeable with the term Band, Jazz Ensemble, Jazz Combo, Percussion Ensemble, Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and any other instrumental ensemble at Bremen High School, with regard to this handbook. Any differences between the "Bremen Marching Band" ("BMB") and another ensemble will be made known by the director when they arise.

## **Responsibilities of Members**

The Bremen Marching Band plays a vital and important role in the Bremen H.S. experience. The BMB appears at concerts, sporting events, parades, contests, competitions and other community and civic events throughout the year and add a great deal of life to the community.

Members will have a highly successful marching band and academic career in high school if they are dedicated, willing to work, and have the support they need. Members learn valuable organizational and social skills that will help them to achieve their goals now as well as after high school. The success of the band program will lead to the success of the individual and vice versa.

We represent our family, our ensemble, our school, our community, and ourselves. We must hold ourselves to high standards in order to achieve high goals. In order to do this, we must take on several responsibilities.

### **Responsibility to Ourselves**

We have a responsibility to ourselves to be dedicated individuals who are willing to work hard and put the time and effort into our chosen craft. We owe ourselves time to practice, time to rehearse, time to do homework, time with our families, time with our friends and time to ourselves. We can fulfill each of these responsibilities by being organized and planning ahead.

### **Responsibility to Our School And Our Community**

The school district provides the setting and facilities for our performances, as well as some larger and more expensive equipment. We have the obligation to provide the best possible performances for our school and our community. This sometimes includes giving up some of our free time on holidays, vacations, evenings, and weekends. It also means that if the school owns the instrument you play or the equipment you use, you are willing to take proper care of it.

### **Responsibility to Each Other**

Getting along with each other in our complex society can be a difficult task, but there is a way to help foster an atmosphere in which it can happen. You have the obligation and responsibility to respect the rights of others. Antisocial behavior will only breed the same from others. Always treat others with respect and dignity, as you wish others to treat you.

### **Responsibility to Music as an Art Form**

The performing arts have always been a vital part of humanity. You possess a very special talent. You now have the obligation and responsibility to use that talent for the betterment of yourself and others.

### **Responsibility to The Program**

To meet any goals that we set we must be on time (even early) to all rehearsals and performances. We must remain focused while rehearsing. We must be willing to play another instrument if needed. We must be willing to fundraise. We must be willing to have fun. We must be willing to participate.

## **Character Expectations**

Each member is expected to adhere to the following at all times.

### **Respect Yourself**

### **Respect Others**

### **Respect the BMB Polices and the School Rules**

**Respect –** To feel and show a high regard for  
To avoid violation of and interference with  
Willingness to show appreciation of and consideration for

## **Rehearsal & Performance Protocol**

1. Members are expected to be on time to all rehearsals, performances, and other events. To be on time is to be early! Each member is expected to arrive early enough to fully prepare and be in place for the start time of the rehearsal. Attendance is taken at the beginning of rehearsals.
2. Members are expected to have their instrument/flag, music, field coordinates, a pencil, water, binder, and any other items assigned to them ready at the beginning of every rehearsal.
3. Members are expected to show respect to whomever is directing them, on the podium or elsewhere, and anyone leading sectionals. This means that members are to be silent when being given instructions and are to raise their hand and wait to be called on when they have a question during a rehearsal.
4. Members that use/handle school owned instruments are responsible for the cost of any repair needed due to neglect. They are responsible for the replacement of any instrument that is lost or stolen while under the care of the member.
5. There are only 4 places that your instrument/flag should be.
  - In your hands
  - Lined up in your section
  - Lined up in its case
  - In your band locker or the guard room
6. All members are responsible for putting away equipment at the end of rehearsals and performances. Members may be assigned to certain equipment during the season, but it is the responsibility of everyone in the BMB to make sure everything is put away properly.
7. The director dismisses the band.
8. The director decides the rehearsal location.
9. In the event that a rehearsal/performance is cancelled the director will notify members. Until that time, assume the rehearsal/performance is still happening and be prepared.
10. Rehearsals begin at the start time. Rehearsals end at the end time. You should allow enough time before a rehearsal to get ready to begin at the start time. You should allow enough time after the rehearsal to put everything away before being dismissed.

## **Attendance Policy**

As a member of the Bremen Marching Band you have made a commitment to the BMB as a whole and to each of your fellow band members as well.

The BMB's success is dependent on the consistent collaboration of all its members and directors.

All rehearsals and performances on the calendar are mandatory for all members.

Marching Band members are expected to be proactive to avoid any conflicts with the BMB schedule.

Communication with the director is very important. Speak to the director as soon as you learn of a potential conflict.

Members/Families are expected to schedule routine medical appointments around the rehearsal and performance calendar. However, should a medical appointment conflict with a scheduled rehearsal, members must submit a doctor's note confirming the member's absence due to a medical appointment for the absence to be considered excused.

Members are responsible for all of the material covered at a rehearsal they miss.

### **Definition of Excused and Unexcused Absences**

The following reasons may be considered excused absences. Except in the case of emergencies, these events should be brought to the attention of the director well before the BMB event they conflict with. Bring potential conflicts to the attention of the director as soon as you know about it.

- Weddings of family members
- Funerals of family members
- Medical emergencies, with documentation
- Student illness, with documentation
- College visit (juniors/seniors only and only excused for a rehearsal)
- Bremen H.S. IHSA athletic contest (only excused for a rehearsal)
- Court appearance
- Other absences as approved by a director

The following reasons will be considered unexcused absences.

- Work and employment conflicts
- Transportation issues
- Routine medical appointments
- Hair and beauty appointments
- Attending concerts of any kind
- Homework
- Anything not listed as an excused absence

## **Planned/Emergency Late Arrival or Planned/Emergency Early Dismissal**

Should the need arise for a student to arrive late or leave early from a rehearsal/performance, the director should be notified as soon as possible. In general, the same policies stated for absences apply to partial attendance. Please discuss any potential issues with the director.

## **Preparedness, Attendance, and Performance**

If a member is not prepared for a performance for any reason, they may be removed from a performance. The director may have them assist in another way or may choose to have them stay home. **Consistent attendance is the only way to be sure that you are prepared for performances.** Excessive tardiness, absence, or unpreparedness, for any reason, may result in your removal from performances.

## **Bremen H.S. IHSA Sports/SSC Competitive Activities**

There are times when the band schedule may conflict with the athletic schedule or the activity schedule of a Bremen H.S. competitive sport/activity. The BMB has many members every year that participate in a fall sport and many competitive activities. The following are general guidelines, with exceptions made on a case by case basis.

In general:

- If the student has a band rehearsal and an athletic/activity contest, they should attend the athletic/activity contest.
- If the student has a band performance and an athletic/activity practice, they should attend the band performance.
- If the student has a band performance and an athletic/activity contest, they should attend the band performance (band is not only an activity, but a class for which credit is earned). However, this is rare. We are almost always able to work things out so that when this happens the student can attend both the sporting/activity contest and the marching performance.

This policy only applies to IHSA sanctioned sports and SSC competitive activities.

## **Communication**

There is the possibility that situations will arise that do not fit into the stated attendance policies of the band. Communicate all possible conflicts with the director as soon as possible. It is the intent of the director to include all students that have the desire to be in band, in the band, while maintaining a level of excellence that is expected. Please communicate all possible conflicts with the director to help avoid situations that place individual students, or the band, in a position that hinders success.

We want all students to experience as many sports and activities as possible while in high school, However, to maintain a high level of performance, and in order for the members of the band to have a meaningful experience, we must follow these policies.

Please speak with the director if you have any questions or concerns. It is the intent of the director to treat each student fairly and with respect.

## **Absence Form**

If any conflict occurs in the schedule, the parent needs to fill out and submit an absence form. This form can be found on our website. The process to submit an absence form:

- You realize there will be an absence (or significant tardy/early dismissal)
- You discuss the situation with a director in person, on phone, via text, or by email
- You wait for the director to tell you to fill out the absence form. You should wait because the director may have other info for you to know before the form should be filled out.
- You fill out the absence form.

Filling out the absence form does not mean an absence is excused or unexcused. The absence form is a way for both the director and the parent/student to communicate and track absences. The form should be used for any absence from an outside of school rehearsal and for any performance, even if the student missed school that day.

## **Band and Your Grade**

(This part about grades does not apply to Color Guard members, unless they are in a band class.)

Every time the marching band meets to rehearse or perform, after the school year begins, band members receive a grade in the gradebook. All rehearsals and performances are mandatory.

*Excused absences* from rehearsals do not need to be made up, unless there was an assessment given at the rehearsal. In this case, the student will need to complete the assessment to receive credit. Otherwise the student will be marked as exempt from the rehearsal.

*Unexcused absences* from rehearsals will result in no credit given for the rehearsal. However, students will be able to make up the rehearsal for credit by completing a rehearsal makeup assignment. Makeup assignments for unexcused absences from a rehearsal are due 48 hours after the conclusion of the rehearsal. If a makeup assignment is turned in after that time it will receive no higher than 70% credit if turned in. If there was an assessment given, students will be able to make up the assessment for 100% credit.

*Excused and unexcused absences* from a performance need to be made up in order for the student to receive credit. Performances are entered into the gradebook as assessments. For every performance there is a formative and a summative grade. Excused absences from a performance can receive 100% credit for both the formative and summative grades. Unexcused absences from a performance can receive no more than 70% credit for the formative grade, but can receive 100% credit for the summative grade.

**Members are responsible for all of the material covered at a rehearsal they miss.**

**Material covered during a rehearsal will impact the BMB's performance.**

**Material covered at rehearsals affect assessments later in the semester.**

**Students must be current with anything that is covered during all rehearsals.**



## **Expenses**

Every Bremen Marching Band member is expected to pay all of the BMB expenses on time and to provide any materials requested. These expenses, their due dates, and items can be found on our website. If a family is unable to meet the expense requirements they should arrange to meet with the director to discuss the situation. It is the intent of the director to include all students in band that want to be in band regardless of their financial situation.

## **Fundraisers**

Students are required to participate in any all-band fundraisers and will have the option to participate in fundraisers to help them pay for their expenses. Information about each fundraiser can be found on our website.

## **Instruments**

The band may provide instruments for students who do not own their own, if the school has a suitable instrument available. There is no fee to borrow an instrument, provided the instrument is properly cared for and returned in the same condition as when it was checked out. Any damages or issues with a school owned instrument should be reported to the director immediately. The student is responsible for the proper care and maintenance of the instrument and will be charged for any damage or loss that occurs while checked out to the student.

A privately owned instrument is the responsibility of the student who owns it.

All instruments should be kept in excellent playing condition and should be cleaned regularly and polished/cleaned before every performance.

## **Flags and Color Guard Equipment**

The Color Guard provides flags, poles, and other color guard equipment to its members. There is no fee for using the equipment. Any damages to the color guard equipment should be brought to the attention of the director immediately. The student is responsible for paying for the replacement of any lost/stolen equipment while it is in their possession.

## **Part Assignments**

Part assignments will be decided by the director. Members are expected to perform the part they are assigned.

## **Facilities**

All Bremen Marching Band members are responsible for maintaining our facilities. Members are responsible for not only their own items, but also for the other items in the facilities we utilize. Rooms we use should be left as clean or cleaner after we are done using them. Members should not leave uniform parts, personal belongings, clothing, coat hangers, accessories, or trash lying around in any room. There will be a designated area for all personal belongings that do not fit in band lockers, for all performances and rehearsals. Rooms 116 and 117, in particular, are to be kept neat and orderly at all times.

## Uniforms

Uniforms are not to be taken home without specific permission from the director. They must stay at the school. Under no circumstance is anyone to make any alterations to a uniform without specific permission from the director. If an alteration is needed, please bring it to the director's attention. Do not take a uniform in to be cleaned. The band will arrange for the uniforms to be cleaned when necessary.

Any student who damages/or does not return any part of the uniform will be assessed a fee.

All members will be required to purchase marching/dance/guard shoes. Members will keep their shoes.

All members must provide their own long black socks.

All members must wear shorts/leggings underneath their uniform bibbers.

All members must wear the assigned BMB shirt underneath their uniform bibbers.

Marching Band shirts will be used for some performances. Shirts should be kept clean and have no stains or marks on them.

The Bremen Color Guard may have different uniform requirements.

## Appearance While in Uniform

Band members are expected to wear band uniforms properly at all times. The uniform is a symbol of dignity, integrity, and honor. When the uniform is worn, a band member's personal appearance is to be impeccable. Band members are expected to observe the following items in order to present a neat personal appearance. The Color Guard may have some different interpretations of these rules, depending on the performance/show.

1. Shoes should be cleaned/shined.
2. Hair should be properly groomed. A band member's hair should not touch the coat collar and should be off the face. Long hair must be worn up under the shako during field/parade performances.
3. All buttons should be buttoned, clasps clasped, and zippers zipped.
4. Bibber bottoms must be fully buttoned and not touch the ground.
5. Sunglasses, medals, rings, earrings, watches and other accessories may not be worn unless specific permission is given by the director.
6. Heavy makeup should be avoided. Only the very basics, if necessary. No lipstick.
7. Band members shall not eat or drink while in a uniform, except water.
8. Students are responsible for making sure their uniform is maintained during the season.
9. Never wear an incomplete uniform in public. The uniform is to be worn in its entirety when in public except when the director has deemed it appropriate to make an exception.
10. No unbecoming actions of any kind are to be taken while in the uniform. The uniform is a symbol of dignity, integrity, and honor. Wear your uniform proudly!

## **Travel**

When the Bremen Marching Band leaves our home campus we become ambassadors of Bremen High School and Bremen High School District #228. It is of the utmost importance that we carry ourselves as such when we travel.

All rules and policies of Bremen High School District #228 and Bremen High School shall be followed. Anyone found in violation of any policies and rules will be subject to disciplinary action at the discretion of the director and/or school administrators. Disciplinary action may include immediate return of the student to the custody of his/her parents at the family's expense.

All members must travel to and from a performance with the Bremen Marching Band. (The exception: There are a few local performances that families are asked to provide transportation to and from.) In the event that a family is seeking permission to deviate from this protocol due to a special circumstance the parent must contact the director well in advance of the trip to see if something can be worked out. Documentation as to the reason for the exception may be required.

Part of the learning experience for all members includes the time traveling, preparing for performances, and watching other bands perform. Families should do their best to avoid conflicts that would require an exception.

### **Bus Etiquette**

Bremen Marching Band members will be assigned to a specific bus when buses are used for transportation. There will be a director and/or an adult chaperone on the bus while traveling. The front two seats, at minimum, are always to be left open for the director/adult chaperones. The director/adult chaperones must be able to communicate with the bus driver from these seats.

Students are expected to respect the bus driver and adult chaperones on the bus. Students are expected to follow instructions given to them by the adult chaperones and/or the bus driver. Students are expected to behave properly. Any student that fails to behave properly and/or does not follow instructions on a bus will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Policy Override Statement**

If at any time the policies set forth in this handbook come in conflict with Bremen District #228 or Bremen High School policies, Bremen District #228 and Bremen High School policies will be followed.

### **Closing**

With the support and encouragement from band members' families and the hard work and dedication from the band members, we will achieve our goals and have fun at the same time. We will work hard to make the band a rewarding experience for all its members and their families. The policies and procedures put forth in this handbook will help ensure that our goals are met and that our experience is rewarding. The director will review any exceptions to the policies stated in this handbook on a case by case basis, in order to treat each student fairly and with respect. Welcome to the Bremen High School Band!