HANFORD WEST HIGH SCHOOL
MIGHTY HUSKIES BAND

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Dear Parents and Mighty Huskies Band and Guard Members,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year! The Hanford West High School Instrumental Music Department has a proud history and tradition of excellence. We provide an opportunity for students to develop an appreciation for music and encourage the skills and discipline necessary for achieving musical success throughout a lifetime of experiences. Students learn the importance of a cooperative team effort while working together, as one, with fellow members to accomplish the shared goals.

In addition, students are not only challenged in developing their skills as musicians but also in areas of personal/social growth. Students have fun meeting new people, make lifelong friends, and travel to new and exciting places.

Here are some things to expect:

1. Fair does not mean equal.
2. Disrespect toward staff, peers, or parents will not be tolerated.
3. Marching band is part of class curriculum; therefore, your grade depends on your participation and attendance at all rehearsals and performances.
4. After-school rehearsals are Monday and Wednesday. Rehearsal begins at 5:30pm. Instruction ends at 9:00pm, announcements will follow. Please allow for 10-15 min for clean-up after.
5. Marching band is physically demanding!
6. We *practice* at home and *rehearse* in the band room. Individual practice time outside of school determines the success of the program.
7. Fundraising and Fair Share Contributions are vital for our programs ability to fund all of our activities and provide the best experience possible!
8. Winning isn't everything but wanting to is!
9. Act as if! Learn how to own the space you're in and command attention
10. To Avoid stress, turn in all forms, and don't miss any deadlines.

This packet constitutes your HWHS Band Handbook, it is the standard of expectation and guidelines for our music program. You will find the behavior, and grading policy, as well as our tentative Fall schedule! Please review this packet with your child and return the signed HWHS Contract and Emergency Form **no later than Friday, August 7th, 2026.** Thank you for your continued support and if you have further questions please don't hesitate to ask!

Programs we offer...

Brief descriptions of each of our ensembles are given below along with the class period or time of the year the ensemble occurs. Also included is an indication of the time commitment involved with participation in that particular group (Level 1, 2, 3 - see the bottom of the page for a more detailed description of the expected time commitment). Students may be a part of one or more of these ensembles.

Marching Band

Field Show (After School - Fall Only) (Level 3)
Marching Band is one of the most exciting performing experiences in our program. The fall is spent preparing the competition show for several competitions through October and November. The Marching Band also learns an entertaining show to perform at halftime for most football games and supports the football team from the stands.

Concert Band

Symphonic Band (5th Period - All Year) (Level 1)
The Symphonic Band performs exciting concert band music with a high level of focus on preparing the students for Wind Ensemble. This group is made up of students with a wide range of experience. From intermediate to advance. Members of this band are eligible to participate in Field, Parade, and Football Band.

Wind Ensemble (6th Period, Nov-June) (Level 2)
A premier concert band experience, the Wind Ensemble performs several times in the spring and travels out of town each year. Wind Ensemble is an intense, but very rewarding performing experience! To be considered for Wind Ensemble, you must be a member of the field show band.

Jazz Band

Jazz A (2nd-Period) (Level 2)
Jazz A is our premiere Jazz ensemble that plays outstanding big band music and has several performances throughout the year in town and out of town.

Jazz B (1st-Period) (Level 1)
Jazz B is open to anyone who is interested in playing jazz, even if you have never played before.

Color guard

Color guard (7th Period - All Year) (Level 3)
Color guard combines dance, drama, performance, and the manipulation of flags, sabers, and rifles into one magical artistry of pageantry. This outstanding performing group is an intricate part of the Marching Band in the fall. The students continue developing their skills throughout winter guard.

Winter guard (After School, Nov-April) (Level 3)
Winter guard is an indoor Color guard activity performed in gyms & arenas. All members of the Color guard are members of one of two Winter guards, A Guard or B Guard. Both groups compete locally and out of town.

Percussion

Percussion (4th Period) (Level 3)
All Percussionists, regardless of grade, take this class which focuses on Marching Band in the fall. For the rest of the year, students focus on percussion ensemble literature and concert percussion technique. Percussionists will be placed in one of our concert bands in the spring or remain in percussion class.

Winter Percussion (After School, Nov- April) (Level 3)
Winter Percussion is an indoor marching percussion activity performed in gyms & arenas. All percussionists participate in winter percussion at Clovis West as part of a well-rounded experience in percussion.

Time Commitment to Instrumental Music Ensembles

Level 1 - Minimal outside of school commitments, usually limited to concerts and some local festivals. Participation in sports and other activities are usually not an issue when participating in a level 1 ensemble.

Level 2 - Significant outside of school commitments including some rehearsals, several performances, festivals, and trips during the year. Participation in sports and other activities can be an issue from time to time, but conflicts and forward planning usually resolve these issues.

Level 3 - Extensive outside of school commitments including regular weekly rehearsals, several performances, festivals, and trips occur during the season or the year. Participation in sports or other activities concurrently can be challenging, but not impossible as long as students plan ahead and communicate with both coach/group leader and band director

Audition Policy
We proudly offer a variety of ensembles here at Hanford West High School, some ensembles may require auditions (such as winter percussion, chamber ensembles, etc). Admittance into these ensembles will be based on both a student's preparation, performance ability, attitude, and attendance track record. Some ensembles may also have chair placements, and those decisions will be made based on performance preparation and execution. Any further inquiries regarding auditions may be forwarded to your director.

A Year at a Glance...

Fall (August to November) The school year begins, and Marching Band hits the ground running (or marching!) preparing for another exciting season. The band performs at football games, competitions. Ending our season with the Hanford Christmas Parade!	**November/December** Auditions for Winter guard and Winter percussion are held. We also prepare for our winter concert and various Jazz band community performances.
Winter (January-March) Winter guard and Winter Percussion are in full swing as they begin competing both locally and around the state. All of the concert groups and jazz bands prepare for several concert and festival performances.	**Spring (April to June)** Our end of the year performances includes the HW musical and our spring concert. We may also take an end of the year trip, depending on the fundraising efforts. We conclude the year with our annual Band Banquet and Awards Night.

Stay Informed

Website

Our website contains a lot of information about our program. We will frequently post relevant information on the Announcements page that you may be interested in. All of our itineraries are posted and updated as soon as times come available. You can always access our most current calendar by visiting our website. A listing of everything coming up in the next few days or weeks. If you click on 'Calendar' in the menu at the top, you can see the calendar displayed in a monthly view. You can find our website at: **www.hwband.org**

BAND app

BAND is a private communications app that allowed groups to share information such as calendars, pdfs, pictures, videos, and send announcements. It is accessible via web browser or you can download the app on your smart devices. It is ***highly recommended*** that you take advantage of this free service. You may do so by using the QR Code or following the directions below:

Go to: Band.us
Search for: HW Band & Guard

Band Backer Meetings

Our Band Backers are a group that exists solely for the benefit of the band and color guard programs. They fundraise to financially support all programs offered, as well as help out at shows and events. Meetings occur weekly and are open to all parents and students who would like to attend.

Fair Share Contributions

These are voluntary donations we ask of our families that help offset cost of running the program. These donations help cover shoes, clothes, food, prop materials, entrance fees, trailer, and instrument maintenance, etc. Donations can be made in any installment system you prefer with:

- Cash
- Checks to “HW Band”
- Zelle (code 4979)
- Debit/Credit via SQUARE**:** https://square.link/u/Cwnjaka8

Square QR Code:

A donation letter with our 501c3 tax ID will be granted upon request for tax write off purposes.

Fundraising

There will be many fundraisers held throughout the year, which will help offset cost of Fair Share Contributions and District support. Parent help in planning and running these fundraisers is crucial, needed, and very much appreciated!

Grading & Expectations

Student Participation/Citizenship in Class (10%) of the grade's weight will be determined by student participation/citizenship in class. Students will lose these points for behavior issues, tardies, and not being prepared for class.

Student Participation/Citizenship in Rehearsal (30%) of the grade's weight will be determined by student participation/citizenship in rehearsals. Students will lose these points for behavior issues, tardies, and not being pre- pared for rehearsals. (being prepared includes athletic shoes, clothes, music, dot books. Jeans, Boots, Sandals, are not accepted as being prepared)

Playing/Written Test (10%) of the grade's weight will be determined by score on various playing and written test throughout the semester. Students will be given time during lunch, break, and after school to play the assigned test for Mr. Ramirez. Test may only be worth 10%, however failure to pass the test will result in being taken out of performances, which has a greater weight to the student's grade.

Final (10%) of the grade's weight is based off of the district written final taken at the end of each semester.

Performances (40%)
Participation in ALL rehearsals (including outside of class rehearsals) and performances is MANDATORY. Performances are what we work hard towards throughout the entire year. When an individual is missing, it affects the entire ensemble negatively. Each student is being held accountable for every performance, and if that student is missing, his/her grade will be negatively affected.

Grading scale

90%=A 80%=B 70%=C 60%=D 59%=F

Practice Outside of School

You must show consistent improvement in your playing throughout the year due to regular practice at home. While we do not 'grade' your practice time at home, it is expected and should be done on a daily basis. Twenty to thirty minutes a day (or more) would be a starting suggestion. A portion of your practice time should be devoted to developing your technique on your instrument with the remainder of the time spent on the music you need to prepare for class or upcoming performances.

Attendance Policy

Two Week Policy

An Excused Absences from Instrumental Music Events & Outside of the School Day Rehearsals could be any of the following: weddings, graduations, severe illness **with doctor's note**, sports competition, or a reason deemed appropriate **by the director**.

To obtain an Excused Absence you must first submit an Excused Absence email **at least two weeks prior** to the scheduled event/rehearsal. Excused absences will require a make-up assignment of enough length based on the time one would have spent at the event. (ex: If the performance was a three-hour event, the paper will be one that requires three hours-worth of work). Some absences may not require make-up work. Late make-up assignments will NOT be accepted. Due date will be determined on a case by case basis.

Missing Other Classes

Occasionally, band/jazz band/color guard/winter ensembles may cause you to miss other classes. Please check with your teachers ahead of the absence to get any missed assignments or to make up tests. When an ensemble is the reason for your absence from another class, you may be allowed to use the music class period immediately following the day we missed class to make up a test/study session for that class. Please be sure to check with the director before missing your music class for make-up due to any absence.

Emergencies

In the case of a last-minute emergency, a parent must contact the director via telephone call. Please note, contact information is listed on the first section of the handbook. Failure to communicate in this manner will result in an "unexcused absence". Communication from a student only will not be accepted, parent/guardian notification is required.

Tardy Policy Regarding Rehearsals and Performances

Class: If a student is tardy to a class period, directors will follow school policy. Please refer to the student/parent handbook for further information.

Marching Band: call time is at 5:30pm. Students are expected to begin to gather their materials, instruments, and make their way to the field to warm-up with laps. Instruction begins at 6:00pm. The final instruction is at 9:00pm, announcements will follow the end of the final run. Please allow for 10-15min for clean-up.

Conflicts

Conflicting schedules are something we must try to avoid at all times to ensure the success of our music program. Students will generally NOT be excused from Instrumental Music performances to participate in non-school events; vacations, parties, etc. Performances are what we work towards so missing a performance in a season may affect a student's eligibility to be a member of that ensemble. Missing a performance negatively effects the entire ensemble, not just the student absents. In a math class, if a student does poorly on a test it only affects their success. In ensemble and team activities such as music, a student missing from a performance brings down the level of all other students involved.

Instrumental Music Rehearsal vs. Athletic/Activity Practice
Student will split time between the two practices

Instrumental Music Performance vs. Athletic/Activity Practice
Student will attend the Instrumental Music performance

Instrumental Music Rehearsal vs. Athletic Game/Activity Performance
Student will attend the Athletic Game/Activity Performance

Instrumental Music Performance vs. Athletic Game/Activity Performance
Directors/Coaches of each activity will decide where the student will be most needed, and let the student know which activity to attend. Learning directors may also be involved in this decision-making process. Students will NOT decide which activity to attend.

*NOTE: Each case may be different depending on upcoming performances, competitions, or athletic matches, and Coaches and Music Directors will work with each other accordingly.

Commitment Policy

At Hanford West we strive to educate our students about commitment and enduring past stressful times in life. It is better to communicate and develop coping strategies to navigate through the tough times, than to simply quit. Real world application is important and makes our students a more well-rounded human in their post-secondary journey. Quitting in the middle of any season will result in an F for the semester and expulsion from the instrumental music program prohibiting taking any of the instrumental music classes offered at Hanford West moving forward. **Quitting in the middle of a season will result in immediate ineligibility for other school sports/activities.**

Disclaimer

Mr. Ramirez reserves the right to remove a student from a performance if they are absent during the week leading up to or of a performance, even if it is an excused absence or is due to illness/emergency, or if we feel they are not properly prepared to perform (don't know their music, disruptive behavior, consistently missing rehearsal, etc.). This includes school hours, as our class periods are treated as rehearsal time. This is not necessarily a punishment, but missing rehearsals negatively affects the rest of the ensemble, and we reserve this right to preserve the experience of the other students.

Mighty Huskies Band and Color Guard
Rules and Guidelines

In General...

• No profanity
• No PDA (Public Display of Affection)
• No playing any instrument other than instruments you own or that are assigned to you. This includes color guard and percussion equipment.
• No students in any music office unless admitted by a director.
• Show respect for all instruments, equipment, music facilities, and other people's property.
• Show respect to directors, staff, fellow students, and guests.
• Common sense should rule all of the time. If you would not do something in the presence of a director, then don't do it!
• Cell phones should not be out during class unless otherwise specified by a director. Cell phone MUST be turned off during performances. Cell phones are to be left in your locker/backpack/instrument case during all performances and rehearsals unless otherwise specified.
• Students are responsible for obtaining any information missed due to an absence.

In the Band Room...

• No students allowed in any band room without a director or staff member present/director approval.
• Absolutely NO food or drink (except water in a spill-proof container).
• NO GUM or candy. Gum/Food/Drink may result in a lunch detention/campus beautification, or lowered participation grade.
• Only students who are a member of the instrumental music program are permitted in the band room.
• No running, horseplay, or throwing items.
• Backpacks must be kept in or next to your locker.
• Instrument cases must be kept in your locker during rehearsal or small cases may be placed under your chair.
• Students MUST get approval to write on the white-board, play the stereo, videos, or piano.

Rehearsal Etiquette...

• Come prepared to every rehearsal with your own music, instrument, and pencil.
• Always warm up properly with good tone and technique.
• Generally, talking is not permitted during rehearsal.
• Please raise your hand if you have question and wait to be called upon.
• You are responsible for putting your own chair and stand away after every rehearsal.

Instrument Lockers...

• Lockers will be assigned as needed.
• You may only use a lock checked out to you from the instrumental music department. All other locks will be removed.
• **Your locker MUST be locked when you are not in the room.**
• Lockers are to be kept clean and free of clutter.
• Absolutely NO food in your lockers.
• Do not hang on the locker doors.

Internet Etiquette... For Students AND Parents

• Please remember that you represent our program when posting on Facebook, etc. NEVER say anything negative about another music program on the internet, a forum, Facebook, etc!
• Please do not post videos on any social media (YouTube, Facebook, etc.) of any performing ensembles. This is to protect our copyright compliance, and the privacy of our students.
• DO NOT send Facebook friend requests/messages to any director or staff member. If you need to contact a director or staff member, please use the school email addresses provided on the website.
• We encourage all students and parents to participate in our group Facebook pages, etc.

Uniform According to Specific Ensembles

While at an event, students must stay in FULL festival uniform *(i.e. Men: tucked in shirts and ties. Jackets off is allowed but stored neatly. Women: cardigans and nylons still on. Change of shoes allowed but must remain in a black dress shoe ex. black heels, to black flats after performance)* until otherwise stated by the director. When not in performance uniform, students will wear: blue jeans, athletic shoes, and current Instrumental Music Program T-Shirt, unless stated otherwise.

Jazz Band

Men: Black slacks and belt, Black dress shirt button top, dress shoes. If wearing a black blazer, white shirts are allowed.

Women: slacks/long skirt/long dress, blouse, formal flats or appropriate heels.

Please see director if you have any questions.

Color Guards

Uniform: Determined by the color guard instructor. Dyed hair is okay during the off season however it must be covered at the expense of the student/family during competition season.

Rehearsal attire: Appropriate dance wear in rehearsals is acceptable for the color guard as long as it is not distracting and covers the body appropriately. Tights, black socks, and dark clothing is highly recommended.

Symphonic Band/Concert Band

Uniform: Concert black attire.

Men: Please do your best to be in a tuxedo, or black suit with a black vest. Black shoes, black pants, black dress shirt, and black tie is a great alternative. Solid calf-length black socks and a black tie are a must. Long sleeved shirts only. Formal black dress attire is required. No tennis shoes or drill masters, dress shoes are expected. Please let us know if you need assistance with concert attire.

Women: appropriate formal black attire for their instrument. If you wear a dress or a skirt, it MUST be solid black and fall below the knee while sitting. No slits above the knee. When wearing a dress/skirt ladies must also wear black tights/nylons. If it does not fit the criteria, you will not be allowed to perform, or will be asked to change into black slacks. Therefore, slacks and a blouse are highly encouraged. Women must also have arms covered from elbows up while on stage (cardigan or formal jacket but may be removed in the audience if blouse/dress is still in dress code). Addendum: High heels are acceptable so long as the heel does not exceed three inches.

Marching Band

Half Uniform: Solid black calf-length socks, black (Super) Drill Master marching shoes, and band shirt/black or white undershirt.

Full Uniform: Solid black calf-length socks, black (Super) Drill Masters, uniform pants, band shirt or black/white undershirt, marching coat, helmet, plume, gauntlets, and black gloves (white for drum major).

*Note: Gloves must be in good condition, and instruments must by polished.

Marching Rehearsal Policies and Procedures

• Bring a jug of water that is clearly marked with your name on it to all marching rehearsals.
• You are required to have your Lanyard with all drill at all marching rehearsals.
• Refer to weekly agenda for goals, and always follow rehearsal protocol.

Dress Code

• Athletic wear (shorts, shirt), socks, and athletic type shoes are to be worn to all marching Instrumental Music rehearsals.
• Sunblock is recommended to be worn to all marching Instrumental Music rehearsals.
• Shirts on at all times!
• Shoes are to be highly polished prior to ALL events.
• Solid black long socks and appropriate under garments are to be worn under the marching pants.
• Instruments and equipment are to be cleaned, polished, and/or touched up prior to all performances.

ALL STUDENTS PLEASE REMEMBER:

When you are at a performance venue, a trip, or a festival you are representing not only the Hanford West Band, but HJUHSD. This also goes for if you are wearing an Instrumental Music Program shirt OUTSIDE of a performance venue, trip, or festival. Conduct yourselves accordingly and be aware of the impact you can have by your actions when wearing a uniform representing our schools and district.

Discipline Policy/Trips

STUDENTS FOUND WITH DRUGS OR ALCOHOL WHILE THE BAND IS TRAVELING WILL BE SENT HOME IMMEDIATELY, AT THEIR PARENT/GUARDIAN'S EXPENSE. In addition, students smoking, using alcohol, chewing tobacco, or under the Influence of drugs during any band function will be turned over to the school Administration for disciplinary action. The student will lose his/her membership in the band program and be subject to expulsion from school.

Conducting oneself in a safe and respectful manner is always the best policy for anyone. It is expected that all students will conduct themselves in a manner that would not create a situation that causes or could cause physical harm to themselves or others, and/or bring embarrassment or discredit to the band, school, and community. Each student is expected to be reliable, consistently on time, and loyal to the band program and their peers. For safety reasons, students are to remain in groups of at least three students when on trips with the music department. It is the student's responsibility to see that he/she has eaten prior to participating in band activities. Skipping meals can lead to unsafe conditions should the student faint while marching on the pavement, etc.

Medical Release Forms
All students must have on file in the band office a medical release form prior to traveling on any band sponsored activities. Students are expected to notify Mr. Ramirez of any special medical situations prior to participating in band rehearsals or performances. It is the student's responsibility to carry his/her inhaler with them to all rehearsals and performances.

Trips
A trip is an extension of the classroom and is governed not only by the school district guidelines for trips but also by the classroom rules and expectations of the teacher. The focus of all our trips is on education, and this philosophy is supported by the itinerary that students receive prior to all of our trips and the expectations regarding use of our time during the trip. Students are encouraged to observe other performing groups and to socialize with other musicians from other schools in attendance. Students are requested to stay with members of the band. School trips are not the arena to plan family outings or time with boyfriends, girlfriends, etc. Students do not "accompany" their parents while on a Band trip. Parents may "accompany" their children as long as all trip rules; including the "3 student rule" is being followed. A list of trip rules is included on the back of most trip itineraries, as well as in this handbook.

Transportation
Students are to travel to and from performances in designated school buses or school arranged car pools. Students are not excused to leave in the middle of any trip. Written requests from parents in the form of a **3rd party transportation form** must be given to the band director in advance of the trip and are subject to approval from the band director.
*****When approved, students will be released to their parents only.**
A school trip begins and ends at school. Plan your time around that time allotment. The band director will handle all student release requests on an individual basis.

Performer Pledge & Contract

Every Hanford West Instrumental Music student must agree to the following:

Attitude: I will bring a positive attitude to the stage, field, or floor, no matter how the day has gone before that.

Effort: I will put in the necessary practice time outside of rehearsal to be prepared and I will give 100% effort for the duration of every rehearsal and performance.

Attendance: I will attend all schedule rehearsals and performances.

Character: I will always act in a way that brings pride and honor to our band, our school and our community. I will follow the behavioral guidelines and policies of the Hanford West Instrumental Music Program, Hanford West High School, and HJUHSD Code of Ethics.

Respect: I will respect all of my fellow student performers, student leadership, parent chaperones, school administrators, staff, and directors.

Service: I will serve my section and the ensemble striving to ensure that everyone has the best experience possible.

Balance: I will manage my time, maintain my grades, eat properly, and get enough sleep to be at my very best for the good of the ensemble.

Commitment: I understand that I have made a commitment to not only the program, but to my fellow performers. I will see that commitment through to the end of the season, no matter what circumstances may arise.

The success of each ensemble within the program is dependent on the outstanding performance of every individual. As an individual member, please commit yourself to the highest levels of excellence possible for the duration of your time in the program.

Final Thought...

THANK YOU for joining our program. We are very passionate about our students and the positive impact music education can have in your life. We hope that you have an awesome experience this school year. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Hanford West Mighty Huskies
Band and Color Guard Handbook
2026-2027