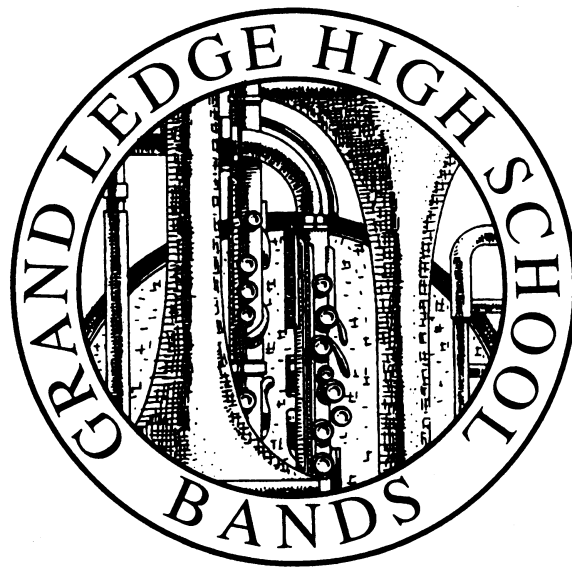


# **GRAND LEDGE HIGH SCHOOL BANDS**

**Pursuing Excellence in Instrumental Music Education  
and Performance**



## **Student/Parent Handbook 2017 – 2018**

**JOHN SZCZEROWSKI  
DIRECTOR OF BANDS**

**E-Mail:** [szczeroskij@glcomets.net](mailto:szczeroskij@glcomets.net)

**Website:** [www.glhsbands.com](http://www.glhsbands.com)

Dear Students and Parents,

I'd like to begin by welcoming you to what I'm certain will be a wonderful school year. Not many people can say they are working in their dream job, but I can. It's my pleasure to be a part of a nationally known program and to work with some of the finest young people I've ever known. Like I always say, the students are the BEST part of the job.

For many students, band is an important part of their high school career that will always provide them with fond memories. Through band, many students have had an opportunity to meet new people, make new friends, and have fun while working hard to perform with a great musical ensemble. In band, every member is an essential part of the ensemble, therefore your responsibilities include preparing for rehearsals, being on time, and actively participating in every rehearsal and performance. Your experience will depend on what you put into the program. Many before you have worked hard to bring the band to a high level of musical achievement, and it is up to you to continue that tradition.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with as much information as possible regarding the band program and all the opportunities it offers. Please read this handbook carefully. You are responsible for knowing its contents. Being informed and prepared will make your high school band experience much more enjoyable and rewarding.

Parents, I encourage you to become involved. Any time that you can volunteer will be greatly appreciated and will help to keep the band running smoothly. Please be sure to sign and detach the last page of the handbook and have your son/daughter return the form to me.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by email: [szczeroskij@glcomets.net](mailto:szczeroskij@glcomets.net) or 517-925-5824. Also check the website: [www.glhsbands.com](http://www.glhsbands.com) for any updates or more detailed information regarding upcoming events.

I am looking forward to a great year filled with hard work, great memories, and beautiful music!

Sincerely,

John Szczeroski, Director  
Grand Ledge High School Bands

## CALENDAR

All Band events for the school year are found on the [Music Department Calendar](#). The High School Music Calendar is linked from our Band website at <http://www.glhsbands.com>. You can also access the Calendar directly at [www.calendarwiz.com/glhsmusic](http://www.calendarwiz.com/glhsmusic). It is the responsibility of each individual student (and their parents) to be up-to-date on the calendar. ALL students will receive a paper copy of the 2017-18 GLHS Band Calendar on the first day of school!! You will also find updates on Facebook: Like Grand Ledge Bands.

## TRIMESTERS

Grand Ledge High School currently runs on a trimester schedule. While the school year is broken up into three distinct trimesters, the High School Bands function as one continuous, uninterrupted school year.

**Those students wishing to be a part of the Grand Ledge High School Bands need to understand that they are making a commitment to the entire school year (all 3 trimesters), and that any deviation from that commitment is acceptable only for academic reasons.** An example of an acceptable academic reason would be the need to re-take a class needed for graduation during senior year to regain credit. Should an academic reason arise, it is the responsibility of the student to bring this to Mr. Szczerowski's attention as soon as possible, so that another student may potentially be re-scheduled to take their spot.

## ENSEMBLES

**THE COMET MARCHING BAND:** The Comet Marching Band performs at all home football games, parades (Grand Ledge High School Homecoming Parade – Grand Ledge Christmas Parade – Grand Ledge Memorial Day Parade), various school assemblies, invitationals, and the annual Grand Ledge Marching Band Exhibition. The Comet Marching Band rehearses on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. through the month of September and October. While marching band is an extra-curricular activity, members must be concurrently enrolled in a band class. The Comet Marching Band is a symbol of excellence in our school and community, and it has a long history of tradition and pride.

**WIND SYMPHONY:** This concert organization consists of the most advanced instrumental musicians at Grand Ledge High School, and frequently performs college-level literature and programs. Membership is open to high school students by audition. The Wind Symphony performs numerous concerts throughout the year. Wind Symphony students are expected to attend sectionals scheduled outside of the school day unless there is an unavoidable conflict. Wind Symphony students are strongly encouraged to participate in our private lesson program, as well as participate in solo and ensemble festivals, audition for the Michigan All-State ensembles. Solo and Ensemble Festival, and perform as part of our recital program.

**SYMPHONY BAND and CONCERT BAND:** These are concert organizations consisting of students in grades 9-12, by audition only. The Symphony and Concert Bands perform numerous concerts throughout the year. Emphasis will be placed on the fundamentals of musical development and performance. Concert Band and Symphony Band students are strongly encouraged to participate in our private lesson program, as well as participate in solo and ensemble festivals, and perform as part of our recital program.

**CHAMBER MUSIC PROGRAM:** These ensembles are dedicated to the performance of the finest in wind and percussion chamber music repertoire. Membership will vary according to the instrumentation of the work being performed. Students will be invited to participate in a chamber ensemble by Mr. Szczerowski based on their performance in the other concert bands.

Enrollment in the GLHS Chamber Music Program will begin after Marching Band Season and will be flexible to all student obligations, especially those involved in the fall musical. My vision for the Chamber Music Program is to have a set rehearsal time each week. All groups will receive a weekly coaching with Mr. Szczerowski or private instructor and will be responsible for having a student-lead rehearsal twice/month. The end goal is for Grand Ledge High School to continually be represented at the Michigan Youth Arts Festival – the highest venue for Chamber Music in the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association.

Examples of Chamber Music Ensembles:

- Large Woodwind Choir\*
- Large Brass Choir\*
- Percussion Ensemble
- Woodwind Quintet
- Brass Quintet
- Saxophone Quartet
- Trombone Quartet

There are so many opportunities for chamber music ensembles. All students are encouraged to form an ensemble. If you are going to sign up for S&E... YOU MUST BE SERIOUS ABOUT IT!!

\*These ensembles will perform at District Solo and Ensemble under the direction of Mr. Szczerowski

PLEASE NOTE: The large brass and woodwind choirs will be made of students from WIND SYMPHONY and will perform at District Solo and Ensemble. All members of Wind Symphony should consider District Solo and Ensemble on Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> a mandatory obligation!

Jazz Band will meet on Monday OR Wednesday evenings from 6-8 in the band room. Rehearsals will begin after marching season with a goal to have a few pieces ready for Collage and Winter Concerts. Participation in Jazz Band will be invitation only.

## PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

A complete list of Band “events” can be found on the [GLHS Music Department Calendar](#) – either through the GLHS Bands website at [www.glhsbands.com](http://www.glhsbands.com), or directly at [www.calendarwiz.com/glhsmusic](http://www.calendarwiz.com/glhsmusic). Please use this calendar when planning your family schedule for the 2017-18 school year. Each and every student is important to the success of this program, and we must be able to count on 100% attendance at rehearsals and performances. If a family emergency occurs unexpectedly, a parent needs to contact Mr. Szczerowski ([szczerowskij@glcomets.net](mailto:szczerowskij@glcomets.net)) as soon as possible. Occasionally, there may be family commitments (weddings, graduations, etc.); in which case, we will try to be flexible and work with the student and parents on an individual basis. These circumstances should be brought to Mr. Szczerowski’s attention well in advance. **Please note that all excused absences from a performance must still be made-up.**

**With regard to extra-curricular activities (athletics, clubs, etc.):** most conflicts between extra-curricular activities and band can be avoided, or alleviated, when pre-planning is done, and advance notice is given. It is critical for students and parents to compare the extra-curricular activity’s schedule with the band calendar in advance. When a conflict is unavoidable, the two events will be weighted for “importance.” For example, a band **performance** would outweigh an extra-curricular **practice/rehearsal**. An athletic **game** would outweigh a band **rehearsal**, etc. Student athletes and their parents should closely check the athletic schedule at the start of a sports season, and compare with the High School Music Calendar. Again, with advanced notice, conflicts can often be avoided! **This is the responsibility of the students and parents!**

## CLASSROOM/REHEARSAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Rehearsal will begin when the director stands on the conductor's podium. At this time, it is expected that it will immediately become quiet and an atmosphere of learning will be established. Anyone who is not seated and/or does not have proper equipment will be marked tardy and will lose points from their weekly rehearsal grade.
2. Respect others and their property.
3. No running, horseplay, or foolish behavior will be tolerated.
4. Keep the band room neat and organized! Pick up after yourselves!! CAGE ROOM AND BAND LOCKERS!!!
5. Practice your music OUTSIDE of rehearsal (homework.)
6. All measures will be numbered if they are not already done so.
7. When asking a specific question about the piece we are rehearsing, always start by telling me the measure number.
8. Students will be on time for class...i.e. EARLY
9. Have a PENCIL in your folder AT ALL TIMES – pencil should be on stand during rehearsal.
10. Keep your instrument in good working condition and having all necessary accessories (reeds, mouthpieces, valve oil, sticks, etc.)
11. Reed players should always have three (3) working reeds at all times at their chair!
12. Be respectful towards others.
13. NO food, drinks (other than water), or GUM permitted in the band room or practice rooms. Water is fine, but please dispose of empty water bottles when finished... in the recycling bin!
14. Hats are NOT allowed during rehearsal inside the band room or auditorium.
15. Students will not speak when the director is speaking.
16. Students will only play when instructed to do so.
17. **NO cell phones are to be used or visible during rehearsal!**
  - a. **Failure to follow this policy will result in confiscation of phone, loss of daily points, and/or disciplinary action.**
  - b. **Cell phones will be placed inside designated containers at the discretion of the director.**
18. Students are welcome (and encouraged!) to use the Band Room and practice rooms before school, during lunch, or after school. **However, due to the many thousands of dollars of instruments and equipment in the Band Room, only current band students are invited to be in the Band Room at any time of day.**
19. Practice rooms are meant for practicing – private lessons will take precedent over individual practice.
20. Keep all of your equipment stored in your band locker. Locker contents are very visible. **It is critical that anyone using a band locker have a combination lock with the combination stored in an easily remembered location. Grand Ledge High School will not be responsible for equipment taken from un-secured lockers.**
21. Percussion equipment is to be used only by percussionists, and all percussion equipment is to be covered and organized at the end of every rehearsal.
22. Chairs and music stands set up for rehearsal are not to be disturbed. If you need to borrow a chair or stand for a rehearsal or practice, please return it when finished!
23. **Students are responsible for any music assigned to them.** Lost original parts (not copies) need to be replaced by the student. The standard cost is \$5.00 for concert-size music (this includes the shipping charges from the publisher), \$8.00 for flip folders, and \$15.00 for concert folders. Loss of music will result in a grade reduction.
24. No large cases will be allowed in the band set up. Assemble your instrument and grab all necessary supplies and return case to your instrument storage cubby.
25. If you are unable to participate because of an injury or other health-related reason, you MUST have a medical excuse signed by a physician. You will be expected to have all required equipment and materials. Wind players should have their instruments assembled and in their hands to follow the music during the rehearsal. If there is an injury that prevents you from participating an alternate responsibility will be assigned.
26. There is no room for complainers – if you have a concern that directly affects you, approach the director in a POSITIVE manner and you will ALWAYS be heard.
27. All GLHS Rules apply in this classroom.
28. Look – you chose to be in this class. I'm not forcing you to be here. If you can't follow these simple rules and expectations...this is not the right class for you.

## LISTENING

As your Director, my approach to being successful in any ensemble is to enhance and build student listening skills. This is not meant that listening to ME is the most important aspect of class (though, it is a plus,) but listening musically to each other. My number one goal as your director is to always bring the group together to a unified approach. This approach, in turn, builds skills necessary to making “split second” adjustments at all times, more specifically, on stage during our performances.

What separates the best musicians in the world from the rest of us: never-ending, CRITICAL, listening skills, which constantly evaluate personal and ensemble performance. Questions we should always ask ourselves in the classroom:

1. Am I producing the BEST sound I can?
2. Am I in tune? With my section? With the ensemble?
  - a. Moreover, how do I know?
3. Does my articulation match what the composer is asking?
  - a. Does it match the rest of the ensemble?
  - b. Does it match what the director has requested?
4. Do I have the most important part of the piece right now? If not, who does? Can you hear them?
5. Can I hear ALL voices from where I’m sitting in the classroom?
6. Am I pushing myself to listen for new material in our literature every day in class?
7. Does my dynamic match the person next to me? Is it supposed to?
8. Does the manner in which I’m playing positively contribute to that of the ensemble?

In essence, every note played in class should be approached in regards to the WHOLE ENSEMBLE. At the end of the day we don’t perform as individuals, we perform as a unit. The older you get, the more this approach equates to everyday life.

## US vs. ME

I firmly believe success in any ensemble begins with an “us” mentality. This class cannot, and will not, be designed for YOUR personal fulfillment; by design, this class is the collective effort of many in achieving a common goal. Please don’t ask, “Mr. S. Can we play something really hard?!?!” In my (not so humble) opinion, performing in an ensemble, always in tune, within the same style, collectively IS really hard! Working to the point where our ears are ALWAYS on someone else is among the most difficult concepts in a refined ensemble.

Don’t get me wrong; I’m confident you will enjoy this class! As a performer, I find enjoyment through knowing that I’m playing with the best sound, in tune, with my ears open. And yes, we WILL play, what I think, is some very challenging literature this year!

## GRADING POLICY

### Final Trimester Grade

Your grade each trimester is a composite of your attendance, attitude, participation, preparation, tests, and performances. Grades are a culmination of points – no weighted grades will be given.

### Weekly/Daily Rehearsal Grades

Attendance at all rehearsals is essential! It is very difficult for the band to rehearse or perform without seeing you or hearing your part, thus the performance of the entire band depends upon you being present. Please take steps to minimize absences from rehearsals. Serious dedication to excellence is required in order for us to complete the work necessary for our performances; therefore every student is expected to practice on a regular basis outside of band rehearsal time. A positive attitude is also essential in helping us achieve our goals; a negative or less than serious attitude hinders everyone and will not be tolerated.

The following Weekly/Daily Grade will be decided if the aforementioned Rehearsal Expectations are met in addition to the following:

You will earn a maximum of 5 points per rehearsal if:

- You are on time and in your seat ready to play when band rehearsal begins at 3 minutes after the bell rings.
- You actively participate in a constructive manner throughout the entire rehearsal.
- You have all necessary materials for class.
- You are musically prepared for class.

You will only earn 3 points per rehearsal if:

- You are tardy by less than 5 minutes.
- You are a distraction during rehearsal through excessive talking, not paying attention and missing entrances during rehearsal, or having a bad attitude/being rude.
- You do not have your music or necessary materials.
- You show signs that you are not musically prepared.

You will earn 0 points per rehearsal if:

- Your absence is unexcused.
- You are tardy by more than 5 minutes.
- You forgot your instrument.
- You are on your cell phone during class.
- Your behavior is so disruptive that you are told to put your instrument away or sent down to the office.
- You fully demonstrate that you have put no effort into your musical preparation.
- You choose not to adhere to the student responsibilities laid out above.

### **Playing Tests/Homework**

Students will be required to participate in playing tests, chair tests, and written exams throughout the trimester. These tests will vary in points and musical literature (scales, etudes, sight reading.) Students will also occasionally receive assignments that need to be completed outside of class time.

- Pop quizzes (playing tests) may arise to reinforce concert literature. This applies to ALL ensembles.
- Some tests will be performed in class – others will be scheduled for a one on one test with me after school, or recorded in a practice room. Timely notice will always be given for preparation! ☺
- Michigan’s State Standards and Benchmarks of Music Education dictate that students must be able to play alone, in front of others, in their classes. Not only does performing alone in class build soloistic musical skills, it also builds character and personal skills that students can apply to all facets of life.
  - NEVER, under any circumstance, will students be “put down, laughed at, or made an example” through their personal playing.
  - All individual playing in class will be supportive and EDUCATIONAL!!
  - There will be many times where I will make mistakes in front of you, whether teaching or playing. I intend to learn from those mistakes, not be embarrassed by them. Similarly, I encourage you to do the same.

### **Concerts/Performances/Festivals**

You will receive full credit if:

- You are on time, dressed appropriately, and behave appropriately

Your grade will drop by 10% if:

- You are late for the performance call time/warm-up
- You are not dressed appropriately for the performance

You will receive 0% if:

- You are not permitted to perform because you did not learn your music
- Behave inappropriately
- You do not perform because you are late or absent without a legitimate, documented excuse. A documented excuse would include a doctor’s statement, or a written note from a parent that specifically explains the

absence or late arrival. Work, doctor's appointments, another performance or concert, etc. will NOT be excused.

**In order to be excused from a performance, you must have a written note/email with a PARENT SIGNATURE at least four weeks before the performance.** Emergency excuses are granted for unforeseeable events, such as illness or funerals. Please call 517-925-5824 or email to notify Mr. Szczerowski and follow up with a written note. Students with a legitimate excuse will be permitted to do an alternative assignment, generally a small playing test of excerpts from the concert repertoire. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. **IF YOU ARE SICK THE DAY OF A CONCERT AND CANNOT MAKE IT, YOUR PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST CALL ME AT SCHOOL!!**

Students work very hard to prepare for performances. It is unfair to the members of the band to have a performance diminished by missing students. Please respect your classmates' hard work by arranging your schedule so that you can attend all performances.

### **Attending Live Concerts**

One of the best ways to improve one's musicianship is to attend live performances. All students are expected to attend one (1) live concert each trimester – this will count as a 50-point homework assignment, which must be completed before the end of each trimester. Attending another GLHS Band Concert will NOT COUNT.

Examples: Hayes MS Bands, GLHS Choirs, GLHS Musicals, MSU Recitals/Concerts, Lansing Symphony, Grand Rapids Symphony, etc. Students will provide a copy of the concert program with the date and signature of a parent/guardian. This is the document that I will use to verify your attendance and assign the grade.

### **Senior Reflections**

In lieu of a concert attendance grade, seniors may submit a senior reflection for their final trimester. This may be up to 1-3 pages covering your time in band at GLHS. This is a time to put your thoughts in paper as you prepare to leave the band room.

## **PRIVATE LESSONS**

**All students are encouraged to participate in private lessons to improve their individual skill on their instrument.** We are extremely fortunate in Grand Ledge to have Michigan State University's College of Music, as well as so many other local resources. Private lessons are a must for serious Band students, and the many private teachers that we bring into Grand Ledge High School can help take our students to that next level of performance. In addition, the Grand Ledge Music Booster Association offers a three-year private lesson reimbursement scholarship. For more information, please go to: <https://www.glmba.org/private-lessons>

**NEW POLICY THIS YEAR:** The GLHS practice rooms will only be available for private lessons for students studying with teachers on the Director Approved List of Teachers. You may study with anyone you wish, however, these rooms will be reserved for approved teachers.

Basic requirement for becoming an Approved Teacher: a minimum of four years of study at an accredited university with a major in Music Education or Music Performance.

No GLHS student will be allowed to teach lessons in the practice rooms.

## **INSTRUMENT CARE**

You will not be penalized if your instrument is in the repair shop. Please consult Mr. Szczerowski before sending an instrument into the shop. Mr. Szczerowski, if needed, should send instruments to the repair shop. **PLAYING ON AN INSTRUMENT IN DISREPAIR JEOPORDIZES YOUR ABILITY TO MASTER OUR MUSIC – DELAYING REPAIR COULD CAUSE A LOWER GRADE IN CLASS!!**



## WIND SYMPHONY PRIVATE LESSONS

The Grand Ledge High School Wind Symphony has one of our state's longest traditions of excellence; a resume that has been built over several years and revolves around one main factor: pride. Students in Wind Symphony will be held to extremely high standards to avoid complacency. This may mean regular chair tests and/or rotating part assignments. Similarly, every student in Wind Symphony must continually earn their spot in this ensemble day-after-day, week-after-week by practicing their parts outside of class, and arriving to rehearsal eager to improve as an ENSEMBLE! (refer to section: listening)

All Wind Symphony members are **MORE THAN HIGHLY ENCOURAGED** to take private lessons even if you have not done so in the past. Taking lessons is the best way to have your skills flourish under the watchful eyes/ears of an expert at your instrument. Even if you don't intend to continue playing music after high school, I promise you will value your unique set of musical skills and the lessons of thoughtful, diligent practice all your life. For more information, please go to: <https://www.glmba.org/private-lessons>

**NEW POLICY THIS YEAR:** The GLHS practice rooms will only be available for private lessons for students studying with teachers on the Director Approved List of Teachers. You may study with anyone you wish, however, these rooms will be reserved for approved teachers.

Basic requirement for becoming an Approved Teacher: a minimum of four years of study at an accredited university with a major in Music Education or Music Performance.

No GLHS student will be allowed to teach lessons in the practice rooms.

**PRACTICING AT HOME:** Do you have a set routine to play every day? Build one that takes you 15-20 minutes and do EVERYDAY!! My playing blossomed when my teacher built a routine for me based on sound quality and fundamentals. I still remember the routine my teacher established for me when I was 15...do you want to hear it??

Routines can/should include the following:

1. Long tones.
2. Lip slurs.
3. Scales and scale patterns.
4. Varied articulation exercises.
5. Finger flexibilities.
6. RUDIMENTS!! ☺ ...every percussionists favorite thing.
7. What are YOUR personal weaknesses? PRACTICE those things specific to your playing!

ALL MEMBERS of Wind Symphony should seriously consider registering and performing as a soloist and Solo and Ensemble. There is no better way to improve your performance skills throughout the year.

## SECTIONALS

There may be times where Mr. S. wishes to hold sectionals to reinforce certain parts of our concert literature. Timely notice will be given and 100% attendance is expected. For your planning, sectionals would occur during the evening hours...after private lessons, athletic practices, etc.

# AUDITIONS AND PLAYING EXAMS

## Concert Wind & Percussion

Band placements for the following year (2017-2018) will take place in the middle of 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester and will also serve as large playing exam for ALL students – except seniors ☺ While this may seem early for a large exam, I need to allow time for the guidance office to coordinate schedules....a LARGE undertaking!

You cannot “opt out” of a band placement exam. **Auditions (playing exams) are required of all students interested in participating in the Grand Ledge High School Band Program for the following school year.** If you do not play an exam, you will earn a zero and a meeting will be held with the director, student and parents to decide the students’ continuation in the Grand Ledge High School Band Program. Playing exams in Trimester 3 are among your largest grades of the year.

Also, as a side note, all incoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be heard in the same manner for their band placement.

Auditions will be live in a one-on-one setting with Mr. Szczerowski and will be scheduled after school. They generally consist of a collection of etudes/excerpts for your instrument, scales, and sight-reading. A wide range of times/dates will be available to accommodate all students and their family schedules. Student placement in all concert bands is based entirely on “how they perform” the audition music. The age/grade of a student is not a factor.

## CONCERT UNIFORMS

**Concert Shoes: Men** - plain, black, tie down, polished dress shoe, black socks. **Ladies** - Plain, black, polished dress shoe. **No sandals or flip-flops.**

Men are required to purchase a white wing-tipped tuxedo shirt, and these will be fitted and ordered through the school at the beginning of the year.

No unusually large necklaces, earrings, bracelets, or large rings are to be worn with the concert uniform. Conservative jewelry is acceptable. See Mr. Szczerowski if you have questions.

The concert uniforms should be cleaned before every performance. Tuxes should be dry-cleaned (never washed!), and skirts and tops can be hand washed or dry-cleaned. If you take your concert uniform to Baryames in Grand Ledge, and let them know you are “with the Band,” you will receive a discounted rate!

**If any part of the concert uniform cannot be obtained due to financial reasons, please contact Mr. Szczerowski as soon as possible.**

## MARCHING UNIFORMS

**This uniform is the apparel that identifies you as a member of the Grand Ledge High School Comet Marching Band. It is to be worn ONLY at authorized appearances and it must ALWAYS be worn properly.**

**THE GLHS MARCHING BAND UNIFORM IS STORED AT SCHOOL BEFORE AND AFTER PERFORMANCES. PROPER HANGING AND STORAGE IS ESSENTIAL. THOSE WHO NEGLECT TO CARE FOR THEIR UNIFORM MAY BE DISCIPLINED FOR ABUSING SCHOOL PROPERTY. (See care of uniform section)**

**REQUIREMENT: A WHITE T-SHIRT or WHITE LONG SLEEVE SHIRT is to be worn under the marching coat. NO TANK TOPS. Please plan ahead. If a white shirt is not available for a performance, you will not be permitted to perform.... yes, seriously.**

The adjustable chinstrap is to be worn at all times. The chinstrap should be adjusted so that the hat does not fall back while playing or at attention. **The hat is never to be worn backwards.**

The plume is fastened into the hat by simply inserting it into the plume holder and pushing it down. To take the plume off of the hat, pinch the wire at the base of the plume while pulling it off. This is best done with the help of one of our parent volunteers before and after a performance.

White marching band gloves are 2 pairs for \$5.00 and must be purchased in the high school band room **before** performances days – **NOT** just prior to a performance. Gloves must be **clean (white)** and in good condition. Gloves should be washed after each performance. All wind players must wear gloves in performances.

Shoes are made of white leather and must be paid for with band camp fees. Shoes must be clean and white for all performances. Only **WHITE** socks are to be worn with the marching band uniform. White socks must be high-cut. NO LOW-CUT socks. Nail polish remover is an excellent cleaner to use on the white shoes.

**If any part of the marching uniform cannot be obtained due to financial reasons, please contact Mr. Szczerowski as soon as possible – prior to the day of a performance.**

## **CARE OF THE MARCHING UNIFORM**

Proper care of the uniform is essential. Members must pride themselves in taking good care of school equipment. When the Grand Ledge High School Comet Marching Band performs, the visual impact must be as great as the musical impact. This means that each and every member must do their best to insure that the uniform stays clean and that shoes are polished. If your uniform needs cleaning between games please inform the parent helper when returning your uniform.

## **MARCHING BAND PERFORMANCE GROOMING**

To insure the clean, uniform appearance of the Comet Marching Band, the following grooming regulations will be STRICTLY adhered to:

Hair is to be worn off the uniform collar and behind the ears. Band members may choose to meet these requirements by either cutting the hair to a manageable length, or putting hair up in such a way that it will not fall down when the hat is taken off. When the latter choice is made, band members must use hair net, bobby pins, or other inconspicuous devices to hold hair in place through the entire performance day or evening.

No Band member's hair will be cut, shaved, or clipped without her/his expressed approval to do so.

Beards, goatees, and/or mustaches are highly discouraged. The remainder of the face should be clean-shaven while in uniform.

Cosmetics (mascara, lipstick, eye makeup, etc.) or jewelry (earrings, ID bracelets, watches, sunglasses, etc.) will not be worn while in uniform. This includes “spirit paint.”

Section Leaders will inspect their section before every performance.

The uniform must be worn in its entirety unless otherwise decided by the director. The only exception to this would be an outside rehearsal prior to a performance where a partial uniform would be acceptable.

# AUDITIONS

## Drum Major

The auditions for Drum Major take place in the spring. The audition consists of demonstrating vocal commands, marching technique, conducting, and an interview. Drum Major candidates must submit the application that will be made available at the marching band meeting. The position of Drum Major is open to any band student who has completed at least one year in the Comet Marching Band.

## Section Leader

The auditions for Section Leader take place in the spring. The audition consists of demonstrating marching technique, and teaching new marching band members. Section Leader candidates must submit the application that will be made available at the marching band meeting. The position of Section Leader is open to any band student who has completed at least 2 years in the Comet Marching Band.

## Color Guard/Drum Line

Color Guard and Drumline auditions take place in the spring. Color Guard auditions are open to any student at Grand Ledge High School, however, Drumline auditions are reserved for current Band students – with preference given to percussionists.

# ALCOHOL/DRUG POLICY

The possession, consumption, and distribution of alcohol or drugs by the members of this organization at any Grand Ledge High School Band event is strictly prohibited. The Grand Ledge High School Band will not tolerate alcohol or other drugs at any school sponsored activity (i.e., bus trips, rehearsals, etc.). Any violation of this policy may result in automatic expulsion from the Grand Ledge High School Band in addition to any discipline administered by the school district's administration.

# HAZING/HARASSMENT POLICY

The Grand Ledge High School Band believes that a positively functioning student organization is nurtured by an atmosphere of social and moral responsibility, respect for authority, and loyalty to the principles of higher education.

The Grand Ledge High School Band further believes that, despite the fact that much progress has been made, one of the most damaging agents in any school environment is hazing. This unproductive and hazardous custom has no rightful place in education.

The Grand Ledge High School Band defines hazing as any action taken or situation created which is intentionally designed to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule. Such activities and actions include: creation of excessive fatigue; physical or psychological abuse; wearing apparel which is not in good taste; engaging in public stunts, morally degrading or humiliating games and activities, and any other activities which are not consistent with policies of the organization or rules and regulations.

The use of degrading names in the Grand Ledge High School Band is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED**. Nicknames are not an official part of the Comet Marching Band. It is important to be aware that the use of degrading nicknames could be considered a form of hazing and could be found offensive by some members.

Any violation with the Grand Ledge High School Band Hazing Policy will result in a meeting with Mr. Szczerowski. An immediate dismissal may be issued to any student in violation with this policy. Mr. Szczerowski, the band council, section leaders and individual members will monitor actions within the organization and will report behaviors which violate the intent outlined in this policy.

## **BAND LETTERS & BAND BLANKETS**

Band letters and blankets are provided to band students by the Grand Ledge Music Boosters Association based on the following qualifications:

### **Band Letters**

- Must have successfully completed three (3) complete years (nine trimesters) of high school band.
- Students who transfer into the Grand Ledge Public Schools during their high school career will be eligible for a Band Letter based on their band participation in the previous school system.
- Letters are presented at the Band Banquet.

### **Band Blankets**

- Must have successfully completed four (4) complete years (twelve trimesters) of high school band.
- Students who transfer into the Grand Ledge Public Schools during their high school career will be evaluated on an individual basis.
- Blankets are presented at the Band Banquet.