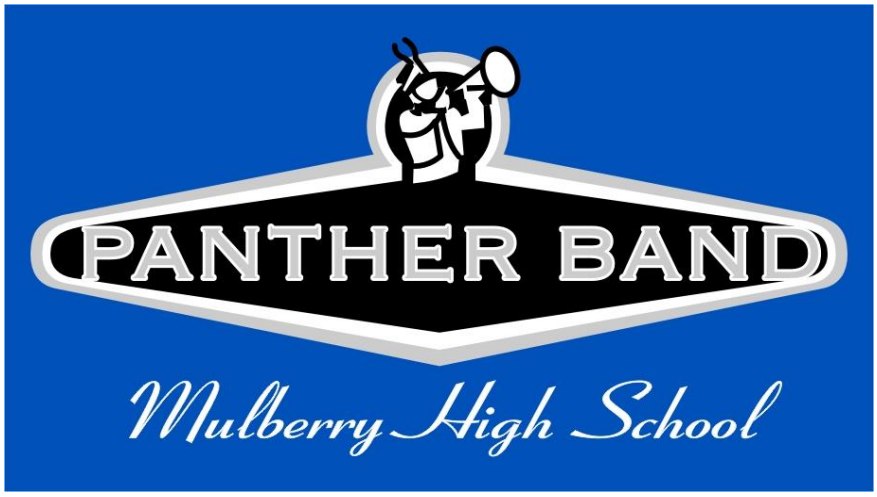

2015-2016
Band Handbook

Mr. Michael J Keogh
Director of Bands

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Mulberry High School Band

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Michael J Keogh
Director of Bands

August 24, 2015

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and Student:

Welcome back to school! I trust everyone had an enjoyable summer and that you are looking forward to the upcoming school year. This year is going to be another great year for the Panther Band as we continue to build upon our many successes from the past few years.

In this handbook you will find policies, procedures, and other important information regarding the Mulberry High School Band Program. Please take the time to read this material, as the success of our band depends upon every individual working toward the same goals. Once you have read through the handbook, please sign the Band Contract and have your child return it to the band room by Wednesday, August 26th.

I would also like to encourage everyone to visit the MHS Band website often, as it will usually answer most questions about upcoming events. There you can find up-to-date calendars, pictures, and other information. The website is:

www.mulberryband.com

As always, if you have any questions, please contact the band room, good communication is essential to having an outstanding band program. Let's have the best year ever!

Sincerely,

Michael J Keogh
Director of Bands

Michael Young
Principal

Philosophy of Music - Every aspect of music is important and will be emphasized at various stages in a student's development. The core of the instrumental program is the concert band. From this ensemble, groups such as the marching band, jazz band, percussion ensemble, and various chamber groups are derived. Music offers a unique opportunity to challenge each student cognitively, affectively, and physically. It provides for emotional expression, intrinsic worth, and has a positive impact on individuals, families, communities, and cultures.

Membership - Any student of Mulberry High School may be a member of the MHS Band Program (including Guard) under the following stipulations:

1. Must maintain an acceptable 2.0 grade point average to be eligible to participate in outside-of-school activities. (Per Polk County School Board and Florida Department of Education)
2. Must accept minimal financial responsibilities for instrument/equipment and uniform cleaning charges.
3. Must meet minimum performance/audition standards set by the Director

What is PRIDE?

Precision	Every musical note and drill move has a high degree of definition and precision. Precision requires hard work and discipline at all times.
Respect	Respect for yourself, your leaders, your peers, your band program and your director. We can only be great if we all work together. Everyone is a piece of the puzzle.
Intensity	Every moment of rehearsal is given your 110% effort. There is no time to relax or show a lack of intensity if we are going to be proud of our finished product… and ourselves.
Dedication	Commit yourself to the "Panther Band." Attend every rehearsal and performance and commit yourself to achieving the highest levels of excellence.
Excellence	Excellence is the result of hard work, discipline, and a good attitude… always. The members of the "Panther Band" should be working for excellence at all times.

Conduct in General - As a member of the Mulberry High School Band, you will be expected to conduct yourself in all school activities and classes in a manner that is acceptable to your teachers and the school administration. Each student's behavior reflects on the "Panther Band" as a whole.

Discipline - **A good band is built on discipline! Because of the nature of the organization, band discipline must, by necessity, be strict. Band students and parents must be willing to accept the ideals, principals, and rules of the organization.**

Because band members are constantly on display, each must always be aware of the importance of good behavior. Each student should remember that he represents his organization, school, and community whenever he/she performs in public.

In order to maintain an orderly educational environment, the following procedures are used:

- When rehearsal is in progress, students should be paying attention
- Have required materials in class
- Food and drinks should be kept in the hallway or outside the building
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself and your equipment

Consequences

1st Offense	Verbal Warning
2nd Offense	Detention
3rd Offense	Discipline Referral and/or meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s)
4th Offense	Dismissal from band until meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s) and principal

Severe Discipline Clause:
In the event a student blatantly and/or maliciously causes a serious classroom disruption, the severe disciplinary clause will take effect and the student will immediately be taken to the principal's office, and will serve the fourth offense consequence.

This discipline policy has been approved by the Mulberry High School administration.

Attitude - Without the proper attitude, you cannot hope to accomplish anything in life that is worthwhile. It is, therefore, essential that you come into this voluntary organization with an attitude that will allow you to put forth a MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF EFFORT with the BAREST MINIMUM OF COMPLAINT. If you are not willing to work hard, listen and follow directions, and respect our desire to be a truly superior band, it is strongly suggested that you re-evaluate your reasons for being in band.

Drugs and Alcohol - The use, possession, or being under the influence of any drug or substance not specifically prescribed by a physician, or the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol is EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED by any member of the MHS Band while taking part in any form of band activity. Since the unauthorized use of drugs and alcohol is against school, state, and federal laws, it shall be treated as grounds for automatic and permanent suspension from the band.

Smoking and/or Tobacco - The use or possession of tobacco products is also prohibited anytime that you are with the band or are involved in any type of band activity.

PDA - Public Displays of Affection (PDA) are not allowed by band students while at band events, including, but not limited to, rehearsals (in class and after school), games, concerts, etc.

The Polk County School Board Code of Conduct applies at ALL band rehearsals, performances, and functions.

Attendance - If an organization such as ours is to achieve a high level of excellence, it is essential that all of its members participate on a regular basis. Because of this, members willingly give up free time and arrange a work schedule around activities of the band. Having chosen to be a part of the MHS Band allows a student many opportunities for public performances, including football games, parades, concerts, and festivals. It should be understood that there are valid reasons to miss band activities, but if these are left unsaid, the director will not know.

The following attendance regulations apply to all band members:

1. In all circumstances concerning absences, it is the responsibility of the student (and/or parents) to communicate directly with the director.
2. Unexcused absences from rehearsals and/or performances will adversely affect the student's 9 weeks grade.
3. Students must fill out an absence excuse form for any and all absences they wish to not be penalized for (including illness). If the student's absence is excused, they will be given an opportunity to make up their grade for the absence.

The following are not excused absences:

1. Your job (read below)
2. Baby sitting for the family
3. Doctor or dentist appointment. Please schedule appointments accordingly.
4. Sports event or team practice if not approved by the director before the absence
5. Detentions
6. Grounded
7. Weather

Part-Time Jobs – **Please read carefully!**

It is recognized that some students must work part-time jobs to augment family income or help with their expenses of attending school and other necessities. Students and parents are reminded of the individual student's responsibility to the band in regard to attendance. Students with jobs should make sure that their employer is aware of their membership in the MHS Band and understand that their presence is REQUIRED for rehearsals and performances. These are not optional to attend by the student or at the discretion of the employer. Take a few minutes and be sure your employer knows the dates and times which you need to be off for band, especially Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings during the fall semester. The band calendar is printed and distributed with this purpose in mind… to eliminate conflicts with jobs and family activities. Give your employer at least a week or two notice!!!

After School Band Rehearsals - The band has scheduled practices throughout the year on Tuesdays and Thursdays 6pm-8:30pm. These rehearsals are required. Please make sure you are ready to begin rehearsing when the rehearsal is to start, not pulling into the parking lot. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of rehearsal, and those students who are not present and ready for the rehearsal with all appropriate materials will lose points on their grade for that rehearsal and may have other consequences. **A student who is tardy to practice or a game will lose part or all of third quarter privileges at the next football game.** Remember: TO BE EARLY IS TO BE ON TIME, TO BE ON TIME IS TO BE LATE, TO BE LATE IS UNTHINKABLE!!

Care of School-Owned Instruments - School-owned instruments are provided to certain students School-owned instruments are rented to the student for their use during the school year. Any student who uses a school-owned instrument will be required to fill out a Rental Agreement Form and pay a one time rental fee of $30.00 for the year. This fee does not cover the cost of repairing any damage that happens while the instrument is being rented to the student. This form will be given to those students on the first day of school and should be returned along with the rental fee by August 31st (payable to MHS Band). The second fee of $30.00 will be due on January 23rd. Only the student who is issued the instrument should use it, unless cleared by the director. Violators will be dealt with individually. **All repairs will be the responsibility of the person renting the instrument!!!**

Care of Library Music - Music is bought for use by this band and is loaned to the members for their use. All that is asked is that each student properly care for the music assigned to them and return it when called for in the best possible condition. All markings in the music should be made lightly in pencil. Students who lose their music will be charged $.50 per page to replace it. Be responsible!!

Grading Policy

Weighting: Rehearsals - 40% Performances - 40% Tests/Assignments - 20%

Rehearsal Criteria (9 weekly grades)
- Student on time for rehearsal
- Instrument and appropriate materials
- Attentive and exhibiting good conduct
- Attendance to all rehearsal sessions
- Performing music at a proficient level

Performance Criteria (each performance)
- Student on time for performance warm-up
- Instrument and appropriate materials
- Attentive and contributing to a good performance
- Individual part performed at a high level of proficiency

Tests/Assignments – Students will be given various assignments and tests throughout the school year. These may include written assignments and tests, as well as playing assignments and tests.

Honors Music Curriculum - Polk County offers 11th and 12th grade band students the opportunity to take band for honors credit with the approval of the band director. There are specific requirements and assignments for this program that the student must complete in addition to their normal band responsibilities. Sign-up for the Honors Music program generally occurs within the first two weeks of school. Students and parents who are interested should see the director for more information.

Trips - As members of the MHS Band, students are required to do a certain amount of traveling to football games, parades, concerts, festivals, and other special activities. All students are required to travel with the band to and from all events by the means of transportation provided for the group. If it is absolutely necessary for a student to travel by other means, special permission must be obtained from the director. A written note from a parent or guardian must accompany such a request. Students will only be released to a parent or guardian, not boyfriends, girlfriends, neighbors, etc.

All band activities are governed by the rules set forth by the Florida Schools Music Association, the Polk County School Board, and the MHS Band. Every person involved in these activities must abide by these policies and regulations. Failure to abide by said policies could result in suspension of all out-of-school activities for the MHS Band.

Bus riding regulations:

1. Departure times will be posted well in advance and will be strictly adhered to. Students should arrive early to assure proper loading of equipment and personal items. "To be early…"
2. Students will sit according to the bus seating chart.
3. Roll will be taken and a head count after each loading.
4. Students will not extend their arms or head outside the bus or throw any object out of the bus at anytime.
5. Everyone must be immediately and absolutely silent at all railroad crossings.
6. Food, drinks, personal music/DVD players, video games, etc. may not be taken onto a school bus. This is against School Board policy.
7. There will be no playing of instruments on any bus at any time.
8. Students will not create loud or sudden noises on the bus (like screaming) and will follow the bus driver and chaperone's instructions regarding noise.
9. Always remain seated until a chaperone instructs differently. Do not, at any time, leave your seat while the bus is in motion.
10. Do not leave the bus improperly dressed.
11. Each student should clean up around his/her seat following each trip and dispose of all trash properly. Leave the bus as clean as you found it.

Football Game Guidelines:

1. The band seating area is off limits to everyone except parents chaperoning that event.
2. Uniforms must remain on and properly worn at all times.
3. Chaperones have the full authority of the director at all times. They are volunteering their time to help make your performance more successful. Please give them your respect.
4. **You must be in your spot ready to play your instrument at the end of the third quarter.** Failure to do so will result you losing that privilege for the next game.
5. Concessions – Use your own judgment. However, if an accident occurs you will be charged an extra uniform cleaning fee whether you were at fault or not.
6. Remember that you are being observed by parents, administrators, fans, and other bands at all times. You are expected to display the proper attitude and behavior at all times. Cursing is never allowed, but ESPECIALLY while in public.

Uniform Rental and Dry Cleaning Fees - Uniforms are provided to all instrument playing members of the MHS Panther Band. In order to take proper care of our uniforms and allow for replacing older uniforms as they wear out, we have these fees in place.

Uniform Rental Fee - $53.50 – due Sept.4th (includes $3.50 in sales tax – make checks payable to MHS Band)
Dry Cleaning Fee (Fall) - $30 –due Oct. 2nd (checks payable to MHS Band)
Dry Cleaning Fee (Spring) - $30 – due Dec. 4th (checks payable to MHS Band)

These fees cover rental and cleaning of the uniforms for the entire school year. If needed, a payment plan may be worked out with the director.

Band Shoes - Each member of the Panther Band must have his/her own pair of marching band shoes. Money for the shoes will be due at that time and only cash is accepted. Anyone paying after this day will incur additional charges for shipping.

Under Uniform - The under uniform consists of your official Panther Band t-shirt, solid black shorts, band shoes, and black socks. Students should always report for football games, parades, etc. in their under uniform so that the marching uniform may simply be put on over top. Students will not be issued their marching uniform unless they have on their under uniform.

Lockers - Lockers are provided to students for the storage of band equipment only! All students are expected to get a locker (including color guard and percussion). Only combination locks are allowed and you must be assigned a locker from the director. **This locker should not be used to store books and other materials for non-music classes.** Keep your equipment safe!

Personal Instruments - When considering to buy or rent an instrument, please consult the director for a list of recommended equipment. Instruments vary greatly in quality, and there are many instruments for sale that are more affordable, but may not be worth your investment. In many cases, such instruments may also limit the student's success.

Cell Phones - The Code of Conduct allows for students to have cell phones as long as they are not activated or used during school hours or on school buses (Section 6.29). It also states that if a cell phone is seen or heard it will be confiscated. For the purposes of minimizing distractions, rehearsals and performances are considered "school hours" in regards to cell phone use. That means cell phones should not be seen or heard during practices, football games, concerts, etc. They may be used during scheduled breaks in these activities (i.e. – 3rd quarter break). It is expected that you will turn your cell phone off during all events.

Chaperoning - Keeping your students safe is one of our highest priorities, especially when it comes to going on trips. In order to provide that level of security, we need parents to volunteer to chaperone. We ask that parents chaperone a minimum of two trips. Each parent **must** be an approved volunteer with the Polk County School Board.

Concession Stand - Our biggest source of fundraising comes from operating the concession stand at all varsity and junior varsity home football games. Everyone benefits from the money raised in the concession stand, from paying for festival entry fees, to uniforms, to flags, etc. The concession stand cannot make money if we do not have people to run it. Everyone is asked to do their share and sign up to work at least two varsity games and one junior varsity game.

Classroom Materials - All students are expected to have certain materials with them in class each day and at all rehearsals:

- Instrument/Flag/Rifle (in working condition) with reeds, oil, mouthpiece, drumsticks, etc.
- All music in folder or flip-folder
- A 3 ring binder with clear sheet protectors
- "Foundations for Superior Performance" book for your concert instrument
- A pencil
- A folder with pockets and prongs
- A GREAT LEARNING ATTITUDE!!

Student Drop Off & Pick Up - In the past we have had safety issues with students hanging around school grounds before and after band events. Mulberry High School operates on the "closed campus" philosophy. That means students are not allowed to wait on school grounds for evening rehearsals or performances. **The earliest students should report for marching band practices is 4:45.** For football games, performances, and other trips, a specific time the band building will be open will be posted. Students should not report before that time. In addition, please make arrangements to pick up your student promptly following practices, performances, and trips. Adult supervision ends 15 minutes after all rehearsals/practices and 30 minutes after all performances, football games, and trips.

Student Parking & Transportation –The only time students should be parking in the B-wing parking lot is for evening rehearsals and events. **Students should also be reminded that PCSB policy is that students do not transport students.**

Fundraisers – The band program depends on raising money in order to keep student fees down and still be successful. ALL students will be expected to participate in all fundraisers and meet minimum fundraising goals as set by the director.

Forms – There are three forms that need to be completely filled out and returned by Wednesday, Aug. 26th. If these forms have not been turned in, students will not be allowed to travel or perform with the Panther Band until they have been returned. The forms are:

- Band Contract (requires both a student and parent signature)
- Blanket Field Trip Form (parent signature)
- Medical Release Form (must be notarized)

Visit the Panther Band Website:

www.mulberryband.com

Pictures, announcements, calendar, upcoming event info, and more. The website is updated at least once a week, so check it often.

Mulberry High School

BAND CONTRACT

STUDENT: I have read and agree to abide by the principals, ideals, procedures, and guidelines set forth in this handbook, and I understand the consequences for non-compliance.

NAME OF STUDENT (PRINT) _____

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN: I understand the requirements and responsibilities for membership in the Mulberry High School band program. I have read and understand the special policies concerning grading, attendance, and behavior. I realize that my child is enrolled in a performance-based curriculum for academic credit and I agree not to use suspension of his or her participation in rehearsals or performances as a disciplinary tool.

NAME OF PARENT (PRINT) _____

SIGNATURE OF PARENT _____

WORK / DAYTIME PHONE _____

Please complete and return this form by Wednesday, August 26th