

# *Courtland High School*

## *26-27*



Pride  
Passion  
Commitment

Gene Mills - Director  
Assistant - Samaria Moss  
Percussion - Kristen Sibley  
Guard - Christine Koolhof

## *Forward*

The band program at Courtland High School forms a vital and important part of the total high school life. Band and marching band, in particular, represent one of the largest, most visible and highly disciplined segments within any school. The performance of a school band at concerts, sporting events, parades, contests and many community events adds color, pageantry, ceremony and life to the community.

It is possible, by reasonably setting your schedule, to be in the band and still maintain a high academic standard. The purpose of this handbook is to provide members with information on our policies and goals. Please keep this handbook in a safe place and refer to it often!

### *General Rules of Conduct/Director's Expectations*

The rules of conduct as outlined by Spotsylvania County Public Schools and Courtland High School apply to all band students at all times (during school, after school, while traveling, on a bus, during rehearsal, etc....***AT ALL TIMES***)

In addition to those guidelines, the following rules also apply:

NOTE: There may be additional rules that apply to specific situations that are not included in this list. Violations of these and all other applicable rules and guidelines will not be tolerated.

1. Directions given by the Band Director, Staff, Student leaders, or Chaperones are to be strictly followed.
2. The use or possession of tobacco, illegal drugs, and/or alcohol is strictly prohibited. **Violation of this rule will result in immediate dismissal from the Band Program.**
3. During a band activity, all students are expected to travel to and from the activity with the band.
4. All members of the band are to remain in the designated areas during band functions.
5. Mature social behavior is expected from all members at all times. This includes actions, as well as conversations, between members.
6. Public Display of Affection (Hand Holding, Kissing, Touching, etc.) is not permitted at any time while representing the Courtland Band Program. Please, remember...you are *always* representing this band program.
7. Profanity or obscene gestures will not be tolerated.
8. If it is not yours, don't touch it.

*Remember, as members of this organization, you represent the Courtland Band Program and Courtland High School. That places a great deal of responsibility on each and every one of you. For many people, their only impression of Courtland is what they see reflected through the Band Program and its members. The actions of every member reflect on the entire group and all of its members. It is my desire that people will see a first-rate, classy group of young ladies and gentlemen who represent Courtland Bands, Courtland High School and Spotsylvania County with a level of maturity, pride, character, and integrity that is unequalled by any other group of its kind.*

## *Academic Expectations*

The Courtland High School Band encourages a culture of high expectations and high academic achievement for every member. Students are expected to maintain a high GPA throughout the year. Faculty members at CHS will be given a list of band students if requested to notify the Director if any band student is not working to a high level of achievement.

## *Course Offerings*

*All Members of the Royal Brigade must be enrolled in a band class at Courtland (this does not apply to colorguard members or percussionists if enrolled in orchestra). If, for any reason, you are unable to schedule a band class - the director must be notified and will work with guidance to fix the situation.*

### **Concert Band**

This class is open to all students who have prior instrumental music experience. Beginning Band students may be considered for this class at the discretion of the director. Concert performance skills are developed through group and individualized instruction. Students learn basic music theory and vocabulary, as well as basic playing fundamentals and sight-reading skills. The class is designed to optimize the potential, talent, and musicianship of the intermediate level student, through the rehearsal and performance of quality wind band literature.

Students enrolled in Concert Band are strongly encouraged to audition for All District Band and to take private lessons. Concert Band meets during the school day. Occasionally, after-school rehearsals may be scheduled in preparation for performances. Students are required to attend all rehearsals and performances.

**Required Materials:** Instrument in good working condition, mouthpiece, reeds (woodwinds), Cleaning & Maintenance Supplies, Mutes (Straight), **Recommended Materials:** Tuner, Metronome

## **Symphonic Band**

This class is open to students by audition (District band Audition) or by recommendation of the directors. This ensemble is more advanced than the concert band and will therefore perform higher-level literature. Students should be able to display a higher level of playing ability and should exemplify the standards of the Courtland Band Program. Students are expected to show a higher understanding of music theory, music history, and concepts of basic musicianship. Instruction will be designed to further enhance the individual and ensemble performance skills through the performance and study of some of the more advanced band literature.

Students enrolled in Symphonic Band are expected to audition for All District Band and are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. Symphonic Band meets during the school day and occasionally rehearses after school in preparation for performances, which include concerts, District Assessment, and other events that may be scheduled as opportunities arise. Students are required to attend all rehearsals and performances.

**Required Materials:** Instrument in good working condition, mouthpiece, reeds (woodwinds), Cleaning & Maintenance Supplies, Mutes (Brass – Straight)

**Recommended Materials:** Tuner, Metronome

## **Wind Ensemble**

Wind Ensemble is the highest level of band that is offered at Courtland High School. Membership is selected through the All District band audition process, occasionally auditions will be held for open spots once the school year has started, only to fill a vacancy in instrumentation in the band. The nature of Wind ensemble is that for the most part it is one on a part, so only those who successfully complete the audition for district band at the highest levels will be admitted to the wind ensemble. Students in Wind Ensemble are required to audition for District Band in December each year to act as their “midterm” for the band. Wind Ensemble meets during the school day and occasionally may rehearse after school in preparation for performances. Students are required to attend all rehearsals and performances.

**Required Materials:** Instrument in good working conditions, Mouthpiece, Reeds (woodwinds), Cleaning and Maintenance supplies (Brass - straight mutes), Tuner and Metronome (can be phone Apps)

## **Percussion Class**

Open to students who have previous percussion experience by recommendation of the band directors. Concert performance skills are developed on a wide variety of percussion instruments (Snare Drum, Mallet Instruments, Timpani, and Auxiliary Percussion) through group and individualized instruction. Students learn basic music theory and vocabulary as well as basic playing fundamentals and sight-reading skills. This class combines with the Concert Band for all performances. Students will also have an opportunity to participate in various percussion ensembles as a part of this class.

**Required Materials:** Vic Firth Concert Snare Sticks (choose from SD1, 5A, 5B), Practice Pad, 2 pr. General Keyboard Mallets (Birch or Rattan shafts – no plastic), Small Stick bag with name on it.

**Recommended Materials (not required):** Metronome, Timpani Mallets (General)

### **Jazz Band**

This class is open to students by audition or by recommendation of the director. Performance skills are developed through group and individualized instruction. Students learn basic music theory, history, and vocabulary as it relates to the Jazz medium. Students learn basic playing fundamentals, sight reading, and skills needed for basic improvisation. This class is designed to optimize the potential, talent, and musicianship of those students who show a particular interest in Jazz music through the rehearsal and performance of quality Jazz literature.

**Required Materials:** Instrument in good working condition, mouthpiece, reeds (woodwinds), Cleaning & Maintenance Supplies, Mutes (Brass – Straight),

**Recommended Materials:** Tuner, Metronome, Mutes (Brass – Plunger, Harmon Mute)

## ***“The Royal Brigade Marching Band” (RBMB)***

The Royal Brigade Marching Band is a *co-curricular* activity open to students who have had previous musical experience or by recommendation of the band directors. Students are required to be enrolled in a music class at Courtland High School. The only exceptions to students not being enrolled in band class are percussion or pit ensemble performers who are enrolled in orchestra and colorguard performers. Performance skills are developed through group and individualized instruction. Students learn basic music skills as well as marching fundamentals. Students perform at all home football games, some away games, and band competitions during September, October, and November.

The RBMB meets after school during the fall on Mondays, 2:30-4:30 for wind sectionals, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 2:30-5:30. Percussion and Guard students will have sectionals at different times as given by their instructors. Students are also expected to participate in the summer band program that includes summer rehearsals and band camp. Band Camp is usually held during the month of July. Band Camp attendance is mandatory. Attendance at summer Tuesday rehearsals is expected but not required. School-owned instruments are available for students based on need and ensemble instrumentation.

## ***Color Guard (Fall)***

The Color Guard functions as one of the most important visual elements of the marching band show. All guard members undergo rigorous training in dance and equipment work. Equipment is, typically, provided by the school or by the CBPA. Guard members may be responsible for paying part of the cost of their own equipment or uniforms which may change yearly based upon the type of show performed. Color Guard will also be required to attend a separate camp week from July 13-17 in addition to the ones required for the entire ensemble.

### ***Commitment and Attendance***

High standards of performance demand a strong commitment to excellence by the students, parents, staff and the director of the Courtland Band Program. Remember that any ensemble is only as strong as its weakest performing member and it is only by working together that we can produce the performance level that is expected of us.

It is extremely vital to the success of the program that all students attend rehearsals and performances. Please check the calendar on the [Band APP](#) for specific dates. Contact the director immediately if you have a conflict. I will strive to do my best to give everyone two weeks' notice of any changes, and ask that you do the same if you know that you will be missing a rehearsal or performance.

Examples of excused absences would be illness, death in the family or an unavoidable once-in-a-lifetime type of conflict that has been brought to the director's attention in advance; such as a wedding of an immediate family member, a family reunion etc. Mr Mills will make all determinations as to whether or not an absence falls under excused or unexcused. Please understand that other activities that cause you to miss rehearsals on a regular basis, including work, will NOT be excused. Giving two weeks notice that you will miss a rehearsal or performance does not mean that you will be excused for that absence.

Please refrain from emailing me saying you have a "Prior engagement." In order for something to be a prior engagement, you must know about it BEFORE you get the band schedule, and you should inform me before the end of band camp. If you get a date for something after I have given you the schedule, it is not a prior engagement.

Excused and unexcused absences may result in the student not performing in the following show or being removed from the ensemble in the case of excessive absences. Regardless of the reason for an absence, if you are not at practice, you have not prepared with the team for the performance.

## Consequences for Absences

Consequences for absence from an after school ensemble will be as follows:

### Absences from Rehearsals

- Limit of **3 absences** per season.
- Exceeding 3 results in sitting out a performance for each missed rehearsal.

**"Just like sports teams, you must be at practice to play the game!"**

### Absences from Performances

- Must be **cleared in advance** by the director. Failure results in being benched.
- **Excused:** Emergencies, weddings, funerals (if cleared in advance). Medical requires a doctor's note.
- **Unexcused:** Extra vacations, work, etc. Students must sit out performances.

**Please schedule all appointments on Wednesdays for winds and percussion and on Mondays for color guard.**

**\*\* Growing up is about making choices!\*\***

## *Winter Guard and Winter DrumLine*

These are competitive groups that rehearse and perform during the winter sports season. They are open to all band and guard members and will be selected by audition. Winter Guard and Drumline are wonderful opportunities for students to keep their skills sharp for the next marching season, or to join and get caught up if they did not march the year before. Auditions will be held in mid-October. Rehearsals will begin in early November and run through AIA Championships held in early April. There is an additional fee required for participation in the winter activities. All Percussion members are required to be in a band class, the same as marching band.

## ***Courtland Standard Time (C.S.T.)***

**When a “call” time is given for a band function, that is the time the event will *begin*. Since various preparations need to be made beforehand, you should arrive fifteen minutes before the scheduled time.**

*Example: If rehearsal is scheduled to begin at 6:00, you will need time to park, socialize, assemble your instrument or equipment, oil valves, test reeds, set your chair and music stand, and use the restroom **before** 6:00. When 6:00 arrives, all other activities will cease, and rehearsal will begin.*

This will allow us to make full use of our time together and will help prepare you to be a better student and performer.

Remember...*To be early is to be on time; To be on time is to be late; To be late is unacceptable.*

## ***Medical Information***

Students are required to have a medical form properly filled out and signed by a parent or guardian before they will be allowed to participate in music activities. Students are also required to provide proof of hospitalization insurance coverage. This proof can be a photocopy of the parents’ health insurance card or school insurance card. This can be copied directly onto the back of the medical form that is provided. If the student is not covered, the parents will need to attach a letter stating that the school will not be held responsible for charges incurred due to a medical emergency and that the parent assumes legal responsibility for all such charges.

The designated CBPA Chaperone will make every effort to assist the students with personal medical problems and with the administration of prescribed medication as well as giving out other medications that would be used for minor medical ailments, as outlined by parental consent and Spotsylvania County Public School Policy.

## ***Fees***

Each year, students may be required to pay a band fee for participation in the marching band. This fee will be used to help defray the cost of instructional staff, purchase of music, transportation, uniforms, instrument repair and replacement, and other items associated with the marching program. This fee will be kept to a minimum so as not to exclude anyone from participation in the band program. There will be additional costs for all students pertaining to any trips taken during the spring. There will be adequate notice of such expenses and the students will have the opportunity to raise some of the money for these trips through various fundraisers. *Any band family in need of an amended payment schedule or payment assistance should contact the CBPA President or*

*Treasurer to arrange a confidential meeting to discuss available options. This meeting must be arranged by the parent/guardian. Student attendance at this meeting is not required. You must reach out and let us know if you need help with band fees. If communication is not given, we can not prepare adequately for the year. **Requests for a season of financial help should be sent in before the start of band camp.***

**NO STUDENTS WILL BE TURNED AWAY FROM MARCHING BAND FOR FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY. Please reach out and let us help you make this happen for your student!**

## ***Fundraising***

Throughout the course of the year, all students will be asked to participate in fundraising activities. These activities may range from assistance with concessions to the selling of items through a designated fundraising company. A large portion of our annual budget is determined by the success of our fundraising efforts. The number of fundraisers will be kept to a minimum. However, during years in which a spring trip is planned, there will be a need for increased fundraising. Fundraising is required of ALL marching band families, if you wish to opt. out of fundraising, you may do so by paying the full amount of a band member's share as found on our budget.

## ***Payment of Monies***

All money must be turned in at the designated time in a sealed envelope with the name, amount, and description of the payment on the outside of the envelope. All payments and fundraising monies must be turned in on the date requested. A collection box is available in the director's office for the collection of student monies. Please do not give money to the director unless instructed to do so. Money should be placed in the collection box or given to the designated representative of the CBPA.

## ***Extra-Curricular Activities***

Students may participate in other activities while involved in music. This may cause a conflict. However, this conflict will be worked out if the student is capable of doing both activities well. Most conflicts are avoided through cooperation and communication. It is best to limit the number of activities in which you are involved, but any situation that is able to be worked out will be given consideration. If you have any questions, please speak with the director.

# ***RBMB Student Leadership***

A slate of Band Officers will be chosen each spring/Summer for the following school year. These officers will be selected by the director based on their performance and leadership ability. These officers will be asked to carry out various responsibilities pertaining to their specific office. The director reserves the right to remove any student from an office in the event that a student fails to meet the obligations of his or her position.

## ***Awards***

The following is a list of awards that are presented by the Courtland Band Program: (Additional awards may be given at the discretion of the director and staff)

### **John Philip Sousa Award (Band)**

Presented each year to the most outstanding senior band member. The recipient is determined by the director.

### **Louis Armstrong Jazz Award (Jazz)**

Presented each year to the most outstanding senior Jazz musician. The recipient is determined by the director.

### **National Marching Band Award (Marching)**

Presented each year to the most outstanding senior Marching band member. The recipient is determined by the director and staff

### **National Colorguard Award**

Presented each year to the outstanding senior member of the colorguard. The recipient is determined by the director and colorguard coordinator.

### **Letters/Honor Letter**

A Band Letter is an award of great distinction. This award recognizes those students who have worked above and beyond the effort given by the average band student in all areas of the band program. Students who participate in Symphonic Band, Concert Band, Jazz Band, Percussion, Guard, **AND** Marching Band for two consecutive years are eligible to receive a letter. Having an unexcused absence from a performance will deem the student ineligible to letter for that year.

Students who have earned their letter but also audition for District Band, and our leaders in our program, will also be eligible to receive the Royal Brigade Honor Letter in their Junior Year after 3 years of Band class **AND** Marching band. Having an unexcused absence from a performance will deem the student ineligible for an honor letter.

## ***Marching Band Camp***

Band Camp is held each year during July. It is during this time that we are able to have our most intense rehearsals. During camp, the focus is on learning the music and the drill so that the band can be prepared for the upcoming season. The vast majority of our work is accomplished during this two to three-week period.

All members of the band need to participate in Band Camp. Additional staff are brought in to provide specialized instruction to the students. Band Camp is a great deal of work, but it is also a lot of fun.

## ***Philosophy of Practice***

In order to minimize the number of extra rehearsals, students should practice a minimum of ½ hour every night. This means every student must take his or her instrument home on a regular basis. Students who play larger instruments will be given special consideration as the need arises. Every effort will be made to see that students who have large school-owned instruments will have an instrument at home and one at school.

## ***Marching Band Uniforms***

The school will provide each student with a uniform for marching band. Students will be responsible for purchasing shoes and gloves of a style designated by the director.

The band uniforms will be dry-cleaned on a regular basis. The current year band T-shirt is part of the uniform and is to be worn under the uniform at all times. In the case of extreme heat, we may remove the jackets. The T-shirts allow us to do that and still look uniform.

The band uniform is not to be taken home for any reason. All uniforms will be kept at the school and issued to the students before each performance. Following a performance, students are responsible for seeing that their uniform is properly hung and all parts are returned to the proper place within 30 minutes from the time they are dismissed.

Students are to wear only the complete uniform at all functions designated by the director. DO NOT appear in public or outside the bandroom, bus, or car in partial uniform. Students are not to wear jewelry when in uniform. Earrings, watches, etc., are a distraction and detract from the overall look of the uniform. Guard members may wear jewelry as a part of the uniform as deemed appropriate by the staff.

Students need to be extremely careful when eating or drinking while in uniform. Chewing gum is not allowed while in uniform.

## ***School-Owned Equipment***

Students using school-owned instruments are required to sign a contract with the school. Students who use school-owned instruments are required to provide their own mouthpiece for use with the instrument. The instrument is to be used only by the person to whom it is assigned. That person is responsible for any damages that occur. **If the instrument is dropped or abused, the person assigned the instrument is responsible for the cost of the repairs.** The school shall determine which company will make authorized repairs. If the instrument is stolen while in the possession of the student, that student is responsible for restitution.

## ***Instrument Storage and Lockers***

All students are required to have their name on the outside of their instrument case, including school instruments. Students will be assigned a storage locker or an area for their instrument. ***Any Student caught opening or tampering with another student's instrument will be referred to the office for disciplinary action.***

Neither Courtland High School nor the Courtland Music Department is responsible for items that are stolen from the storage areas or from the band room. These areas will be locked when they are not in use; however, this may not prevent theft from occurring. Take the appropriate precautions in securing your belongings.

## ***Courtland Band Parents Association (CBPA)***

The Courtland High School Band Program could not exist without the support of the CBPA. This organization is made up of parents who are taking an active and concerned role in the education of their children. This organization provides the bulk of the financial stability that allows the program to grow and to provide the students with the highest quality education possible. All parents are invited and encouraged to come and be a part of this crucial element of the Courtland Band program. Participation in this group is not all work. There is a great deal of fun to be had while working closely with the students and staff. Come and see what you might be able to do!