

GATEWAY BAND

The first day of band can be intimidating to the new member.

Everyone is filled with all kinds of emotions as they first begin an activity like marching band — excitement, anticipation, hesitation and probably fear. Most rookies think that they are the only ones to feel fear. They don't know what to expect and are not sure they will be able to rise to the level needed for the band's rehearsals and performances. It would be surprising if every veteran in the band did not feel some or all of these emotions when they were rookies. So it is to be expected! When the rookie looks around at the veterans or watches a video of last season's show, they need to realize that everyone they see was a rookie once. They all started from ground zero with the same feelings.

What Can You Expect?

Hard Work

You will probably work harder in marching band than you ever have in your life, but you will love it! The more you put into something, the more you get out of it.

Exciting Performances

Few people get to perform in front of thousands of enthusiastic fans. It is truly exciting to perform in a marching band of this caliber.

Friends

Most members make some of their best friends in band. Ten–twenty–thirty years from now, you will probably have many of the same friendships that started in band.

Memories

You will have memories that will last a lifetime! When band alumni come to visit, they still talk about their band experiences

Sense of Belonging

You are an important part of a great organization. The band is a family that you belong to. You have a place to go and people you can count on.

Life Skills

In addition to the musical and visual skills that you learn, you will learn about attitude, organization, responsibility, teamwork, leadership and many other important life skills.

Tradition

You will be part of the tradition of this band that has been established over the years. You are now a part of this great tradition – the Gateway High School Marching Band! WELCOME!

Band Motto

“Be Your Best”

Be Your Best is a goal that everyone can achieve. This is not the same as “Be **The** Best” which is something that few can achieve. It is all that is expected of you, but it is expected *all of the time*—every minute, every practice, every day and every performance. Further, it is expected that you will Be Your Best *outside* of organized band activities, as well as in rehearsals and performances.

You can measure your success and do not have to wait until someone else, like the director, senior or band judge tells you. *You know!*

Band Expectations

Show Respect

Respect yourself. Respect others. Respect the band facilities, equipment, and uniforms.

Be Prepared

Band members are responsible for doing their best, working on their individual skills, and practicing. All equipment must be brought to rehearsals as requested.

Be on Time

(Early...is on time / On time...is late / Late is WRONG!)

Students should arrive at the building 15 minutes *before* the rehearsal is scheduled to begin in order to be ready to start on time. If you count on someone else to get a ride to practice, tell him or her the time you have to *be there*, not the time rehearsal begins. With this concept, you will be prepared physically and mentally to begin the rehearsal and not flying in at the last minute or worse—late. You also will have a cushion of safety if there is extra traffic or you are running a couple of minutes behind.

GATEWAY BAND EXPECTATIONS

Every organization has expectations of conduct or behavior.

It is called many terms—behavior expectations, conduct, discipline, rules and regulations—and is essential for a successful band program. For the most part, band members want to be good and reach their potential. They understand that this is not possible without good conduct on their part.

- Without discipline
 - The group does not achieve its potential.
 - Students are not focused and do not hear information.
 - Too much time is wasted.
 - It is not enjoyable/fun (contrary to what some may think).
- With discipline
 - The band operates in a **spirit of cooperation**.
 - Students are focused and hear information.
 - Rehearsals are efficient.
 - Members take pride in being a part of the band and in striving for excellence.

We prefer to call the topic “behavior expectations” because this is how we, as a staff, *expect* the members to act. Some organizations have many rules for every detail and possible situation. We think it can be summed up in a few simple phrases—the Band Motto and three Band Expectations. Of course all high school rules and regulations *always* apply. The Band Expectations are the foundation on which our band operates, so it is important to review them.

BE YOUR BEST

Strive to be your best and make the best decisions possible in all you do. The best award we receive is the compliment that the band members were mature, well-mannered young ladies and gentlemen. We hear that compliment frequently and want to maintain that tradition.

SHOW RESPECT

If you are “being your best” you will at all times show respect to other members, to the staff, to the parents and other adults who are here to help you and of course - yourself. Respect the band facilities, equipment, and uniforms and the traditions of the band program.

BE PREPARED

Band members are responsible for doing their best, working on their individual skills, and practicing. All equipment must be brought to rehearsals as requested.

BE ON TIME

In order to be prepared physically and mentally to begin the rehearsal, arrive 15 minutes before rehearsal time.

Questions or Problems – talk to your section leaders, drum majors, and then the staff to resolve them. Don’t hesitate.

GATEWAY BAND - REHEARSAL SKILLS

Members need to understand their role in achieving great rehearsals.

The following is the band's rehearsal philosophy:

Rehearsals will be conducted with a positive attitude in a pleasant atmosphere. Students will be focused, energetic and relaxed in order to achieve the outstanding results desired. The director and staff will be organized and efficient through careful planning and goal setting. These qualities will make the experience enjoyable and productive for students and staff alike.

Why is it important to have a rehearsal philosophy? A philosophy is an overall way of thinking about a subject. It helps to keep everyone's attitudes on the same page. In order to have efficient, productive rehearsals, we need to have an approach that will be successful and this will happen if everyone maintains the ideals set forth.

What kind of cooperation is needed? Band is a team endeavor and only is successful if the teachers and the students work together in a cooperative effort. The staff has the knowledge and background to direct the team and the students have the skills, energy and enthusiasm to bring the performance to life. Any weak links in the team will cause the team to not reach its full potential. *Each member* is important in this effort.

How can the students be active participants in this process? "You are your own best teacher" is a quotation that is very applicable to the marching band activity. There are literally thousands of visual counts and musical notes in a marching band show, and it is impossible for the staff members to correct everything. You are an active participant on this team and not a passive observer. Don't wait to be told to fix a problem—fix it yourself. You can then take pride in truly being an important team member.

What is the band member's role in this process? You should strive at all rehearsals to "Be Your Best" of course, but what does this mean? Here are a few ideas:

- Be prepared—within the available time, come to each rehearsal **improved**.
- **Be aware** of your performance and everything around you—visually and musically.
- Try to make an error only once.
- Try to *improve one thing* in every segment visually or musically. Don't wait for someone else to tell you.

What about mistakes? Without mistakes there is no improvement. It is the natural way we all get better in all endeavors. The important thing is that you are *aware* so you can make improvements.

How should I feel if I am corrected for an error? *Thankful!* You appreciate a private lesson teacher for making a suggestion that makes you a better player. So it is in band. We are always trying to solve problems and make the performance better. Go ahead and say "*Thanks!*"

Gateway Band - Rehearsal Etiquette

Many directors talk about rehearsal discipline and behavior, but at Gateway, we prefer to use the phrase “rehearsal etiquette.” This phrase immediately brings to mind the meanings of the word “etiquette” that everyone SHOULD have imprinted on their brains. The meaning is “correct or polite behavior in social or professional settings.”

All band members should keep in mind in rehearsal, indoors or outdoors, good rehearsal etiquette. Here are a few thoughts about how the phrase relates to marching band rehearsals:

- Be silent when someone is addressing you or the group.
- Make eye contact with the speaker—you will hear more when you do!
- In full rehearsal, when the instructor says your section’s name, everyone should raise their hands. In that way, the instructor knows the group being addressed is listening.
- Participate if asked a question. For example, “How many of you arrived at your set early that time?” Raise your hand. The instructor is trying to assess the situation and needs an honest response.
- Speak only at the appropriate times. Talking keeps you from hearing and learning, as well as those around you. It is also rude behavior to the instructor (poor etiquette).
- Listen to directions for the next move carefully. A student not knowing what to do wastes everyone’s time and the instructions must be repeated.
- Move quickly and efficiently to the position for the next segment.
- Think independently. Do what you are supposed to do, when you are supposed to do it. Don’t wait for everyone else to do something.

“Do what you are supposed to do, when you are supposed to do it” is what you need to do every rehearsal. It is a *waste of time and energy* to question and complain about what you are asked to do, whether you do that mentally or verbally. If you cheerfully follow directions you will be happier and enjoy the rehearsal.

Good rehearsal etiquette (or discipline or behavior) does not create a negative, unpleasant atmosphere. It creates a relaxed, pleasant environment that is productive and efficient.

Everyone wants to get better, have the band improve every day and have an enjoyable experience. **Good rehearsal etiquette**, a **positive attitude** and following the motto – “**Be Your Best**” is how we get there.

This is your band! Make it great by being an active participant.