

Westwood Warrior Band Parent Guide



Hey Band Parents!

Welcome to the whirlwind of being a part of the Warrior Band! Your enthusiastic support and active participation is wanted, expected, and very much appreciated (even by your very own student, although you may never hear him tell you.) There's a lot to know about band. In this Parent Guide some "seasoned" parents-- with the input of freshman parents --have attempted to highlight what we think will help you, as a parent, have a fun-filled, rather than stressful, band experience.

Band is a great elective for your student. The Warrior Band is the largest visible student organizations at Westwood. It is steeped with traditions and pride. In fact, our greeting, "Hey Band Parent!" parodies what the directors say when they want to get the attention of the band. You'll hear "Hey Band!" and hear the return "Hey What?"

Band is about music, learning, teamwork, commitment, time management, forging friendships, and fun. Take pride in the effort your student will be investing to be a part of what is known as "The Best of the West." Respect and encourage him and other students by taking an active role by meeting the commitments expected of each family: working food concession shifts at games and other fundraising activities. Volunteering to assist in a support role that interests you. Being there at performance time whether it's at the Performing Arts Center or at a football game on a cold, drizzly Friday night.

Our Parent Guide may not have all the answers you seek. Be sure that you familiarize yourself with the Official Band Handbook issued by the Directors. Consider ours a serious, yet light hearted attempt to make your family's Warrior Band experience more enjoyable.

Who? What? Where? When? WABB!

Communications – Warrior Band Style

Weekly Band Notes are emails issued by the Directors to the students and parents. These will keep you up to date on rehearsal times, call times, etc. If for any reason, you can't find your weekly Band Notes, you can read them on the Charms website.

You can really stay on top of what's happening by attending announced parent meetings, attending the Westwood Area Band Booster general membership meetings and following us on social media, as well as our website www.westwoodband.org.

Be assured that your teen is not the only teen who doesn't communicate with their parents. Don't hesitate to pick up the phone or email another band parent. We think it was Einstein, or maybe it was a senior parent, who has been quoted as saying, "The only dumb question is the one that wasn't asked."

What's WABB?

WABB stands for Westwood Area Band Boosters and membership fees can be paid at registration. Be assured though, that even if you chose not to officially join WABB, your presence and your volunteer hours are still welcomed! WABB is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization comprised of band parents and guardians of students enrolled in the band programs of Canyon Vista Middle School, Grisham Middle School and Westwood High School. Don't let the name WESTWOOD Area Band Boosters fool you – the middle school programs contribute to the success of WABB and reap huge benefits from WABB. WABB is one of just a handful of band booster clubs in the entire state of Texas that fund middle school programs to the extent that we do. Because face it, no matter how wonderful and talented the high school program is, the students have a habit of graduating on us and moving on. Without successful, talented middle school students moving up to Westwood, the high school program will soon falter.

What does WABB do? It raises monies to fund services and educational opportunities not provided by RRISD, provides volunteer manpower that it takes to support a high quality band program, and maintains a communications network for parents. WABB's annual budget averaged \$100,000 over the last several years.

How does WABB raise that money? Most of the money raised by WABB comes from the operation of the food concession stands during football season. The concession stands at Peters Stadium (near Round Rock High School) and Kelly Reeves Stadium (on Parmer Lane) are coordinated by BCOB (Band Concession Operating Board) but staffed by parents from the 'home' team's band. The boosters also operate concessions at middle school home games, freshman home games, and junior varsity home games, all of which are played at the Warrior Bowl at Westwood High School. The operation of these stands requires the full participation by all band parents. Each band family is expected to work at least ONE concession shift per season. Round Rock ISD also hosts playoff football games at its two stadiums. Concessions at these games are jointly shared by all Round Rock band booster clubs.

WABB's revenue sources also include membership dues and donations from parents and donations from corporations. Donors are recognized in concert programs.

Current membership and donation levels are:

- Virtuoso*: \$500 or above (\$40 membership, plus \$460 donation and no volunteering is required)
- Whole Note*: \$300 (\$40 membership, plus \$260 donation)
- Half Note*: \$200 (\$40 membership, plus \$160 donation)
- Quarter Note*: \$100 (\$40 membership, plus \$60 donation)
- Basic Membership: \$40

Corporate sponsorship levels are:

- Topaz - \$200-\$499
- Opal - \$500-\$999
- Sapphire - \$1000-\$2499
- Emerald - \$2500-\$4999
- Diamond - \$5000+

In kind donations are welcome!

During the course of the year, the WABB organizes other fundraising activities. These may vary from year to year. Current fundraisers include:

--SpiritWear – Shirts and other items for parents and band supporters that proclaim your pride in the Warrior Band. These items are sold through MyLocker.com and you must designate Westwood Warrior Band as the recipient of part of the proceeds from your purchase.

--Spring Mulch sale – The band sells bags of yard mulch and delivers the bags to the customer's yard with minimum purchase of 5 bags. This fundraiser clicks into gear in late winter, with delivery taking place in March.

--Mattress sales – The band hall is turned into a mattress showroom! A company comes in with their sales staff to sell mattresses to the community. This raises a significant amount of money for the band and all we do is spread the word to our friends, family and the community.

WABB also supplies support for the band program through volunteerism. Imagine trying to get your teen up, dressed and out the door with everything he or she needs for the day. Now imagine trying to get THREE HUNDRED teenagers ready. Band parents help the directors with this task – readying uniforms, feeding students before games and events, chaperoning, driving equipment trucks, building props, and more.

I've heard that band is very expensive!

Band fees and expenses at Westwood are at or below the costs of participating in band at any other RRISD high school and our fee schedule is considerably LOWER than fees at other non-RRISD high schools in the area. And comparing fees for other Westwood activities (like football, cheerleading, SunDancers, lacrosse, baseball, volleyball) our fee schedule is still much lower than most of these other WHS organizations. When our fees have increased it is because of higher costs for transportation, supplies, and equipment, and the district-required game day Meal Plan. Actually, our band fees have DECREASED for the 2019-2020 season.

I've heard that band is very time-consuming for the students!

Yes, students do spend a lot of time in rehearsal. Summer band usually starts the last week of July, though some instruments will have sectionals or summer camps earlier in the summer. The first football game of the season is usually the first week of school, so the band needs to have a halftime show and stand tunes ready BEFORE the first week of school. Students need to have time to rehearse the show, adjust to playing their instrument in 'marching style' rather than 'concert style' and to have time to come together as a band. But think about it this way, your student spends a LOT of time with other band students and a LOT of time at the school. So before the first day of classes, your student has already made nearly 300 friends and has become very familiar with the layout of the school – or at least the band hall, cafeteria, rehearsal fields, restrooms, choir rooms and practice rooms.

Students receive a fine arts credit AND PE waiver for marching band. Colleges LOVE to see band listed on student transcripts – it shows dedication and commitment-- and there are MANY chances to excel at a personal level (region/area band and orchestra, solo and ensemble) and to show leadership (officers, section leaders, uniform crew, loading crew, librarians, drum majors) in band. Students not only learn how to play their instrument and how to perform in front of an audience, but they learn responsibility, time management, leadership skills and team building. Band teaches students to look out for others, to do their fair share, and gives them a sense of camaraderie and community.

Rehearsal times 'normalize' during the school year. UIL mandates that for any given extracurricular activity, students are limited to no more than eight (8) hours of practice and rehearsal outside the school day per school week per activity. Our band directors are adamant about this rule. Study time may be made available during band classes, especially after a weekday football game or after a late concert, so students can stay current on homework.

I've heard that band is very time consuming for PARENTS!

You will probably spend a lot of time getting your child to and from rehearsals and picking them up very late at night after games and competitions. You may want to join a carpool with other parents from your neighborhood. And, yes, it is hoped that parents WILL volunteer time to help out the band and our

students. There are many ways that parents can help with the band. There are 'one time' volunteer opportunities throughout the year, and many weekly opportunities to help out. Each band family is asked to work ONE concession shift per season. A shift is approximately three to five hours long. Parents are encouraged to sign up to provide section snacks during marching season two to three times, depending on the size of each section. Your student appreciates your attendance at performances and competitions, too—even if they don't admit it.

But again, think about the return you get. You get to spend time with amazing, dedicated, POLITE teenagers. You get to meet and know the other band students – and your band student spends more time with these other band students than they do with YOU. You get to meet and network with other band parents. And if your student objects to you being around, you can always say "Yes, but band parents are EXPECTED to help out. I can't let the band down."

Fun in the Sun (or What to Expect During Summer Band)

Auditions are held in the spring for concert placements in the high school band. There are four bands at Westwood: Concert, Symphonic, Wind Symphony and Wind Ensemble. It is EXTREMELY rare for a freshman to be placed in the Wind Symphony or Wind Ensemble. Incoming freshmen are 'competing' against upperclassmen students who have been playing their instrument for twice as long as the freshmen. No matter how talented the freshman is, it is very difficult to compete against that kind of experience.

Summer Band camp starts the last week of July. Attendance is mandatory. Some sections (colorguard, drum line, front line percussion) also hold weeklong camps in mid July. Some sections may also hold sectionals throughout the summer to get a jump on the show music.

Camp schedules may vary from day-to-day, but count on them being day long, with a break for lunch. Students are encouraged to stay on campus and bring a lunch from home. Students are asked to dress for the weather (HOT! It is Texas after all!) and wear comfortable tennis shoes. A hat and sunglasses are suggested. Sunscreen is a VERY good idea. Students are required to bring a FULL water jug to practice each day. Brief water breaks are held often. If the weather becomes too hot, students head indoors for sectionals or to work on music performance.

A Parent's Guide to Marching Season

Marching Band – During the football season, the marching band is composed of the Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Symphony and Wind Ensemble. The bands meet daily as separate classes during school hours. They come before and after the school day during football season to form the marching band. The marching band provides halftime shows and spirited music in the stands during all Varsity football games (home and away). The band also performs at several marching competitions each year, usually on Saturdays during October and early November. Normally, all band students participate in

marching band unless they are excused due to circumstances approved by the directors. A Physical Education credit is met with marching band, as well as a fine arts credit. Students who continue in band will receive elective credits toward graduation requirements.

Why is my student not marching?

Just like a sports team with a fixed number of players in a game, the marching drills are designed with a fixed instrumentation and number of spots on the field. These spots are called varsity spots. Westwood is unique in that it 'trains' additional students to march parts of the show. These spots are called junior varsity. If a spot opens up in the show due to injury or academic ineligibility, the varsity spots can easily be filled by junior varsity members who have been working on the music and drill all season. Auditions for the varsity spots are held in early August and are based on marching and playing tests and 'pass offs.' Junior varsity students are often needed to help with sideline crew, pit crew, and to perform with props and electronic equipment. Even though junior varsity students may not perform on the field during competitions, all students perform during the halftime shows at football games and in the stands.

What is a 'pass-off?'

A Pass-Off is a test. Students are sometimes required to play (pass off) music for a grade or seating assignment. The directors or section leaders may provide feedback on any deficiencies.

What is Call Time?

Call time means the band student is ready in the appropriate attire, with the appropriate equipment in the appointed place. A call time of 7:00 am means you are ready to begin rehearsal at 7:00. It does not mean that you arrive at 7:00 am.

Game Day Meal

The time between the end of the school day and call time is SHORT. To ensure that students have time to eat before the game, the booster club offers Game Day Meals as a service. We contract with various restaurants to provide a quick, complete student-friendly meal. These are served in the cafetorium. These meals are purchased during registration. A typical Game Day Meal is a sub-type sandwich or pasta dish or pizza, plus a side, dessert and drink. Vegetarian options are available. We are NOT able to accommodate all food allergies at this time, so parents can choose to opt out of the Game Day Meal plan, with documentation to the directors. Parents MUST provide a meal for their students if they have opted out of the meal plan.

Section Snacks

After certain rehearsals, many parents will arrange to provide a snack for their child's section. These snacks are provided by parents who take turns feeding the whole section. Snacks should be simple and quick—just a little something to hold them until mealtime. During warm weather, individual ice creams or popsicles or sport drinks are appreciated. On cooler mornings, pastries, doughnuts, kolache, pig in a blanket or hot chocolate are welcomed by the students. Please do not feel you need to do anything elaborate. Your section parent will usually send out a signup sheet so you can pick dates to provide a snack for your child's section. The students REALLY enjoy these quick 'pick me ups' and it is another way for you to see and meet the other students in your child's section.

Uniforms

The school furnishes the basic marching uniform. It consists of uniform shirt, pants (bibs), jacket with a hip cape, gauntlets (a detachable cuff worn at the wrists) and a shako (hat) with a plume. The following items are ordered at registration: marching shoes, black gloves (except percussion) and show shirt. The student must provide these items on their own: TALL black crew length socks, black compression shorts (available at most sporting goods stores), ALL black athletic shorts (no logos, school-appropriate length) and hair ties (all hair that hits the collar must be put up into a bun).

Students are fit into their marching uniforms during the first part of summer band camp. The bibs, shirt, jacket, gauntlets and shako remain at school and the uniform crew helps distribute them before each event. **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR HANGING UP THEIR UNIFORMS.** Students must have their uniform 'inspected' by a member of the uniform crew before they leave the band hall after a performance. Uniforms are cleaned regularly.

Students may order a band duffel bag to hold their uniform items. These duffel bags are available at registration or through MyLocker.com. *Note: For 2019, we are possibly changing vendors for the duffel bag. Please be on the lookout to order duffles via an email in the summer.*

Later in marching season, students are issued a concert uniform (see below).

Showing Your Spirit

Photo Buttons

At summer band camp, snapshots of the students are taken in their uniforms. The pictures are then made into photo buttons which are available for sale to parents. You may order the photo buttons during registration.

SpiritWear

Parents and family members may elect to buy a shirt that is similar to the band's show shirt. Other band shirt options are also available through mylocker.com. Parents wear these shirts to games and competitions, when chaperoning or working concession stands to identify themselves as band supporters.

Don't feel self conscious. You won't be the only one wearing a photo button or booster shirt. Glance around at the football games and you will see lots of proud parents sporting the images of their band student, cheerleader, Sundancer or athlete.

Blockheads

Blockheads are the wooden soldier yard ornaments painted to look like the Westwood band uniforms. Blockheads are made by WABB and are given to incoming freshmen and new band students. Each Blockhead sports the student's name and graduation year.

Tickets to the Football game

The marching band performs at all regular and playoff season varsity high school football games. Westwood shares two stadiums with the other RRISD high schools. Kelly Reeves Athletic Complex is located at 10211 West Parmer Lane, Austin, Texas 78717. MOST of Westwood's home games will be played at Reeves, also known as KRAC. The other stadium is Dr. R.L. Peters Jr. Stadium, located behind Round Rock High School at 300 N. Lake Creek Drive, Round Rock, Texas 78681. This stadium was formerly known as Dragon Stadium. The band travels by school bus to and from all games.

Band parents tend to sit high in the bleachers at the games in order to see the marching formations and close to the band in order to hear and participate in the band experience. Season tickets are available through the RRISD Athletic website and office at Kelly Reeves Stadium. Individual general admission tickets for the regular season will be sold from Monday through Friday each week during the season. We will update you on the 2019 ticket prices, but here's a look at [2018 ticket pricing](#).

Student Game Day Plan

A call time is announced a few days before each performance. Students are to eat their game day meal in the school cafeteria, then change into their uniforms. This will consist of tall black socks, marching shoes, black compression shorts, and show shirt. (Students may wear their athletic shorts over their compression shorts until they are ready to put their marching uniform pants on.) They are to be seated in the cafeteria with everything they need to perform their part in the show (water jugs, instrument, props, all proper uniform pieces.) Usually the student leadership performs a motivational or funny skit, weekly awards are announced and last minute instructions are given. Students are dismissed to board their bus and are usually seated by section (all trumpets on one bus, all flutes on another, etc.) All

students must ride the bus to and from the games. An adult chaperone rides each bus to and from the game or competition. AFTER the event, all students return to the band hall to return uniforms, instruments and other equipment to storage. Students usually return to Westwood around 10:30 PM, though return times depends on the length of the game and the distance traveled. Students are urged to call parents for pick up as they approach Westwood. Students must unload the buses and equipment trucks, put away instruments and hang up their uniform before they are allowed to leave. Please park in the parking lot. Leave the front driveway CLEAR for the buses to unload. Drive CAREFULLY around the school. Remember, it has been a long day for everyone. Be patient.

Parent Game Day Plan

It takes a village to get nearly 300 students ready to perform. Help is needed to serve game day meals, distribute and return uniforms, chaperone buses and drive equipment trucks. Signups to help in these areas are usually available during registration. You do not have to volunteer EVERY week, but all parents are encouraged to volunteer in some way.

Home Games are usually played at Kelly Reeves Athletic Complex (10211 W Parmer Lane/Austin, Texas 78717) though a limited number of 'home' games may be played at Peters Stadium (formerly Dragon Stadium) at 300 N. Lake Creek Drive/Round Rock, TX, 78681. The home side of both stadiums is the west side (the taller side). Free parking is available at both stadiums. Most games begin at 7:00 PM and are over at 10:30 PM or so. Band parents tend to sit in the section near the band. School colors are orange and white, though you will also see a lot of grey and black. You may notice Westwood spectators using a hand sign during the school song and fight song. It is a "W" made by extending the last three fingers on either hand.

Competition season

The marching band will participate in several marching festivals and competitions. Traditionally, October is the season for festivals and competitions, so prepare for every weekend in October (and possibly early November) to be scheduled with a competition. Central Texas is rich with marching festivals, so many of these competitions will be near the Austin area. The directors also try to attend festivals outside of central Texas so students can see bands from areas outside of central Texas.

No Pass/No Play

The Texas Education Agency defines band as a performing art and concert and marching performances are an extension of class time. Attendance at rehearsals and performances is required and is a part of the band grade.

A student will be suspended from participating in any extracurricular activity (marching band activities, pep rallies, parades, UIL solo and ensemble and other competitions) after a six week grading period in which a student receives a grade below a 70. The student will remain eligible and responsible for band and technique class requirements including sectionals and performances.

Interim progress reports are issued in the middle of each six week period to students who are borderline or failing a class. Students can 'regain' eligibility at this time if he/she is passing.

A Parent's Guide to Concert Season

Uniform basics

Concert season begins when marching/football season ends. The school provides formal concert attire (long black dresses for ladies and jacket and bow tie for guys.) We can provide black tux pants for guys or they may wear their own black slacks with their school issued tux jacket. Students will be responsible for providing the following:

- Black shoes (guys are okay to use their marching black shoes)
- Black socks
- White, pleated tuxedo shirts (there are inexpensive options so please check with us before purchasing)

The concert uniforms are kept at home. As with the marching uniforms, items are numbered and the student is responsible for care of each item. We will clean all uniforms at the end of the school year.

Performances

Several concerts are held during the season including a winter concert in December, a Symphonic Camp and Concert in February, a pre-UIL concert in April and a spring concert in May. Performances may be held at Westwood HS or at RRISD PAC (Performing Arts Center) adjacent to McNeil High School.

Concert Season Competitions

The University Interscholastic League (UIL) sponsors both individual and group music competitions. Competitions may be in solos, small ensembles, or large ensembles (whole band).

Band Banquet

Traditionally, band students have celebrated a fun-filled, successful musical year with a banquet planned cooperatively by student leadership and WABB. Although the theme varies, its purpose is to honor the seniors and bestow awards. Each year, WABB awards two scholarships to seniors who apply for and are chosen by a Scholarship Committee. Students reminisce about the year gone by and give a send-off to the graduating seniors. Regardless of what your band student might tell you, parents are welcome and encouraged to attend this celebration.

The Social Side to Band

Corral a group of teenagers into an organization and its social side will soon appear. You'll find your student asking to do things and go places that are not school, band, or WABB sanctioned or related. Many sections have mascots, section jokes, section t-shirts, traditions and other bonding experiences. Participation in these activities is optional, but you will feel more comfortable when your child participates in them if you know the other students. Get to know your teen's new friends and their parents. Volunteer. Go to games. Go to competitions. Bring section snacks.

This and That

Band Trips/Band Fundraisers

The Westwood band usually goes on an extended trip every other year. The band has traveled far and wide, from marching in the Cherry Blossom parade in Washington, DC to marching in the Disney Parade in Disney World Orlando, to performing in Golden State Park, San Francisco. Students and their families bear the cost of these OPTIONAL trips. Fundraisers may be held to help defray the cost of the trip.

TMEA All-State Bands

The Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) sponsors a series of individual auditions. High school district and region band auditions are held in late November/early December. All-State band auditions are held in January. Students selected for region band attend a clinic/rehearsal in January, which is followed by a concert. Students selected for All State attend TMEA Convention in February and will perform in concert at the convention.