



Sherando High School Band Department

Student Handbook

2025-2026

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WELCOME!

It is with great pride in our students, parents, school, and community that we welcome you to the award-winning Sherando Band Department community! This is truly a wonderful learning community that is second to none in our school community, as students are able to take advantage of learning from teachers and instructors, and from our great parent boosters and volunteers as well. Students also have the opportunity to learn from each other in a collaborative, project-based learning environment. Our department offers many unique and enriching life and music experiences for students.

Performing Ensembles

- Marching Warriors
- Concert Band / Symphonic Band
- Jazz Ensemble / Jazz Combo
- District Band & Honor Band opportunities
- Color Guard / Winter Guard
- Indoor Percussion

Band Director and Staff Director: Joel Cosner, cosnerjo@fcpsk12.net

Band Instructional Assistant: Devon Stein, steind@fcpsk12.net

Guard Instructor: TBD

Percussion Instructor: Scott Kittrell, skittrell37@gmail.com

Rehearsal Locations

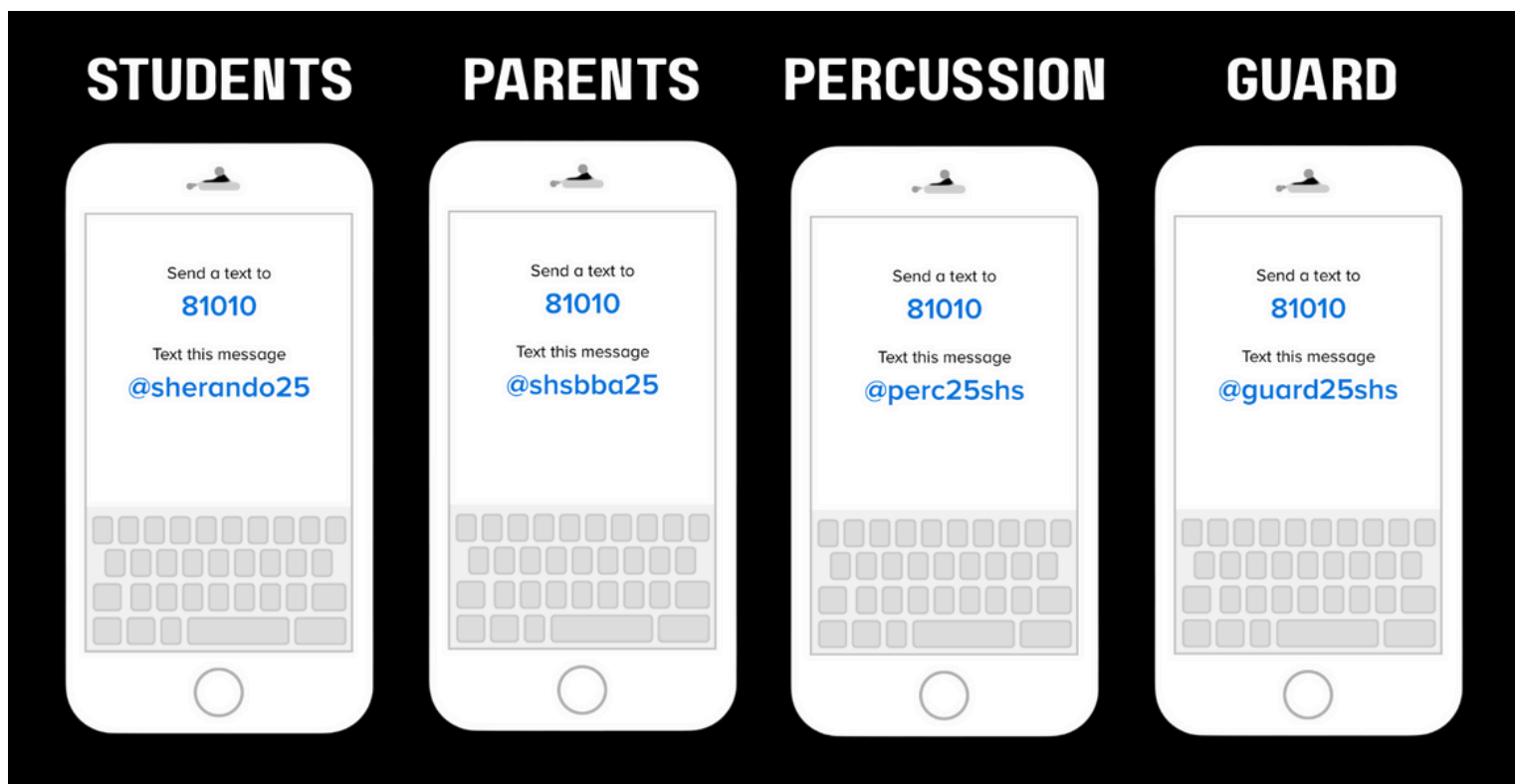
The Band Room at Sherando is located between the bus loop and the front office entrance at SHS, and the exterior door is Door #2. Other rehearsal locations include the "South Practice Field" during marching season, the Sherando Auditorium, and Gymnasium for various other times of the year depending on the performance season.

COMMUNICATION

For such a large organization, communication is key from staff to students/parents AND students/parents to staff. All key dates and events are listed on the Band Calendar on the Band website, well in advance: <https://www.sherandoband.org/>

Students also have access to Google Classroom where announcements, assignments, and resources are listed. The weekly Sherando Band Newsletter also includes key dates/events, volunteer opportunities, etc.

We will be utilizing the Remind App for the 2025-2026 school year for both students and parents. Follow these instructions to sign up for the Remind app(s) relevant to you:



STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

From the support of the community, SHS administrators, SHS Band Boosters, we are very fortunate to have the staff, instruments, uniforms, volunteers, trailers, etc. in order to be successful. Being involved in any Sherando band organization is a privilege. We must take pride and responsibility in caring for and maintaining the condition of all of these things. Simple things, like keeping instruments in their cases and stored in lockers to cleaning off your marching shoes/uniforms will assist in the longevity of our belongings. As a member of the band organization, you are not only representing yourself, but Sherando High School and its community. Respecting others, uniforms, and instruments/equipment is a must, especially while in uniform.

Students must abide by the FCPS Student Code of Conduct. Some examples are as follows: no swearing, making lewd comments, acting provocatively, PDA, violating bus safety rules, bullying, vandalizing school-owned or other's personal property, etc. These behaviors will not be tolerated and will be immediately presented to school administration. Poor behavior could lead to that student not being allowed to participate in any band activities.

As listed in the attendance section, communication is key to our success. We encourage you to participate in multiple activities while you are here at Sherando; however, there must be clear, advanced communication in order to succeed. We provide schedules to you as early as we can. Please take the time to review and manage your time accordingly. Anything missed in a class/rehearsal must be made up prior to the following rehearsal. Please reach out to a section leader or staff member to assist, if needed.

MARCHING BAND PREPARATION

Students are expected to learn and review all musical warm ups and show music over the summer before band camp. These documents will be posted on the Sherando Band website prior to the end of the preceding school year. We will review and continue to perfect throughout the fall season.

Marching band has become more and more physically demanding over the past few years. All instructional practices/performances are created to encourage and strengthen our members mentally and physically. We will be including stretching, conditioning, and movement to continue to eliminate injury, improve flexibility, stamina, and overall health. There are things outside of the school day/rehearsals that can assist with this such as eating healthy, staying hydrated, and stretching at home.

If you have a preexisting injury, please notify us. If you are hurt during a rehearsal, please notify a director immediately. We will take the necessary actions needed to ensure the member does not increase the injury.

Band Camp/Rehearsal Prep List

- Athletic workout clothes (no jeans) & abides by FCPS dress code
- Supportive closed-toe shoes and socks for marching—Vans & Converse not recommended (not enough support). No Crocs!
- Hat/sunglasses (you will be in the sun much of the time)
- Water bottle
- Fully charged phone (to access UDB and music)
- Sunscreen/Bug spray
- Enthusiasm!!!!!!!

ATTENDANCE

Attendance for rehearsals (including band camp), competitions, performances and Tag Day are required. Absence forms available on the Sherando Band website or from the band assistant.

- **PERFORMANCES** – Please submit 4 weeks before the event.
- **REHEARSALS** (outside of school hours) – 2 weeks before the event.

If a student has an unexcused absence the last school day before the weekend, or is absent multiple days—excused or unexcused—within the same week, they will not be allowed to perform in the weekend's performance(s). This includes an unexcused absence from a Wednesday rehearsal.

Work or non-sponsored Sherando events are not excused absences even within the 2 week rehearsal/4 week performance period. Please communicate your scheduling needs with your employer ahead of time. An emergency absence will be handled on a case by case basis. Nonparticipation in weekly rehearsals could also result in students not performing in the weekend's performance(s).

Sherando High School Policy Statement on Student Participation in Multiple Activities:

School policy states that students who participate in more than one Sherando sponsored activity that occur at the same time are permitted to choose which activity they will participate in, and this does not always follow the 4 week/2 week policy. Every effort should be made to plan well ahead, and communication with directors/instructors well in advance will only help everyone involved.

GRADES

Student grades are based on attendance and participation. Participation grades are taken only during school day class time. Some reasons for deducting points within this time period are as follows: tardiness, sitting out half or majority of class time without a doctor's note, not knowing individual music or visual responsibility, playing out of turn, talking or general disruptions, including phone use.

Points will be deducted on rehearsal/performance days for the following: failure to submit an excused absence form within 2/4 week time frame or tardiness.

Points breakdown listed below:

Band Camp 100 pts each week

Class Rehearsals 20 pts each week

Saturday Rehearsals 50 pts each

Wednesday Rehearsals 20 pts each

Parades 50 pts each

Football Games 100 pts each

Competitions 100 pts each

Playing Assignment 100 pts each

There will be 2 individual playing assignments given through the marching season and concert season. Students will be graded on memorization and playing (tone & tempo) ability. A rubric will be distributed prior to the due date. Alternate assignments may be given for any missed performances due to excused absence, lack of payment, or ineligibility to travel. This will be handled on a case by case basis.

SHADOW SYSTEM

The shadow system is in place to fill in for students who are absent and/or continuing to develop their music and visual skills. The purpose of this system is to hold each individual student accountable as well as give students time to enhance their individual performance skills.

Shadow positions will be eligible to perform in all football games, parades, and any additional exhibition performances. They will march in competitions if they are filling an absent position or stand-still playing at the front of the field. Students in shadow positions will be assigned a member of their section to shadow that is determined by band staff. They will rotate and learn this position–music, drill, and visual movements– during band camp and rehearsals. During rehearsal weeks of a competition, the student will either fill an absent spot or will rehearse on the sideline. This will be communicated to student shadow positions as soon as absent forms are turned in.

Shadow positions are based on the following: **A**ttendance, **A**ttitude, and **A**chievement. Any student is eligible to be or become a shadow based on the A-A-A system.

Attendance

- Is present and active at band camp
- Is present and active in class
- Is present and active at rehearsals
- Has abided by the absence policy

Attitude:

- Has a positive outlook and open mind when learning new things
- Gives 100% effort each rep and rehearsal
- Respectful to self, teammates, and staff

- Respects and takes care of instrument, locker, uniform, and rehearsal spaces provided

Achievement:

- Understands and can play through all warm-ups
- Memorize and play through the entire show individually
- Understands and can execute all marching fundamentals

Timeline Prior to Band Camp

- Placements pre-determined by staff prior to band camp
 - Band registration completed by 5/31/25
 - Considerations include: recommendations from middle school band directors & marching band show needs post Band Camp
- Discussions with students after band camp about shadow status
 - Band fees paid or accommodations for payment plan by 8/8/25
 - A-A-A system

BAND FEE

The Band Fee for the 2025–2026 school year is **\$180.00 + \$50.00** (shoe price is not final yet and may fluctuate) for Marching Band Shoes. The Fee will be broken out into two parts and you will be responsible for paying for both.

Band Fees or accommodations for a payment plan are due by **Friday, August 8th, 2025**. Guard deposit of \$50 is due by May 28th, 2025.

If fees are not paid by this date, the Band Boosters reserve the right to transfer any additional funds in a student's Raise Right or from the calendar fundraiser account to apply towards an unpaid band fee.

1. **\$30.00** will need to be paid to the Frederick County Schools directly. This is a class fee determined by FCPS. You can pay this through MySchoolBucks or a check to SHS. The Band Boosters can not transfer the funds so please don't pay this to the Boosters.
2. **\$150.00** will need to be paid to the Sherando Band Boosters. (Payment options below including calendar fundraiser). This fee is determined by Boosters/Staff to fit our yearly needs.

\$10 Marching Band Show Shirt

\$20 Band Camp/Tailgating Food

\$50 Instructional Staff/Music & Drill Designers

\$10 Music copyrights

\$60 Uniform rental/cleaning (marching and concert band)

\$150 Total

***This fee does not include indoor percussion, winter guard, spring trips or District Band activities

3. **\$50.00** (may fluctuate) – If your student needs new marching shoes.

- Cash/Check
- Credit Card through SwipeSimple – Marching Band Shoes.
- Money that is in your students account.

Band Fee Policy

Students are responsible to pay the \$150 band fee to the Boosters, \$30 class fee to SHS, and \$50 for shoes (if needed) on a yearly basis. They must be paid in full or up to date per the agreed payment plan in order for a student to be eligible for any travel or extra-curricular activities with the band such as parades, competitions, band trips, indoor percussion, winter guard, or any District Band opportunities per SHS administration. Non-payment could also result in limited/no use of school owned instruments and equipment.

All students/families have opportunities to fundraise the Booster Band fee by using the following:

- Calendar Fundraiser
- RaiseRight
- Krispy Kreme

Payment plans and scholarships are available if needed. Feel free to contact any staff member listed on page 2 or the SHS Booster Treasurer at treasurer@sherandoband.org

STUDENT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Band Officers

These roles are nominated by other students within the band each year. They will represent the students of the band department in Booster meetings and assist the director in any student-ran duties. Role duties are listed below.

President: Lead student executive for the Band Department, connects the Band Boosters to student membership, attends Booster meetings, works collaboratively with the Band Director on a variety of tasks as needed, etc.

Vice President: Same duties as Band President, assists President in any way, etc.

Secretary/Social Media: Helps promote the band through social media platforms, other media platforms, works collaboratively with other band officers to help organize band executive board topics, attends Booster meetings when able, works collaboratively with Band Director on a variety of tasks as needed, etc.

Historian: Creates slideshow of Senior photos and other photos for year-end Band Awards Banquet, attends Booster meetings when able, works collaboratively with Band Director on a variety of tasks as needed, etc.

Section Leaders

Section leaders comprise a crucial element of the success of the band. These students are leaders working directly with students to ensure their success in all aspects of band membership and consistently modeling the highest of expectations. Generally, each section has a section leader (or 2-4 in the case of large sections). However, in cases where sections are too small or contain no interested/eligible candidates, sections may be combined under a single leader (i.e. low brass, high brass, etc). The exact number of leaders is determined by a combination of band enrollment and those who apply.

To be eligible for the position of section leader, applicants must be a rising sophomore or older, a member of the Marching Band at least one year at SHS, and be a student in good standing—grades and behavior. They must complete the application form, undergo an interview process with band staff, as well as submitting 2-3 teacher/employer recommendations by the deadline given. They must also be up to date with any outstanding band fees. If a section leader is not meeting band/school standards and expectations, they may be removed from the role. Section leader selection is determined by the band director with input from the adult marching band staff.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Band Awards/Lettering



The first time a student completes the requirements for a Band Letter, they will receive the Band pin to go on their Sherando Letter. Then, for each additional year of completion, the students will earn a bar to go along with their original pin. Band members must earn 7 points from this list during the school year. Mr. Cosner will post a Google Form on Google Classroom each Spring along with a submission due date.

1. Be an officer or section leader/captain/drum major for the Sherando Band (1 point)
2. Membership in the Sherando Band for 3 years (1 point)
3. Perfect attendance at all band performances (1 point)
4. Straight A's in band for two consecutive years including the letter year (1 point)
5. Membership/Earned placement in All-District Band (1 point)
6. Audition for All-Virginia Band/Orchestra (1 point)
7. Membership in the All-Virginia Band/Orchestra (3 points)
8. Membership in the All-Virginia Jazz Ensemble (3 points)
9. No point deductions from your daily grade (1 point)
10. One point when a band you are in receives a Superior Rating at State Marching Assessment or District Concert Assessment (Max – 2 points)
11. Participation in either Indoor Percussion or Indoor Color Guard competition season (1 point)
12. Play all of your major scales for the director (1 point)
13. Complete "Musicianship Test" assignment (1 point – discuss with Mr. Cosner for more detail)

Requirements to Letter in Color Guard

Once the student has completed two total years of membership in the Color Guard, they will earn the Color Guard pin to go on their Sherando Letter. Then, for each additional year of participation, the students will earn a bar to go along with their original pin.

Requirements to Letter in Jazz Ensemble

Once the student has completed two total years of membership in the Jazz Ensemble, they will earn the Jazz pin to go on their Sherando Letter. Then, for each additional year of participation, the students will earn a bar to go along with their original pin.

Elected Band Officers

Students elected to a Band Officer position will receive a Star pin. Duties and responsibilities for band officer positions are defined within the Band Officer Nominations form (See the director for this information).

District / District Jazz / All-State Band and Orchestra / Solo and Ensemble / Collegiate Honor Bands

Student members of the Sherando Band Department will have the opportunity to audition and participate in various honor ensembles and events throughout the year. Information for each of these will be communicated to students through Google Classroom, under the "Classwork" section of the platform. Dates for the various events will be posted to the Sherando Band website calendar as well. If you have questions about any specific events, please email the Band Director.

TRAVEL POLICY

To ensure the safety of our band students, we have a policy that we are asking you to follow if you want to drive your student(s) home with you from band events/competitions instead of them riding the bus back to the school. Please do the following:

1. Send a physical note that says you are taking your student with you instead of them riding the bus. (Preferably ahead of time so we can make bus chaperones aware in advance, but the day of, will be accepted.)
2. You or your student must tell the bus chaperone that they are leaving with you.
3. Your student must make arrangements to make sure their uniform and/or instruments gets to where it needs to be.
4. Band staff must see the student leave with you! This is non-negotiable, and we cannot hold the buses if they are late

Per SHS admin, students can only be released to THEIR parent/guardian. Adults cannot take any student with them that does not belong to them. No exceptions.

SPRING TRIP

The spring trip is an opportunity for students/staff/chaperones to enjoy the performing arts together outside of a competitive environment. The majority of trips are traveling in the month of April. Every year varies on what activity we do such as attending a theater production, traveling and exploring a large city, to a performance opportunity. Students will be informed approximately 2-6 months prior depending on the volume of the trip. All students must have any outstanding band fees paid prior to a trip deposit being due.

WORD TO PARENTS

Without our extremely dedicated Band Boosters and volunteers, it would not be possible for our students and program to be as successful as they are each and every year. As a parent of a student in the Band Program at Sherando, you are automatically a part of the Band Boosters organization, whether you are in a board position or not. There are many ways for parents to be involved in the program, both large and small, and you are encouraged to be as involved as your schedule allows. We utilize Sign Up Genius that can be accessed from the Band Newsletter and band website to sign up for roles. Volunteering and supporting our student-musicians and performers at Sherando gives you a wonderful and unique opportunity to positively influence the lives of our students and help them to enjoy an unforgettable experience as a Sherando Warrior!