



July 24, 2020

Hello WHS Band Family!

First, I would like to apologize for the slight delay in delivering more detailed information and thank you again for your patience as we work through these everchanging times. Also, this is a lengthy update, but all the information is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT! Please make sure you read the entire document carefully.

As some of you may have seen, at around 10:00am on Tuesday, just as I was preparing to send the lengthy document I had prepared with details of the previously announced summer rehearsal schedule, the UIL released a revised competition and practice/rehearsal calendar for Fall sports and activities in the 2020-2021 school year. In addition to delaying the start of football season, the revised calendar moves the date on which we may begin learning the visual/drill components of our marching show from August 1st to September 7th. It also pushes our Region UIL Marching Evaluation from October 20th to a date to be scheduled in late-November or early-December and moves our 5A UIL Area Marching Contest from October 31st to a date to be scheduled on or around December 12th.

While we are eager to get started, and know that many of you are too, we want to proceed in a manner that will allow us to provide the safest environment possible and that is also respectful of your time and effort. In a normal year, we would have approximately 12 hours of rehearsal, including music and marching fundamentals, prior to beginning the show on August 1st. With this date being pushed back to September 7th, we will have at least that much rehearsal time during the first two weeks of school. Coupling this with the fact that our season is now scheduled to extend into December, we feel that maintaining the usual length and intensity of our summer schedule would be both unnecessary and create a high likelihood of student burnout by the end of the season. That said, we also feel that it is important for us to get started, reunite with our family members, get instruments and equipment in hands, start moving, playing, drumming, and spinning again, and take care of as many housekeeping and procedural items as we can before we are in the midst of the first days of the school year. So, while significantly reduced, we will still hold the following summer rehearsals (these dates and times are now reflected on the band calendar).

***SPECIAL NOTE: Per UIL and Waller ISD guidelines, students who select to receive their instruction through Waller ISD Online will be eligible and allowed to attend and fully participate in extracurricular activities as long as they provide their own transportation to and from the school for all required rehearsals and events. Therefore, any student wishing to**



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participate in marching band, regardless of if they plan to choose online or in-person learning, can and should attend these rehearsals.

- Color Guard
 - Monday, August 3 – Friday, August 7, 8:00-11:00 am (ALL)
 - Monday, August 10 – Thursday, August 20, 8:00-10:00 am
 - All attend on Mondays and Wednesdays
 - Only those interested in learning/spinning rifle/sabre need to attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - No rehearsals on Friday, Saturday, Sunday
- Percussion
 - Monday, August 10 – Thursday, August 13 and Monday, August 17 – Thursday, August 20, 6:00-8:00 pm
- Winds
 - Brass Only
 - Monday, August 10; Wednesday August 12; and Monday, August 17; 8:00-10:00 am
 - Woodwinds Only
 - Tuesday, August 11; Thursday, August 13; and Tuesday, August 18; 8:00-10:00 am
 - All New Members and Student Leaders
 - Wednesday, August 19 and Thursday August 20; 8:00-10:00 am

Detailed safety protocols and procedures that will be followed for these rehearsals are listed below. Please take the time to read them thoroughly and be prepared to follow them.

- All students and staff will be required to complete a daily screening form for COVID-19 symptoms, and have their temperature checked and logged, upon arrival each day. This will be a Google Form that will be accessed by scanning a QR code. An alternate method to complete the form will be available for students without a smart device. Temperatures will be checked by a director and entered into the form by the student.
- Students or staff showing symptoms or having a temperature above 100 degrees will be sent home and TEA/UII guidelines will be followed to determine when they may return.
- Any participant who has symptoms or is currently lab-confirmed as being positive for COVID-19 must not attend. Any participant who develops symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19 after attending a rehearsal should immediately contact Mr. McWilliams so that proper protocols can be followed regarding providing proper notifications and determining if future rehearsals should be altered or canceled. In such an instance, the identity and personal information of the infected individual will be kept confidential.



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- Students should be dropped off by entering the main entrance of the front parking lot and dropping off at the end of the horseshoe near the handicapped parking spaces. Students who drive should park in the student parking lot behind the school.
 - Upon arrival, all students should proceed to the check in table that will be in the loading dock area outside the back door of the band hall to be screened. While waiting to be screened, students must follow posted signage to maintain 6 feet of distance from each other.
 - **STUDENTS SHOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES BEFORE REHEARSAL BEGINS TO ALLOW TIME FOR EVERYONE TO BE SCREENED PRIOR TO THE START OF REHEARSAL.**
 - Students are required to arrive appropriately dressed for rehearsal with all needed equipment and their own water (at least ½ gallon if REQUIRED to attend rehearsal) already filled.
 - All summer rehearsals (except for front ensemble) will take place entirely outside. To the extent possible, students should keep all equipment at home and bring it each day to avoid the need for access to storage and locker areas inside the band hall. In the event of large instruments/equipment that students are unable to transport back and forth from school, a one-way flow through the inside areas will be established and students will enter one at a time to retrieve or stow their instrument or equipment. Only large instruments and equipment may be kept at school. Water bottles MUST be taken home and cleaned daily. To retrieve/return instruments from the locker areas, students will enter door 60 (one at a time) and exit door 59. To retrieve/return instruments from the percussion room, students will enter door 60 (one at a time), go straight into the percussion room from the garage area without entering the main band hall, and exit to the outside through door 61. Guard equipment should also be taken to and from school each day. Any guard equipment that needs to be kept at school will be placed on a cart that will be brought in and out each day. Students will NOT have access to the guard room due to its small size and lack of ventilation.
 - Once screened, all students should move directly to their designated rehearsal area where they will be placed at an appropriate distance for rehearsal (10 feet of space on all sides while playing per UIL guidelines). Students should always remain in their spot and maintain the marked distance. During playing rehearsals, water bottles and all other needed items will be kept with the student to minimize travel during breaks. To the extent possible, this same practice will be used during marching rehearsals. When not possible, water bottles and items not in use will be placed at 6 foot spacing in designated areas to allow for appropriate distancing during breaks.
 - **ALL STUDENTS AND STAFF MUST WEAR MASKS OR APPROPRIATE FACE COVERINGS AT ALL TIMES WHEN NOT PLAYING OR IN THEIR DESIGNATED SPOT FOR REHEARSAL. THERE WILL BE A LIMITED NUMBER OF MASKS AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE ONE, BUT PLEASE PLAN TO PROVIDE YOUR OWN.**



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- Front ensemble rehearsals will take place in the main band hall to allow for maximizing space between students and remove the need to move equipment daily. These students will enter door 60 one at a time after being screened and should go straight to their designated instrument without congregating. All water bottles and other needed items will always be kept at the instrument with the student. Because they will remain inside for an extended period, front ensemble members may be asked to keep their masks or face coverings on while playing.
 - As noted above, students are required to have at least ½ gallon of water with them for rehearsal. Water jugs should be filled at home before coming to rehearsal. If this is done, the shortened rehearsal length should negate the need to fill water at the school. If a student's water needs to be refilled, a designated staff member will take the bottle and refill it. This staff member will properly wash their hands and use a fresh pair of disposable gloves while retrieving ice from the ice machine and filling the jug. Students will not be allowed to use the ice machine or enter the building for water.
 - As with refilling water, these shortened rehearsals should minimize the need enter the building to use the restroom. If needed, students will be allowed to enter one at a time to use the restrooms in the auditorium lobby. These restrooms are located just inside the door; therefore, this will negate the need to enter any other part of the building. Front ensemble members will be allowed to use the restrooms across from the band hall one at a time.
 - **STUDENTS SHOULD BE PICKED UP, OR DEPART THE SCHOOL, PROMPTLY WHEN REHEARSAL ENDS.** Students must maintain 6 feet of distance from one another while waiting for ride.
 - We are still working through the logistics and cannot make any guarantees at this point, but we are working to be able to stream and/or post recordings of these rehearsals to allow students who are unable to attend, or not yet comfortable attending, to have access. Regardless of if we can make this happen, materials will be posted to allow students to work independently on what is being covered in rehearsal.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information. As always, you may contact me directly if you have any questions or concerns. I will be sending a separate update soon regarding the remainder of the season and other items that will address many of the questions I've been receiving. I look forward to seeing all of you in the weeks ahead.

Grant McWilliams
Director of Bands