

# WHM BANDS

## West Hall Middle School Band Program Handbook 2020-2021

### **West Hall Bands Mission Statement**

The mission of the West Hall Band Program is to develop musicians using the highest standards of music education and performance; provide students with opportunities for personal growth and leadership; encourage students to become lifelong learners and supporters of the arts; and promote the place and value of music in our community.

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The purpose of this handbook is to answer any and all of your questions, update you on the coming school year, and to get you inspired for this year of music. Please make sure you read the entire handbook, refer to it often, and add the events on the band calendar to your personal calendar. Please also sign and return the Signature Page. There is also a digital handbook and calendar on the band [website](http://westhallband.org/whms), westhallband.org/whms.

## LETTER FROM MS. FOSTER

Dear Band Members and Advocates,

Welcome to the West Hall Middle School Band family! I am Ms. Foster, and this is my third year as your band director here at WHMS. Music is one of the best things you can invest in, and I hope that you will cherish this experience for a lifetime. The ultimate goal of the band is to shape students into young adults who love learning, and foster a lifelong love and understanding of fine arts.

Graduating from elementary school to middle school, or middle school to high school, can be tough, and it often takes time to find your place in the crowd. But participating in band means you already have a group of built-in friends who share your interests! Some of my closest friends, even now, are people I grew up with in band. Our band is a cohesive 6th grade through 12th grade program. In your time here, you will get to know me as well as Mrs. Wilson-Fields, the high school band director and many of her students.

There are a multitude of benefits to being in band. Playing music is fun! You will learn to read and analyze music, which is an important skill. You can also take the deep, critical thinking you learn in band to your academic classes and various other parts of your lives. That's right - music can help you in your other classes! Band members gain so many social skills and leadership opportunities. Some will even go on to continue playing music in college, or even make a career out of it. Most importantly, band teaches team building, because we truly are a team. Band students are part of something bigger than yourselves, and as a group, we are greater than the sum of our parts.

In a typical year, we play four concerts, plus our two field trips and a performance with the high school marching band. We play for basketball games, the fall festival, as well as the fifth grade visit. Many of our students get to attend trips like university band concerts, and even Six Flags. We also take recruiting trips to the elementary schools. Throughout the year, we bring in professional musicians to work with each instrument section in small groups. While this year will certainly be different, we hope to incorporate as many fun and enriching activities as we can. If you are interested in helping us make these events happen, please email me about joining the Band Parent Association.

Due to COVID-19, we do not know what this year holds. Online classes can be tough, and even in person, band will look very different. But my top priorities are making sure you're safe, and making sure you have FUN! Band will be a slice of fun in your school day. Music is an escape and a great creative outlet. In these isolated times, having a support system of other students and adults that you trust is more important than ever.

I am so excited for this school year. Congratulations on continuing your music education this year in band! Go Spartans!

*Lindsey Foster*

## LETTER FROM MR. ETHAN BANKS

Dear WHMS Band Members and Supporters,

Welcome to another wonderful adventure in Sparta! I am so excited that you have chosen the Band as a way to enhance your educational experience at West Hall. As a former middle school, high school, and college band member, I can personally attest to the wonderful journey upon which you will embark this year. The lessons learned in a performance program are ones that can be employed in every aspect of your life from now on. Hard work, dedication, teamwork, and service are skills that will be developed this year in addition to the musical talents you already possess.

Your dedicated and talented directors – Mrs. Katy Wilson-Fields (HS) and Ms. Lindsey Foster (MS) - are truly committed to growing you as both musicians and leaders for our community. Members of school band programs consistently represent the best that we have to offer, and I firmly believe that your choice to participate in the Band of Silver will shape you into the best students and young people that you can be.

We want your Band experience (students AND parents) to be as positive and rewarding as possible. Active participation, hard work, and commitment will truly make your time in the West Hall Band one of the highlights of your Spartan journey! Make it a great year everyone, and as always: Go Spartans!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Banks', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ethan D. Banks  
Principal, West Hall Middle School

**ABOUT THE CLASS****Ms. Lindsey Foster****[lindsey.foster@hallco.org](mailto:lindsey.foster@hallco.org)**

Course Websites:

[Virtual Canvas/In-Person Canvas](#), [Charms Office](#)

Band Website:

[www.westhallband.org/whms.html](http://www.westhallband.org/whms.html)**COURSE OBJECTIVES****Students will....**

1. Play a varied repertoire of music on their instrument of choice.
2. Apply understanding of musical concepts and demonstrate mastery through rehearsals and individual assessment.
3. Listen, analyze, describe, and evaluate musical performances.
4. Demonstrate appropriate rehearsal skills.
5. Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music, other fine arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
6. Demonstrate performance skills by giving concerts.
7. Read, write, and recognize musical notation, symbols, and language.
8. Develop social skills and teamwork.

**REHEARSAL AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

1. Be on time to all rehearsals and performances. Remember: Early is on time, on time is late. Rehearsal will begin *three minutes* after the official start time of the class, allowing students time to unpack and go to their seats.
2. Warm up appropriately on the music Ms. Foster has assigned.
3. Participate in rehearsal in an active, engaged, and meaningful way and with a positive attitude.
4. Students should avoid the following in the band room: food, gum, candy, beverages other than water, cell phones, non-musical materials/other homework. Water in a sealed bottle is permitted.
5. Students are expected to practice regularly and prepare individual parts outside of class. Weekly private lessons are strongly encouraged!
6. Students are expected to treat teachers, students, peers, and all musical instruments and equipment with care and respect. Put all materials away in their proper place.
7. When the director or other instructor steps on the podium or asks for your attention, all playing and talking stops.

8. Students must bring their instrument, all P.P.E., and supplies necessary for class every single day. Students must bring their school chromebook every day. P.P.E. must be worn/used correctly at all times.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a 0% participation grade for the day.

## REQUIRED EVERYDAY MATERIALS

1. Sharpened pencil
2. Instrument (including 3+ reeds, accessories)
3. Music binder (including concert music, handouts, and book)
4. P.P.E. once distributed (mask, bell cover, etc.)

(Tuners and metronomes (or equivalent phone apps) are *strongly* recommended!)

Essential Elements is the required book for band and is included in the band fees. Many instrument supplies and accessories will be sold at the “Band Store” in the director’s office. Required supplies for each instrument are posted on the WHMS Band website. Failure to bring materials to class will result in a 0% for participation grade for the day.

## ASSESSMENT METHODS

Ms. Foster and other specialized instructors will assess, evaluate, and provide constructive and productive feedback for students regularly through a variety of methods. These will include, but are not limited to, written or electronic quizzes, written reflections, and playing assessments (“Pass-Offs.”)

## GRADING POLICY

~40%	Combined Daily Participation/Demonstration of Rehearsal Skills
~25%	Concerts/Tests
~20%	Quizzes/Pass-Offs
~15%	Classwork/Homework

Gades will be posted on Infinite Campus.

Participation will be tallied every two weeks from the total of the last 5 class days. (Example: if a student loses one day of daily participation, that will result in an 80% for the week.)

## CONCERTS

### CONCERT ATTENDANCE

The **ONLY** excused absences from concerts include:

1. Excused absence from school due to field trip or extracurricular activity (with at least 2 weeks advance notice, preferably more)
2. Illness (doctor's note required)
3. Family emergency (note from parent or guardian required)

Because of the collaborative nature of performances, scheduled concerts are required. Students should note conflicts at the *beginning* of the school year and compare against athletic, extracurricular, and other scheduled activities. In cases where reconciling the conflict is challenging, students should contact the director immediately (at *least* two weeks before the event.) Ms. Foster is always willing to speak with coaches/sponsors and find a compromise. Students are usually welcome to stay after school for concerts.

Students who miss a performance will receive a 0% for a Test/Concert grade. If the absence is excused, it can be made up individually with me through a pass-off of the music that would have been performed. Students must seek out the director to receive a make-up grade. If the absence is unexcused, the grade will remain a 0%. Students who are out of uniform receive a 50%. Students who are late receive an 80%. These grades may be adjusted slightly on an individual basis at the discretion of the director.

### CONCERT ETIQUETTE

Concert Etiquette is an important skill for music students and families. It allows others to enjoy the music without distraction! We also record the concerts, so please help us get the best recording possible.

Please do the following at all concerts:

- Turn off phone, or set it to vibrate.
- Make sure the shutter sound and flash are off for any photos.
- Stay quiet so everyone can listen to each piece.
- Stay in your seat while the band is playing. If you need to leave, wait until the piece is over.
- Keep small children with you at all times, and take them outside if they need a break.
- Wait to clap until after the conductor lowers her hands. Silence is part of the music!
- Attend the entire concert out of respect for the efforts and dedication of the students involved.

We deeply appreciate your attendance at our concerts! You, the audience, play such an important role at concerts. As we encourage our student performers to use proper concert etiquette, please remember how important it is for parents, friends, adults, and older siblings to model that behavior. Thank you for positively reinforcing appropriate concert etiquette so everyone may enjoy the performance.

## UNIFORMS

Uniform for concerts/performances will be the WHMS band polo (covered by band fees,) khaki pants, long black socks (that cover the entire ankle,) and all-black shoes. Please go ahead and begin to purchase these items before the first concert!

# INSTRUMENTS

## SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS AND REPAIRS

Some school-owned instruments may be lent **ONLY to students whose financial situation does not allow them to rent their own**, or whose instrument is not able to be rented from a music store. These may include baritone/euphonium, tuba, French horn, tenor or bari saxophone, oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, and some percussion. All other students are expected to rent or buy their own instruments. Ms. Foster is happy to make recommendations!

Students are expected to maintain and clean instruments regularly. (For school-owned instruments, nominal repair charges due to normal wear and tear will be covered by the rental fee.) Loss or damage due to negligence of a West Hall-owned instrument is the responsibility of the student/family. *Rental instruments are on a first come, first served basis.*

Repairs of student-owned instruments are the responsibility of the student and family. Repairs of school-owned instruments are generally the responsibility of the band. However, the school does not cover repairs due to negligence, such as horseplay or failure to properly maintain an instrument. If a student would like their personal instrument repaired by Music and Arts, a trusted repair shop, they make frequent visits to the school. Students should leave their instrument with Ms. Foster with their name clearly marked and a note inside describing the damage/issue and contact info. Mr. Kilpatrick will give an estimate and get the parents' approval *before* doing any work on the instrument that would cost money.

## PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

Percussionists are responsible for setup, tear-down, and appropriate care and storage of all percussion instruments. Percussionists may utilize school instruments at any time for practice before, during, or after school with permission. They may also take them home with Ms. Foster's approval.

Percussion instruments are to be played or touched **only** by percussionists. Should a non-percussionist touch or move a percussion instrument, following a warning, disciplinary action will be pursued.

## CHARMS

The West Hall Band Program utilizes an online database called Charms Office Assistant. This helps with communication, management, and organization of all things related to the West Hall Band Program. Charms not only keeps track of inventory records, fundraising profits, and member information, it is also a tool for our student musicians. They can keep practice logs online, upload playing tests, and more.

### How do I login as a Parent/Student?

- Log on to [www.charmsoffice.com](http://www.charmsoffice.com) and click "Parents/Students/Members Log in" in the upper right corner.
- Locate the "Parent/Student/Members Login" section of the web page. Login to your student's account using the school code: **WestHallMSBand**
- This will bring up the main "Public" page. This will allow you to look at the calendar for the West Hall Band including event list, and handouts and other "publicly shared" files, as well as a few other options.
- If this is your first time accessing Charms, you will need to enter your student's school ID number. Once you access Charms using the school ID, you can create another password. Remember to create a password that the whole family can remember, and write it down!
- If the student or parent has already accessed the Charms account, you will need to use the password initially created by the first person to login.
- If you forgot your password, there are mechanisms to recover/reset a lost username or password.

### How do I update my personal information?

- Click on "Update Info" (blue person logo)
- You can help make changes to adult and student information page (such as updating phone numbers and email addresses if they change) to help them communicate with you more effectively. Click *Update Info* to save changes.

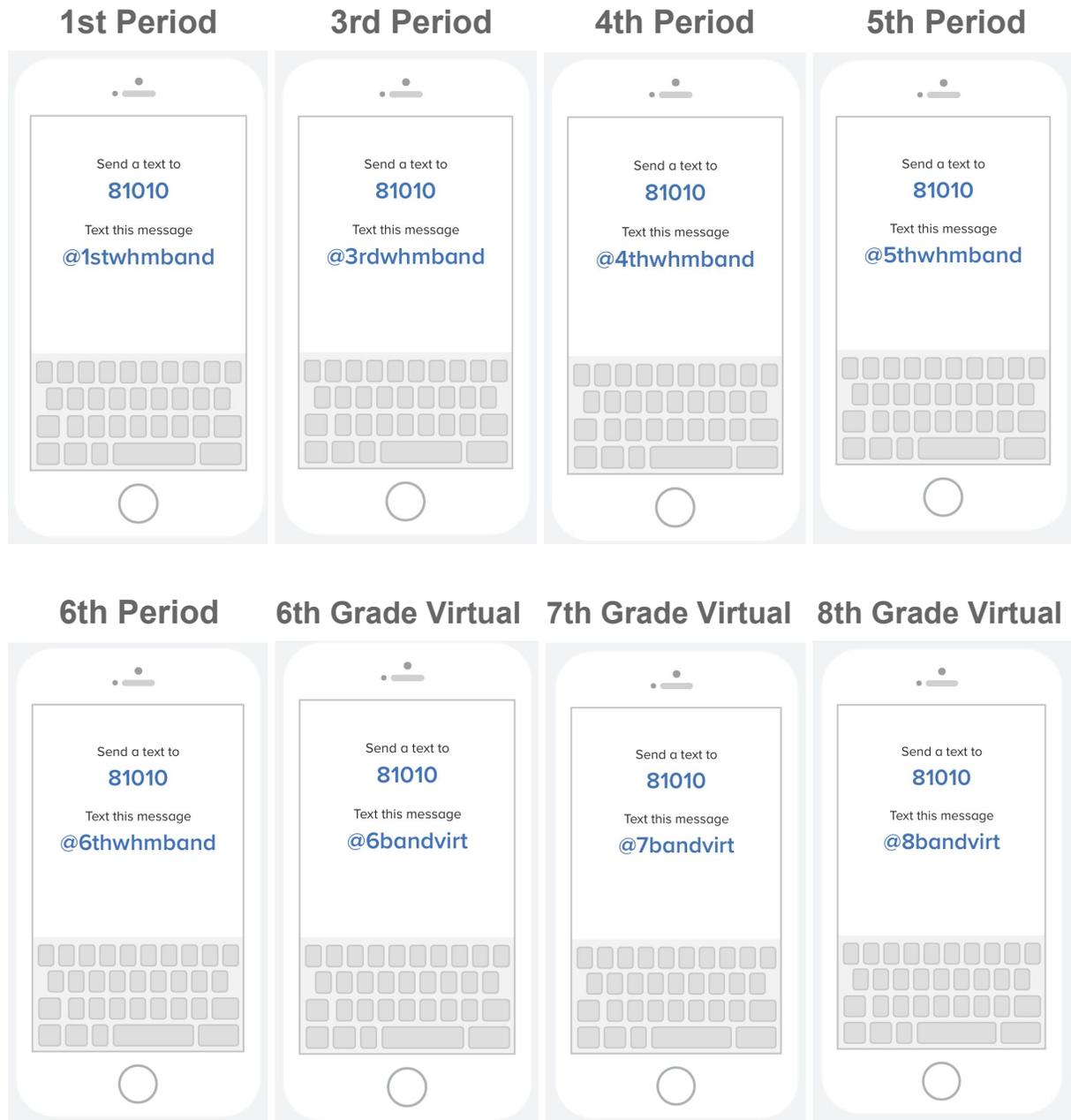


### How can I make payments online through Charms?

- This function is coming, hopefully by the 2021-2022 school year! For now, please make payments with cash or check in a labeled envelope.

## JOIN REMIND

Join our Remind group to stay up to date on all band updates. All students under 13 who join will have certain restrictions.



# HELPFUL OPPORTUNITIES

## FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Here are a few things parents/guardians can do to help:

- Join the WHMS Band Association.
- If you ever have a question... just ask!
- Volunteer to chaperone field trips or help with events.
- Show an interest in the musical study of your child.
- Take personal instruments to the shop once a year for maintenance.
- Be extra-careful with instruments. Repairs cost money!
- Keep their case stocked with all accessories needed (Saxophones and clarinets need 3 or more reeds at a time.)
- Purchase a metronome and tuner. (Phone apps are perfectly fine.)
- Find a quiet place where your child can practice without interruption.
- Come up with a reward system for DAILY practice.
- Provide private lessons! Ms. Foster will help you find a great teacher.
- Make faithful attendance at all band activities.
- Stay current on your “fair share” of fundraisers and fees.
- Help your child remember to use their agenda for marking important dates.
- Teach your child to be prepared and on time to each rehearsal or lesson.
- Notify the director if your child will be absent for events or performances.
- Keep the Handbook in a safe place and refer to it often.
- Put the Band Calendar on the fridge, or somewhere prominent.

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Officers (music librarians, section leaders, equipment managers, and others as deemed necessary) may be chosen to serve in leadership capacities for the school year.

Student leaders will serve the program at the discretion of Ms. Foster. They may have extra responsibilities in and outside of class, such as morning meetings during RIGOR time.

## PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons on a musical instrument are the best way to improve performance skills. The one-on-one approach allows the student to benefit from individual attention as opposed to a teacher monitoring a class of over forty. A recent survey of students in the S.C. All-State Band revealed that approximately 85% of the

students in the honor band studied privately. Ms. Foster will be more than happy to assist in the selection of a private teacher, including virtual lessons!

### **AUDITIONS AND HONOR BANDS**

Members of the band program are eligible to audition for the All-State and All-District Honor Bands. 6th graders have an additional opportunity to attend First Year Honor Band with no audition and are nominated by their director. Being selected for these ensembles is an honor and participating will be a memorable and musically rich experience. Please consult the schedule, the All State website, and ask Ms. Foster for more information. (All of these events are TBD due to Covid-19.)

### **SPARTAN SOUND - PEP BAND**

Here at West Hall, we like to show our support for all of our students through music. On a completely volunteer basis, 7th and 8th graders have the opportunity to learn some pop songs and play them at a few football and basketball games each year! We will know more specific dates once the county finalizes their athletic schedule, but generally, football games are Tuesday nights, and basketball games are Monday and Thursday nights. Students will also have opportunities to play at curriculum nights, pep rallies, 5th grade visits, and more. The uniform for any pep band activity is any West Hall spirit wear shirt and jeans.

## FINANCES

In order to keep band accessible to all students, we expect every member to participate in fundraisers and contribute a band fee. Fundraising supports clinicians, instruments, music, P.P.E., and other opportunities. Making small incremental payments is acceptable IF the band director has signed off. Families in financial situations that make paying band fees an impossibility should speak to me directly. Families who do not wish to participate in fundraisers are welcome to donate the \$100 fundraising expectation instead. This year, the band will be covering as much P.P.E. as possible to prevent band fees from rising during this financially difficult time.

We will never turn a student away from band due to an inability to pay.

### 6TH GRADE BAND FEES

\$75 fee due by October 1, \$100+ to be exempt from fundraising  
(6th graders receive a band polo, binder, page protectors, and book to keep)

### 7TH AND 8TH GRADE BAND FEES

\$50 fee due by October 1, \$100+ to be exempt from fundraising

### FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

September 23 - Online Donations - Goal \$50

November 30 - Scrip Gift Cards - Goal \$200/month

January - Domino's 50% Off Cards - Goal 10 Cards

Rockathon in March (TBD) - Goal \$50 each

(Katydid chocolates in March if we cannot hold the Rockathon)

## 2020-2021 BAND CALENDAR

The marching band calendar for participating 8th graders can be found on the high school band website. In order to stay in compliance with state, local, and school system regulations concerning Covid 19, all dates are subject to change.

Thursday, September 10 @6-7pm - 6th Grade Band Family Meeting

Tuesday, September 15 @6-7pm - 7th and 8th Grade Band Family Meeting

Wednesday, September 23 - Online Donation Fundraiser Begins

Thursday, October 15 @4-5:30pm - WHHS 8th Grade Night Rehearsal

Friday, October 16 @5:30pm - WHHS 8th Grade Night

**Tuesday, October 27 @6:30pm - Fall Cluster Concert**

Monday, November 30 - Scrip Card Fundraiser Begins

Saturday, December 5 - District Honor Band Auditions

**Tuesday, December 15 @6:30pm - Holiday Concert**

Saturday, January 9 - All State Honor Band Auditions

January TBD - District Honor Band Retreat

January TBD - Domino's Fundraiser Begins

Saturday, January 30 - LGPE Concert Camp

**Thursday, February 11, @6:30pm - LGPE Premier Concert**

Early March, TBA by District - LGPE Field Trip

Saturday, March 13 @5-7pm - WHHS Taste of West Hall

Friday, March 26th @5-10pm - Rockathon

Saturday in March TBD - 8th Grade Field trip to Southern Star

**Thursday, April 22 @6:30pm - Spring Concert**

April TBD - Outdoor Recital Night for Chamber Ensembles

Saturday in May TBD - 6th Grade Honor Band

## FORMS (1 of 4)

Please consider filling these out digitally!

STUDENT INFORMATION		
Student Name:		Student ID#
Age:	Grade:	Birthdate:
Gender:	Student Email:	
Student Cell Phone:		
Student lives with:		Band Class Period:
Student address:		
PARENT + GUARDIAN INFORMATION		
<b>Guardian 1 Name + Relationship:</b>		
Address:		
Cell Phone Number:		Work Number:
Email Address:		
<b>Guardian 2 Name + Relationship:</b>		
Address:		
Cell Phone Number:		Work Number:
Email Address:		
STUDENT COMMITMENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT		
<p>As the student named in this form, I hereby promise to always try my hardest, even when things get challenging, because trying and failing at something is often the first step to succeeding. I promise to take good care of my instrument. I promise to respect myself, other people, and all band equipment. I will come to band class with a positive attitude. I will practice. Most importantly, I will tell Ms. Foster if something is wrong, so that she may help me find a solution.</p>		
<b>STUDENT Signature:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____		

## FORMS (page 2 of 4)

EMERGENCY CONTACT + INSURANCE INFORMATION		
Student Name:	Gender:	DOB: ___/___/___
Parent Name:	Phone:	
Emergency Contact:	Phone:	
Insurance Carrier:	Policy #:	
GENERAL MEDICAL INFORMATION		
Please list any chronic health problems:		
Please list all allergies including medical, food, and environmental:		
Does student have asthma?		
Does student carry an Epipen, Auvi-Q, or inhaler? ___Yes ___No If so, which?		
List medications taken on a regular basis:		
PHYSICIAN INFORMATION *		
Name/Practice:		
Phone:		
Address:		
*If there is an incident warranting a hospital visit, we will take them to the nearest hospital available.		

**FORMS (page 3 of 4)****PARENT PERMISSIONS**

Please CIRCLE the over the counter medications that CAN be provided to your student:

Tylenol    Sudafed    Ibuprofen    Dramamine    Benadryl Tablets    Benadryl Cream

In case of minor illness, the West Hall Band Directors or chaperones have my permission to administer the above over the counter drugs to my child.    YES    NO

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*All information provided on this form is private and confidential and will only be used when needed.

**EMERGENCY WAIVER and MEDICAL CONSENT**

I, the undersigned parent/guardian of:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student

Date

Hereby grant authorization to a Band Director or any chaperone of the West Hall Band Program standing in loco parentis, to obtain any emergency medical and/or surgical procedures from a physician or hospital emergency room physician on behalf of the above-named minor.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDIA RELEASE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

As the parent/guardian of the student named in this form, I hereby consent to the participation in interviews, the use of quotes, and the taking of photographs and/or video of the student named above by the West Hall Band Program.

I also grant the right to edit, use, and reuse said products for nonprofit purposes including use in print, on the internet, and all other forms of media. I also hereby release the Hall County Public School System and its agents and employees from all claims, demands, and liabilities whatsoever in connection with the above.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**FORMS (page 4 of 4)****HALL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION RELEASE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

School functions and trips for the 2020-2021 school year may include football games, indoor and outdoor rehearsals, LGPE festivals, service projects, concerts, and trips, depending on their grade level.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the parent/guardian of child, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby consent to my child's participation in school trips listed above.

I further acknowledge and agree to the following:

- The Hall County Board of Education, Its members, employees, and agents assume no responsibility for personal injuries and/or property damage which might be suffered by my child, their property, or the person or property of others during said function/trip, and hereby expressly release said Board of Education, its members, employees, and agents from any and all liability relating to such injuries/damages.
- The Hall County Board of Education's policies on Student Conduct and Discipline shall be in full force and effect as to all student participants in this function/trip at all times during the same, and any violation of any rules contained therein by my child may result in appropriate disciplinary measures includes suspension and expulsion as provided in said policies.
- The Hall County Board of Education, its members, employees, and agents are not responsible for any expenses related to this school function/trip except as otherwise specifically agreed to them in writing.
- The Hall County Board of Education may require as a condition of my child's participation in this school function/trip that satisfactory evidence be submitted indicating that my child has sufficient medical insurance in effect during the period of the said function/trip.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**BAND PARTICIPATION AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT**

I agree to meet the time and monetary commitments for the West Hall Middle School Band Program for the 2020-2021 school year as outlined in the WHMS Band Handbook and understand that all program fees and payments are non-refundable.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**WEST HALL BAND STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have read and understand the contents of the 2020-2021 Band Handbook and have reviewed the band calendar. I understand that it is also posted on the band website.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_