

*Etowah*



*Blue Devil*

*Bands*

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Etowah Blue Devil Band Program is to provide an education of music to the students of Etowah Middle and Etowah High Schools through classroom rehearsal and public performances. Students also develop characteristics that are important in becoming a prosperous member of the community and society. These may include leadership, work ethic, pride, and several others.

## **Goals & Objectives**

The goals and objectives of this band are always high. Each year we strive to meet and surpass the goals and objectives that have been set.

The goals for every year are to do our best at every performance and to always be able to say that we did our best. While yes, we do want Superior ratings at all contests, what we ask most is that our students to be never satisfied but to continue to work harder to become the best band we can be.

As students, we challenge you to set goals and objectives of your own. Whether it is to play with a better, richer tone or to sit first chair, we encourage you to set them high so that you have to work to reach them.

## **Program Structure**

There is a structure that the band program needs to follow to be successful and for the students to grow musically. The Etowah Middle School Bands and the Etowah High School Bands are constructed differently. However, each strives for the same objectives and goals.

### **Middle School Bands**

The bands at Etowah Middle School are considered to be concert bands and meet at different times during the school day. The bands are: Band I, Band II, and Band III. Band I is for all first (1<sup>st</sup>) year band students. Band II is for all second (2<sup>nd</sup>) year band students. Band III is for all third (3<sup>rd</sup>) year band students. A Pep Band may be formed by the Director to play at events at the school such as football and basketball games. Selection for the Pep Band will be determined and made by the Band Director. Only students in Band II and Band III will be eligible for the Pep Band. If needed, the Band Director may call an 'After School Rehearsal' for a specific band, or bands. The rehearsal is mandatory.

Students who are in the Eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) Grade are eligible to march with the Etowah High School Blue Devil Marching Band. Students will be selected by the Band Director based upon performance and attitude. Students who have completed Band II will be given preference over students who have completed just Band I. The students who participate with the EHS marching band must adhere to all policies governing the marching band.

### **High School Bands**

The bands at Etowah High School all meet at one time during the school day. The bands are: marching and concert. All students (instrumentalists) participate in both marching and concert bands. Other bands may include a Jazz band, a Pep band, etc. Selection for these bands will be done by audition at the discretion of the Band Director.

## **Marching Band**

During the marching season, we are in the public's eye every week. We will attend and show our support for the football team every game it plays. It is of the utmost importance that we carry ourselves with pride and dignity and to act professional while wearing the band uniform, or shirt.

There will be 'After School Rehearsals' on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week. The times are 3:15 - 5:00 on Tuesday and 3:15-5:30 on Thursday. Section rehearsals can only be scheduled on Wednesday 3:15 - 5:00. If needed, a special sectional may be called on Thursday, 5:30 - 6:00. Rehearsals may be cancelled, or changed, at the Director's discretion.

## **Concert**

Concert season begins in November as we prepare for our Christmas concert. The season continues for the rest of the school year. There will be an 'After School Rehearsal' every Thursday, 3:15 - 5:30. Rehearsals may be cancelled, or changed, at the Director's discretion.

All students who play an instrument must be in concert band. If not, the student will be excused from the band program at the director's discretion. Concert season is a major building block in our music education.

## **Officers**

Every year there are students who assume leadership roles within the band. The students assist the band director during rehearsals, games, etc. These student officers will be respected at all times. However, if a student does not exemplify behavior of a student officer, he/she will be removed from the position. The officers are:

Drum Major  
Band Captain – Auxiliary  
Band Captain – Brass  
Band Captain – Percussion  
Band Captain – Woodwind

The Drum Major is the highest ranking student in the Band. He/she is second-in-command to the Band Director. All captains directly report to the Drum Major. Drum Major is selected through a try-out held each spring. Drum Major try-outs are open to students who are entering the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> Grade and must have marched an instrument for at least two (2) years in the program. There is a \$25 try-out fee.

The section (Auxiliary, Brass, Percussion, and Woodwind) officers are second-in-command to the Drum Major. The official title is 'Captain.' These captains are selected each spring through student-vote and/or at the discretion of the Band Director. Students who are entering the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> Grade and have marched in the respective section for at least two (2) years in the program are eligible to be a captain. There may be multiple captains for Auxiliary if needed (e.g. Color Guard and Dance Line).

If desired or required, the Band Director reserves the right to appoint section officers called Sergeants. The sergeants will report directly to the captains and are second-in-command to the captains. The Sergeants will be considered for each individual instrument (e.g. flute, clarinet, and saxophone). However, sections may be combined (e.g. Upper Brass, Low Brass).

## **Auxiliary**

The auxiliary group(s) is very important to the Etowah High School Blue Devil Marching Band. As the instrumentalists present musical and visual parts of the show, the auxiliary present visual interpretations of the music. With the use of props and dance, the auxiliary give depth and visual excitement to the show.

Members of the Blue Devil Auxiliary follow the same Rules & Regulations as the instrumentalists of the Etowah Blue Devil Band. Parents of auxiliary members are strongly encouraged to participate in the Etowah Blue Devil Band Boosters.

Try-outs for Dance Line and Color Guard will be held every spring. Try-outs are open to all students entering the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade. There will be a sign-up period posted and announced by the Band Director. The Band Director will check the grades (C average) and discipline points (Level 2 or lower) of all candidates. A packet containing information such as requirements and forms will be given to the candidate before try-outs begin. The packet must be returned before try-outs begin. There will be a \$ 25 try-out fee to pay for instructors and judges.

## **Members**

Members of the Etowah Blue Devil Band are in grades 6 -12. All students are required to follow the Attalla City Schools, Etowah High School, Etowah Middle School student handbooks and the Rules & Regulations stated in this handbook. The duties of the band members are listed below.

### **Duties**

1. Promote the musicality and spirit of Etowah Middle and Etowah High Schools through performing at school events, marching and concert contests, and public concerts.
2. Always exhibit good sportsmanship.
3. Work together as a band, showing respect for each other, fellow students, faculty, fans, opposing bands, and band boosters.
4. Conduct oneself in an exemplary manner on and off campus at all times.
5. Band members are expected to participate fully in all band activities (ex: rehearsals, performances, fund raisers, etc)

All members of the Etowah Blue Devil Bands Program are required to meet academic eligibility standards. Grades will be checked at midterm and six-week grading periods. If a student has a failing grade, the student will not participate until the grade is raised to meet standards.

If a band member decides to quit, they must sit out one (1) year before reinstatement. The student must meet with the Director before he/she is allowed to rejoin the program. The student will not be allowed to hold any leadership positions for at least one (1) year after reinstatement.

### **Rules & Regulations**

Listed below are the Rules & Regulations of the Etowah Blue Devil Bands. The Band Director reserves the right to punish anyone who is in violation of the stated items. If an act is considered detrimental to the school and/or music program, the student, or students, involved will be dismissed from the program and will receive a letter grade of "F" for the remainder of the grading period. These students are not eligible for reinstatement.

### **Electronic Devices**

Electronic Devices are **not** allowed at any time. If a student must carry an electronic device, it must stay off until told otherwise. In an emergency, the student should notify the Band Director first.

If a student is found using an electronic device, it will be confiscated by the Band Director. The parent or guardian will be allowed to pick up the electronic device.

### **Illegal Substances**

Students are not allowed to use, or have in their possession, drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco products while on school property or traveling with the Band. If a student is found with any of the above mentioned items, he/she will be dismissed from the program and is subject to disciplinary actions by Attalla City Schools, Etowah High School, and Etowah Middle Schools. A student may return to the program after one (1) year once a conference with the Director and Principal is held. The final decision is made by the Director and Principal.

### **Classroom**

Without order and discipline in the classroom, this program will not be able to succeed and continue to be its best.

1. Students are to be in their seats ready to play by the time set by the Band Director.
2. There will be NO drinks, food, or candy in the Band Room at any time. The Band Director may change this when needed.
3. Students are to be quiet and still when the Band Director, or a Student Officer, is on the podium.
4. Students who cannot rehearse due to illness are to sit in their assigned seat with the band.
5. Students should come prepared to rehearsal everyday. (Music, Instrument, Pencil, etc).
6. Students who need to purchase supplies (ex: reeds, valve oil, etc) must make such purchase before rehearsal begins.
7. Music folders and instruments will be stored in their designated storage areas.

### **Grading Policy**

The grades of students involved with Etowah Blue Devil Bands will be determined by several factors. All grades are given at the Director's discretion in accordance with school policy. If a student misses a test or a performance, he/she must see the Band Director to make-up the missed grade. Grades include but are not limited to the following:

1. Written Tests
2. Playing Tests
3. Performance Tests (football games, contests, concerts, etc)
4. Practice Records

### **Dress Code**

The dress code of the band will follow that of the Attalla City Schools. The Band Director will develop a dress code for Band Camp(s) and After-School Rehearsals with permission and approval from the Principal.

Students must:

1. Wear appropriate attire for all rehearsals and performances. (Clothing and Footwear)
2. Wear appropriate Band Shirt and pants/shorts (when appropriate) on days of pep rallies, (to) football games, and contests.
3. Only female Drum Major(s) and Auxiliary Groups are allowed to wear make-up and/or jewelry during performances during Marching Season.
4. No one is allowed to wear make-up and/or jewelry during Concert Season.

Students who do not follow the mandated dress code will be reprimanded by the Director as seen fit. If needed, the Principal will be consulted.

### **Performance**

The Etowah Blue Devil Bands perform several times throughout the year. The performances range from football games to concerts to parades. It is very important that we, as a band, are on our best behavior at all times.

There are performances in which we must transport equipment using the Band truck and trailer. All equipment must be loaded promptly and correctly to ensure safety and arrival of the Band.

Band Trailer Rules:

1. Only loaders are allowed near and on the trailer.
2. Students are responsible for their own equipment. If you forget your equipment, you do not perform.
3. Students must stay 10 feet away from trailer during loading and unloading.

Football Games:

1. Students must march in at Attention in their respective section.
2. Students must stay in their own section while in the stands.
3. Students must stand, watch, and be ready to play at all times.
4. No one is allowed in the Band Section at anytime.
5. Students cannot catch items thrown by the cheerleaders and other students.
6. Students must remain in uniform, unless told otherwise by the Band Director.
7. No eating or drinking dark-colored drinks while in uniform.
8. All students will be given a break during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter. Students must report back at a time specified by the Band Director. Students who do not report will be punished.

Contests (Marching & Concert)

1. Students will show respect to all performing groups.
2. Students are not allowed to roam during performances.
3. If needed, students must notify a chaperone of leaving (food, etc) and must travel in groups of 5 or more.

### **Attendance**

Band is an extracurricular activity in this school program. With this, membership is on a voluntary basis. It is imperative that if a student chooses to be in the band that he/she attends all After School Rehearsals and all performances.

1. All rehearsals and performances (including pep rallies) are mandatory.
2. Excused absences from rehearsals, performances, and other school-sanctioned band activities are as follows:
  - a. Personal injury or illness - must have a Doctor's note.
  - b. Death of an immediate Family member.
3. Unexcused absences from rehearsals, performances, and other school-sanctioned band activities are as follows:
  - a. Work.
  - b. Dentist and other doctor's appointments, unless an emergency.
  - c. Two (2) unexcused tardies equal one (1) unexcused absence.
4. The Band Director reserves the right to excuse, or unexcuse, any absence or tardy and reprimand any unexcused tardy as seen fit.
5. ALL tardies and missed rehearsals must be made up at the Director's discretion.
  - a. If a student does not make-up his/her missed time, it will be treated like an unexcused tardy/absence from rehearsal.
  - b. When a student makes up an unexcused absence, he/she still will not perform.
6. Penalties for Unexcused absences from Rehearsal and Performances:
  - a. After one (1) unexcused absence from rehearsal, the student will not be allowed to participate for the following activity. He/she will attend the performance in uniform but will not perform.
  - b. After two (2) unexcused absences from rehearsal, the student will not be allowed to participate in all activities for the following week. The student and Director will meet with the Principal; the student will attend performances in uniform but will not be allowed to perform.
  - c. After three (3) unexcused absences from rehearsal, the student will be dismissed from the program and given a grade of "F."
  - d. After one (1) unexcused absence from a performance, the student will be dismissed from the Band Program and given a grade of "F."
7. If a student is too sick or injured to participate at any performance, they cannot attend the performance unless given permission by the Band Director.

### **Bus Policy**

We will use school buses for transportation to and from performances. For special purpose and by vote of the Band Boosters, the band may use charter buses. The guidelines below pertain to all types of travel.

1. The Band Director assumes full authority and responsibility while the band is traveling.
2. Chaperones are second in command to the Director. They are to be respected.
3. All Attalla City Schools rules apply to everyone riding on the buses.
4. Students will be assigned to a specific bus and must ride on that bus. However, they may sit where they wish unless they are asked to move for corrective reasons.
5. Students must ride to and from all performances with the band on the buses.
6. Students may be released to parents after performances (end of football game, etc) if the parents have signed the Sign-Out Sheet located in the Band Room. The Sign-Out Sheet can be signed at performances.

7. Students will only be released to parents/legal guardians. Exceptions may be made by the Band Director and Principal prior to the performance.
8. The students will only be released to his/her parents or legal guardians after all equipment and students have been loaded. This will take place in front of the Equipment Truck.

### **Uniform Policy**

At all performances, it is imperative that the band is always in uniform. Whatever the uniform is, the look of the band will determine and create first impressions. So the band must always be in complete uniform as it is meant to be worn.

#### General Uniform Rules:

1. Uniforms will be inspected before each performance.
2. Jewelry and Make-up is not to be worn in uniform (performances), rehearsals or pep rallies.
3. Any Student who fails inspection before a performance will not perform.

The marching band uniforms are very expensive and purchased by the band boosters. When taken care of properly, these uniforms can last 8 - 10 years. The auxiliary purchase their own uniforms each marching season. Students are expected to maintain a proper uniform at all times. The following applies to band and auxiliary uniforms.

1. Uniforms are not to be cut for alterations. If needed, see the Band Director.
2. Uniforms must stay at the Band Room, unless specified by the Band Director.
3. Uniforms are to be hung up after every use and kept neat and clean.
4. Shoes, boots, and gloves must be clean for all performances and not left in the Band Room.
5. Students are responsible for keeping up with all parts of the uniform.
6. Do not wear heavy clothes under the uniforms. It puts undue stress on the seams.
7. Uniforms are to be transported in approved garment bags if needed.
8. Auxiliary groups must be uniform in hair and make-up.

The concert uniform for the Etowah Blue Devil Bands is furnished solely by the students performing with the bands. The uniform is:

1. Female: black dress, black dress shoes.
2. Male: long sleeve white dress shirt (button-up), black dress pants with black belt, black dress shoes and black socks.

### **Band Boosters**

As a Band Program, the Band Boosters are our backbone. Without the Boosters, the Band Program would not be able to accomplish all of our goals. The Boosters support the band in every way: financially, emotionally, etc. The Band Boosters meet the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm. It is very important that all Boosters work together.

# Acknowledgement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Student)

and \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Parent or Guardian)

acknowledge that we have read and will abide by the Etowah Blue Devil Bands Handbook.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date