

OWEN J. ROBERTS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

*Wildcat*

**MARCHING UNIT**

MEMBER HANDBOOK

**2023 / 2024 SCHOOL YEAR**

*[www.ojrhsband.com](http://www.ojrhsband.com)*

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# OWEN J. ROBERTS "WILDCAT" BANDS

*Todd R. Mengel, Director*

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*[www.ojrhsband.com](http://www.ojrhsband.com)*

August 1, 2023

Dear Students, Parents/Guardians, Staff, and Friends:

Greetings and welcome to another exciting year for the OJR "Wildcat" Marching Unit! This handbook will serve as a reference and a guide explaining what the OJR band is all about and is meant to familiarize you with some of our operating procedures, rules of membership, and other expectations.

Please review this handbook carefully and sign and return the contract on page 13 at the start of band camp. (You will not be permitted to attend our first football game unless I have a signed contract in my possession.) **Please take special note of our attendance policy which is outlined on page 5.** Along with the contract, you need to complete and return the "field trip & medical authorization form" on page 17&18. This form will be kept on file throughout the season and taken with us each time we travel in the event of a medical problem.

Of course, you can contact me anytime with any questions. My school phone number is: 610-469-5349, my e-mail address is: [tmengel@ojrsd.net](mailto:tmengel@ojrsd.net), and our band website address is: [www.ojrhsband.com](http://www.ojrhsband.com).

Thank you for being a part of the 2023 / 2024 "Wildcat" Marching unit. We have a great year to look forward to, and with the help and cooperation of everyone involved, we'll make this season the best one yet.

Musically Yours,

Todd R. Mengel

## OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATION

The “Wildcat” Marching Unit is comprised of the band and colorguard and is open to all students who attend Owen J. Roberts High School. The marching unit is actually part of the school course entitled “Concert/Marching Band” and attendance at the band’s practices & performances constitute part of a band member’s quarterly grade for this course. (Colorguard members are not graded.)

The marching unit season is from August through early November each year, with occasional trips or other performances at various times throughout the school year. Activities include performances at all Owen J. Roberts Football Games (both home and away), participation in several band cavalcades (some Saturday evenings), and participation in several area parades. (Please see the 2022 Summer Practice Schedule and Fall Performance Schedule on pages 13-15 for a more detailed schedule of our activities.)

The marching unit rehearses regularly throughout the season. A two-week mandatory band camp occurs in August each summer before the start of the school year. When school begins in September, the marching unit rehearses every **Tuesday evening from 5:30pm to 8:30pm** until the end of the season. Rehearsals can also be expected for several hours on Saturday afternoons before a band cavalcade. Colorguard and Drumline members will also have separate practice schedules at the discretion of their instructors and may begin earlier in the summer.

The marching unit is managed by a staff of dedicated instructors in their field, many of whom volunteer their time for this activity. The group is also supported by the Owen J. Roberts School District and by the Music Parent Organization Band Chapter.

Membership in the marching unit is open to any student regardless of their musical background who has a responsible, hard-working attitude and who fully understands the commitment he/she is making. Each and every member is important to the group and will participate 100% of the time. (We have no second string players in band, everyone is a starter!) Once a commitment is made to the band director and/or one of the instructors to be a member of the marching unit, it is expected that the individual will follow through with that commitment and finish the season.

The goals of the program are for each student to improve his or her own musical and creative skills through teamwork and dedication to the organization. Leadership opportunities such as drum major, section leader, and captain are also available within the marching unit and all students are encouraged to audition for these positions. By the time each student graduates from Owen J. Roberts High School it is the hope of the band director and the staff that the student will have had a memorable, educational, and enjoyable experience as a part of the marching unit.

## **ATTENDANCE AT REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCES AND ARRIVING ON TIME TO BAND EVENTS**

You are expected to be at all practices and performances of the marching unit. Fall band schedules are posted and distributed to all members early in the spring each year so that you can make plans accordingly. It is realized, however, that things come up from time to time which necessitate your need to be excused. Therefore, the following policy will apply to every member of the marching band:

**ABSENCE REQUEST** - Marching Band Members may request an absence by submitting an **absence request form** two weeks or more in advance. Absence Request forms may be found in the band room outside the director's office, on the band website under 'Forms', or at the back of this handbook. The forms must be signed by both student and parent. The request will be reviewed by the band director and approved or not approved. In a case where there is an illness or other family emergency and you can't submit a form ahead of time, then an absence form should be turned in at the next rehearsal or the absence will be deemed "unexcused".

- **EXCUSED ABSENCES:** (These absences carry no consequences)

*The following are VALID reasons for missing a rehearsal or performance:*

- Illness
- Medical Emergency
- Major Life Events (weddings, etc.)
- Religious Observations
- Other Family Emergencies

- **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:** (Unexcused absences will carry the consequences outlined below at the discretion of the band director and staff.)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Absence: Loss of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter privilege at football game and/or removal from next scheduled performance (for safety reasons)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Absence: Loss of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter privilege at football game and/or removal from next scheduled performance and parent conference
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Absence: Loss of 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter privilege at football game and/or removal (or more) from next scheduled performance and possible removal from the marching band.

*The following are NOT VALID reasons for missing a rehearsal or performance and will be considered Unexcused:*

- Work/Employment
- Homework/Studying
- Forgetting About Practice
- Don't Have a Ride\*
- Concert Tickets
- Other?

\* It is your responsibility to try and make arrangements to find a ride to practice. We have a large band with many very helpful families, and there is a good chance that someone lives close to you who wouldn't mind giving you a ride to band when needed. If you need assistance finding someone who may live close to you, please see Mr. Mengel and he will help identify other band members who live in your vicinity.

**ARRIVING LATE TO A BAND EVENT:** All band members are expected to be on time for each band event. Practices begin at designated times - those times are not "report" times, they are practice "start" times. Band members should plan to arrive before the start of any event so that they have time to get their instruments out, warm-up, etc. **Band members arriving late to a band event must provide a written excuse from a parent/guardian which must be turned in to either the director or another staff member (NOT your section leader).** Band members arriving late to band events repeatedly without a legitimate excuse will be subject to the same consequences listed above for Unexcused Absences.

## UNIFORM CARE AND MAINTENANCE

### **PHILOSOPHY:**

Your uniform is the symbol of the Owen J. Roberts “Wildcat” Marching Unit and should be worn with pride and treated with respect at all times. The image of our band is directly represented by the uniform, and each member of the band is expected to maintain a clean, well taken care of uniform.

### **POLICY AND PROCEDURES:**

Band members are fitted for their band uniform each year during band camp. The band uniform is supplied by the school (except shoes, t-shirts, and gloves) with the understanding that it will be cleaned, well-maintained, and in good repair at all times. A condition of marching unit membership is agreeing to have your uniform cleaned regularly. Parents are requested to help in this regard by making sure that uniforms come home after each event and are in good shape for the next event.

The band uniform consists of the jacket top, black pants, hat, plume, gloves, wrist gauntlets, black shoes, and black socks.

A uniform inspection will take place before each performance. The uniform must be complete and must be neatly pressed and clean. Particular attention will be given to the pants and shoes. **Any member who does not pass the uniform inspection will not be permitted to perform for that event.** Disciplinary procedures outlined on page 12 may also apply.

Uniforms are to be taken home after every event and either hung up neatly (if clean) or taken to the cleaners. Uniforms are not to be left at school, or stored in cars or trunks throughout the week. Uniform jackets may be taken off after performances providing that the marching unit T-shirt is worn underneath. (Jackets in this case must be left on the bleachers in an area where they will remain clean and not be stepped on.) Uniform pants must be kept on at all times and straps kept over the shoulders. Be careful not to let the bottom of your pants drag on the ground and get dirty. Personal hats can be worn in the stands, but must be removed upon exiting the stands. Additional rules and guidelines concerning the uniforms may apply and will be communicated by the band director throughout the season. Failure to adhere to any of the above guidelines will result in disciplinary procedures being followed. (Outlined on page 12).

**COLORGUARD COSTUMES:** *(Colorguard uniforms/costumes may be subject to a different set of guidelines. For more specific information on colorguard uniforms, please contact one of the guard instructors.)*

## **How To Care For Your Band Uniform**

Your band uniform consists of a band jacket, pants, band hat, black shoes, black socks, white gloves and a raincoat (made available when needed).

Your jacket and pants should be **dry-cleaned only**. This should be done as needed depending on wrinkles, sweat, number of wearings etc. Your uniform should be crisp and clean before every performance. After finishing a performance, you should hang your jacket and pants on **separate** hangers and let them air out for several hours.

Your band hat should be cleaned with 409 or Fantastik and a soft cloth. This should be done on the vinyl areas (inside & out). Your black shoes should be wiped clean with a damp cloth.

The overall image of the band unit is dependent on **each** individual's appearance. Please do your part!

## ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR

### **PHILOSOPHY:**

Membership in the Owen J. Roberts “Wildcat” Marching Unit is a privilege, not a right, and your attitude and behavior should always reflect the best interests of the band, the school, and the director. *COMMON SENSE* and *COURTESY* should govern all of your actions when involved with the marching unit.

### **GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS:**

1. Conduct yourself in a mature, responsible fashion.
2. All members must stay with the unit at all times. If you need to use the restroom or go anywhere else during a performance, you must be accompanied by a chaperone.
3. **THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO TALKING WHILE AT ATTENTION, EVER!!!**
4. No food or drinks (except water) are allowed in the stands at football games. This includes candy, drinks, etc. (Exceptions to this are sometimes made, but only at the discretion of the band director or assistant director.)
5. During football games you are given the third quarter to get something to eat, drink, use the restroom, socialize, etc. You **MUST** be back in the stands with your instruments by the beginning of the fourth quarter. Failure to make it back in time will result in your loss of this privilege during the next game.
6. Stand music will be played at football games at the appropriate times. (Whenever the opposing team has the ball.) You are to play only when instructed to by the director and/or one of the drum majors. No random playing please, this is very annoying.
7. **WHENEVER ANY INSTRUCTOR IS TALKING, YOU ARE LISTENING!!!**
8. Rehearse maturely: talk only during breaks, improve your listening skills, and utilize our rehearsal time efficiently.

### **BUS RIDES:**

A large portion of our time will be spent being transported to events. At the beginning of the season, all members are required to have a completed field trip authorization form on file before the first away trip. The form also includes medical information in the event of an emergency. The form is good all season long and will be taken with us everywhere we go.

Bus trips will be just as enjoyable as you allow them to be without getting out of hand. Some common sense rules include: Always stay seated while the bus is in motion (even if it's going really slow), never switch seats during the ride, respect others around you, throw away all trash and clean up after yourselves, close all windows when we're home, etc. Also, yelling, cheering, singing of songs, etc. on the buses will be under the constant monitoring of the band director and/or chaperones. Any song or cheer with questionable lyrics and/or references to inappropriate material will not be permitted to be sung. Failure to adhere to the above rules will result in disciplinary procedures being followed.

## INSTRUMENT AND EQUIPMENT CARE

### PHILOSOPHY:

Your instrument and/or your equipment (colorguard) is the sole basis for your performance. Instruments and equipment should be treated with respect and maturity at all times. The care of your instrument and/or equipment is a direct reflection on you and on the marching unit as a whole.

### POLICY / RULES & REGULATIONS:

1. Never use/touch anyone else's instrument or equipment – HAND'S OFF!!!
2. Take care of your own equipment and keep it in good working order.
3. If you have a problem with your instrument, see Mr. Mengel or one of the instructors at the appropriate time, **not during a drill run through** – we'll deal with it later.
4. Take pride in your instrument and have it shined up / polished for each performance. This helps to make our band look sharp!!!
5. All instruments and colorguard equipment must be put away in the proper locations after each rehearsal and after every performance. You are responsible for your own equipment.
6. **You are responsible to make sure that your equipment is packed on the bus or trailer before we leave for an event – don't just assume that someone else did it for you.**
7. **ALL OF YOU ARE ASKED TO HELP UNLOAD TRAILERS AND BUSES WHEN WE RETURN FROM EVENTS AND THEN TO STORE YOUR EQUIPMENT AWAY NEATLY FOR THE NEXT REHEARSAL.**
8. Instruments and/or equipment should NEVER be left outside or laying on the floor.
9. Drum cases and instrument cases should be laid out in an organized fashion during rehearsals and performances. This all contributes to our "polished" image and our professionalism.
10. Be careful with your instruments and equipment in the stands at football games. Whenever you leave the stands for any reason, your instrument should be placed in its case and the case closed.

## FUNDRAISING

### PHILOSOPHY:

Running an organization such as ours is, obviously, a costly endeavor. When taking into account everything that goes into a show (equipment, props, staff, costumes/uniforms, transportation, etc.) it is easy to see how quickly our total show costs can amount to several thousands of dollars. The funding of our program is based on a partnership between the Owen J. Roberts school district and the Music Parent Organization Band Chapter.

### POLICY / FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES:

Several fundraisers will be scheduled throughout the year. Each member of the marching unit is expected to do his/her part and contribute to the fundraising efforts of our organization. From time to time some individuals/families choose not to participate in fundraisers and would rather make donations to the organization. Donations are gladly accepted and can be forwarded to the treasurer of the music parent organization.

## SPRING TRIPS

An overnight spring trip may be offered to marching unit members every other year with the off years being an opportunity to save up and earn money for the trip years. The trips may or may not be part of a music festival, but a performance of the marching unit will always be involved. The trips range in cost and length, with a trip to Orlando (Disney & Universal) every four years. Trips are organized in the fall with a payment schedule and tentative trip itinerary distributed at that time. The trip is a means of rewarding membership in the marching unit while maintaining a good attitude and positive behavior throughout the fall and remainder of the school year. The band director reserves the right to deny participation on the trip if any member conducts himself/herself inappropriately at any time throughout the school year. All school rules, policies, and guidelines apply on the band trips and a student may be sent home from a trip at the parents' expense if that student's behavior is found to be inappropriate.

## BAND COUNCIL / OFFICERS

The band council is a group of student-elected band leaders who serve various functions such as: helping maintain band spirit and pride, helping set up and run fundraisers, helping with the annual band banquet, and generally serving as liaison to the band director and to the music parent organization with regard to the students' ideas and opinions. The positions in the band council will include: President, Vice-President, Librarian, Secretary, Treasurer, Drum Majors, Senior Class Rep., Junior Class Rep., Sophomore Class Rep., Freshman Class Rep., Colorguard Rep., Instrument Manager, Uniform Manager, Band Room Manager, and Activities Coordinator. This organization will be elected by the members of the band each spring.

## **CAPTAINS / SECTION LEADERS**

An important part of the success of the band is based on effective student leadership. Each section of the band will have section leaders or captains (this is at the discretion of the instructors and may change on a yearly basis). Section leaders will be chosen for each section of the band proper. Try-outs for section leader each year will take place in the spring. A section leader's main responsibilities include: helping to teach the drill to your section, help individuals in your section with any music problems they might be having, call extra practice time when needed, take attendance each rehearsal and performance, do a uniform check of each member of your section prior to each performance, run your section's phone chain to effectively communicate information, and be a good leader/role model for your section while maintaining their pride and spirit.

## **ADULT CHAPERONES**

Our band could not function without the assistance of reliable, adult chaperones. These parent volunteers travel with the band to each function and aid in equipment management, uniform inspections, supervision of students, medical problems, crowd control, etc. These individuals are also in charge of the group when the band director and staff are not immediately present and have complete authority to deal with any situation that may arise. Each member of the marching unit will at all times extend the adult chaperones your utmost courtesy and appreciation. Any incident or inappropriate act witnessed by an adult chaperone will be reported to the high school administration on the next regular day of school and disciplinary actions outlined on page 12 will be taken.

## **ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

Owen J. Roberts High School maintains a policy of eligibility for participation in sports and activities. (For the specifics of this policy and for more information, please consult the high school student handbook.) *All band members are expected to maintain good grades and be academic leaders in their classes.*

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

### **PHILOSOPHY:**

All of the student guidelines, policies, etc. outlined in this handbook should be “common sense” and should not present a problem to anyone. It is the band director’s hope that no member of the marching unit will be subject to the disciplinary procedures outlined on this page. However, it is recognized that it only takes a few individuals to promote a “negative” atmosphere and/or “ruin it for others”. If this should be the case, then the procedure outlined below will be followed.

### **POLICY:**

In the event of an infraction of any rule or the display of inappropriate behavior at any time, the following three steps will be taken: \*\*

STEP #1: A verbal warning will be given to the student along with parent notification. (At this time a file will be started so that a record of any future incidents can be maintained.)

STEP #2: A written warning will be issued to the student and parent/guardian with a required signature upon return. A copy will also be given to the appropriate high school administrator.

STEP #3: A conference with the student, parent or guardian and administrator will be requested and a recommendation will be made that the student no longer continue as a member of the marching unit.

<p>** Other disciplinary procedures may apply at the discretion of the band director depending on the incident. The band director also reserves the right, depending on the severity of the incident, to start at any step (1, 2, or 3).</p>
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# 2023 “*WILDCAT*” MARCHING UNIT

## SUMMER PRACTICE SCHEDULE

### ***BRASS & WOODWIND SECTIONALS:***

- TUESDAY, JULY 18<sup>th</sup> (10:00am to 12:00pm)
- TUESDAY, JULY 25<sup>th</sup> (10:00am to 12:00pm)
- TUESDAY, AUG 1<sup>st</sup> (10:00am to 12:00pm)

### ***FRESHMAN DAY:***

*(For ALL freshman and/or newcomers to the band)*

- THURSDAY, AUG 3<sup>rd</sup> (9:00am to 12:00pm)

### ***BAND CAMP:***

- AUGUST 7<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> (2pm to 8:30pm): All Units
- AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> (2pm to 8:30pm): All Units
- AUG. 22<sup>nd</sup> (5:30pm to 8:30pm): All Units
- AUG. 24<sup>th</sup> (5:30pm to 8:30pm): All Units

COLORGUARD AND PERCUSSION WILL HAVE THEIR OWN SEPARATE REHEARSALS PRIOR TO BAND CAMP. THOSE SCHEDULES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED BY THE COLORGUARD AND PERCUSSION INSTRUCTORS.

All Rehearsals are mandatory. Please keep in mind that your attendance is critical, particularly at band camp. We cannot learn the show without you there! If you chose to be a member of the marching band, then you are expected to make a commitment to being at all functions. Please contact either Mr. Mengel or your instructor ahead of time with any problems you may encounter with the schedule.

## 2023 “WILDCAT” MARCHING UNIT

### FALL PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

(Update – 5/17/23)

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<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>FUNCTION</u></b>	<b><u>REPORT</u></b>	<b><u>APPROXIMATE RETURN/FINISH</u></b>
Aug. 25	Away Game (Conestoga)	4:30 pm	10:30 pm
Sept. 1	Away Game (Pottsgrove)	5:15 pm	10:00 pm
Sept. 8	Home Game (Avon Grove)	5:15 pm	9:45 pm
Sept. 14	Away Game (Upper Merion) <i>Thursday Night Game</i>	5:15 pm	10:30 pm
Sept. 16	<b>CAVALCADE</b> (Twin Valley HS)	TBD	TBD
Sept. 22	Away Game (Perk Valley)	4:45 pm	10:15 pm
Sept. 30	Away Game (Springford) <i>Saturday Afternoon Game</i>	11:45 am	5:30 pm
Oct. 6	Home Game (Norristown)	5:15 pm	9:45 pm
Oct. 7	<b>HOME CAVALCADE</b> (OJR BAND CAVALCADE)	TBD	TBD
Oct. 13	Home Game (Boyertown) <i>HOMECOMING</i>	4:45 pm	10:15 pm
Oct. 18	<b>HALLOWEEN PARADE</b> (Elverson) <i>Rain Date Oct. 19<sup>th</sup></i>	5:00 pm	10:00 pm

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<u>DATE</u>	<u>FUNCTION</u>	<u>REPORT</u>	<u>APPROXIMATE RETURN/FINISH</u>
Oct. 20	Away Game (Methacton)	4:45 pm	10:15 pm
Oct. 21	<b>CAVALCADE</b> (Penncrest HS)	TBD	TBD
Oct. 27	Home Game (Opponent TBD) <i>Senior Parent Night</i>	TBD	TBD
Oct. 28	<b>CAVALCADE - PAMBC FINALE</b> (Manheim Township HS)	TBD	TBD
<i>Nov. 4</i>	<i>Rain Date for Final Cavalcade</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>
Nov. 9	<b>Marching Band BANQUET</b> <b>(High School Cafeteria / Auditorium)</b>	<b>6:00 pm</b>	

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**Please Note: All times listed are tentative at this point. Cavalcade times are listed as “TBD” or “To Be Determined”, but will generally involve a late-morning practice, followed by a meal together at OJR in the afternoon before we leave for the cavalcade in the evening.**

# OJR MARCHING BAND

## CONTRACT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

(Due At The Beginning Of Band Camp In August)

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*To save paper, we no longer print out copies of the marching band handbook. The handbook can be viewed on our band website: [www.ojrhsband.com](http://www.ojrhsband.com). Please sign and return this form acknowledging that you have viewed the handbook online and are aware of all policies and expectations of marching band membership.*

I acknowledge that I have read the 2023/2024 marching band handbook (handbook can be found on the band website at: [www.ojrhsband.com](http://www.ojrhsband.com)). I pledge to adhere to all policies and guidelines outlined in the handbook and to contribute to the marching band in a positive way. I understand the consequences and/or penalties if I do not.

STUDENT NAME (Please Print Neatly): \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

PLEASE NOTE: This contract, along with the medical form, must be signed and returned before you will be permitted to perform or travel with the marching unit.



# OWEN J. ROBERTS MARCHING BAND

## Request for Excused Absence

Excused: \_\_\_\_\_

Unexcused: \_\_\_\_\_

Director

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Office Use Only)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Date(s) To Be Excused: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* This form must be submitted before the absence occurs (except in illness or emergency in which case it should be submitted immediately afterward).**

**Submission of this form does not necessarily mean the absence is excused. You will receive the bottom half back indicating whether or not the absence was approved by the director.**

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*This portion will be returned to student...*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Absence Date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

 Excused

 Unexcused