

# WESTFIELD WINTER GUARD HANDBOOK



2009-10

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## A Letter from the Coordinator

Dear Guard Members and Families,

Welcome to the 2009/10 Westfield Winter Guard season. As we begin a new, amazing, season I am looking forward to working with you and cannot wait to get the new season underway. It promises to be our best season yet. Eric has already started planning the new program (some of which you have already seen and/or heard about) and we are so confident, he has entered the guard in more competitions than ever before. I really believe we have a good chance of not only placing this year but coming home with an award at Finals.

Regional's are in Richmond this year and AIA Finals are in Chesapeake, which may mean an overnight stay that weekend. We will need to do quite a bit of fundraising this season, so any ideas you have are welcome and much appreciated. We do have certain criteria we have to meet, so if your idea is rejected, please do not take it personally; it just means it was not approved by the school. If you know anyone who might want to sponsor us, that would be helpful too!

With the help of other guard directors in the area, I have compiled information that I thought would be helpful to you this season and have put it together in this Handbook. Hopefully it will answer a lot of your questions, but if you feel I have missed something that you think should be added, by all means, please let me know. I GREATLY value your input, suggestions and opinions. I learned last season that this is not a one person job; it takes us all to make this work.

Thank you again for all your help and support, without you it would be impossible to keep this activity afloat. If you ever need me for anything, please don't hesitate to contact me. You can reach me by phone at 703-409-8821 or by email at [robin@westfieldcolorguard.org](mailto:robin@westfieldcolorguard.org).

Sincerely,  
Robin Peralta

# Introduction

## ***What is Winter Guard?***

Westfield's Winter Guard is an indoor color guard which competes in the Atlantic Indoor Association (AIA). Winter guard season begins in November, with competitions beginning in February and running until the end of March/first part of April. During Winter Guard, members may use the same equipment and/or costumes as the Fall season, however skill levels are raised, drills are different and are much more intense and demanding than Fall Guard. Winter Guard performs in a gym to recorded music and props are frequently used to enhance and emphasize the program. Due to space constraints, Winter Guard is usually smaller in size than Fall Color Guard. All students, including veteran Guard members, are generally required to audition for a place on the Winter Guard. It is a requirement for students to have been a member of the Fall Guard to audition and/or participate in Winter Guard. Winter Guard is under the direction of Coach Eric Dowty.

## ***The History of Winter Guard at WHS***

(Many thanks to the WHS Guard Alumnus who provided us with our own piece of history – Bridgett Finley, 03', Susy Davila, 05', Emily Sue Merritt, 05', Holly Goodman, 06', Sarah Norton, 06', Jackie Drzemiecki, 07', Chelsea Black, 08')

In the fall of **2000**, Westfield High School opened its doors for the first time. But for that season, there wouldn't be a Winter Guard to speak of. That year, the show was set to the music of Chuck Mangione. The guard's very first instructor was Erin Stewart. The show was all flags (6 foot and swing flag) and the guard wore black leotards and jazz pants and a white wrap dance top with a rose attached. There were 10 members of the guard that fall season.



In the Winter of **2000/2001** the show was "Simple Gifts" (the Blast version). The guard started with 12 members, but dropped to 10 by the end of the season. Rifles were introduced this season. The guard came in 5<sup>th</sup> in the Novice class that year, which, as Bridget Finley, 04', puts it "was great considering it was our first year and there were over 18 guards in novice."

Winter **2001/2002** was the first year the guard became popular outside of the band, as well as within. Prior to this year, there had only been a handful of members, but that season there were 18 members. The 2001/02 season also brought new direction to the Guard, in the form of Director Meghan McCourt. According to Emily Sue Merritt, 05', "Her guard style was very different for some of the girls (and the one guy [on the guard] that season) because it was danced based, and a lot of girls didn't know how to point their toes, let alone jazz run or anything like that." The show that season was "The LA Song" which the guard referred to as "the train show". That season the guard wore basic maroon uniforms and spun purple flags with train tracks on them. The guard received silver medals at the AIA Championships in the Regional A Category.



The **2002/2003** winter performance was based on a poem by Maya Angelou called "On the Pulse of Morning". The name of the show was "A rock, A river, and A tree". That season a picture of the guard, wearing the brown and powder blue uniforms designed by their Director, Meghan McCourt, was published in a catalog. The Guard received a bronze medal at the AIA Championships in the Regional A3 Category.



“The Power of a Woman” was the name of the show the Guard performed in the **2003/2004** Winter Season. The Guard wore purple outfits with a variety of different tops and performed their show surrounded by large pictures of women. The Guard received a bronze medal at the AIA Championships in the A2 Category.



Winter **2004/2005** proved it was a “Pretty Good Year”. The show was based on a calendar and went through the year, starting and ending on New Year’s. That year the Guard wore grey and pink. At the end of the season Meghan McCourt left the Guard to seek other color guard ventures. Today, she still judges and coaches color guard.

In the fall of 2006, Stephen Howard was the instructor, up until the first game. After that the guard was “turned over” to Mary Lisa Idol and Eric Dowty.



In the winter of **2005/2006**, the Guard ‘said’ “No Grown Ups Allowed”, and performed their show to the Overture of *Candide*. Fraught with injuries (Stephanie Monroe finished the season on a broken ankle), the Guard placed third in A2 at AIA Regional’s in North Carolina, and were the only guard from Fairfax County to medal that year.



Winter **2006/2007** performed their *Marco Polo*, using the costumes from yellow, pink, and deep pink, with placed 18th out of 18 in the A2



show, “Sunrise, Sunset” set to the music the fall season. The floor was painted in backdrops in the same colors. The guard Category at AIA Championships.



In **2007/2008**, Eric Dowty became the solo instructor and the Guard performed their show, “The Crying Game” which he wrote and choreographed. The guard incorporated dance routines, with rifle, sabre and flag work to several song clips, including The Four Seasons “Big Girls Don’t Cry”, Leslie Gore’s “It’s My Party” and Faith Hill’s “Cry”, just to name a few. The judges at AIA may not have understood it, but the show was a hit with audiences.

That season, the guard wore the same costumes from the fall show – a purple, one piece sleeveless “pantsuit” with gold belt. There were no props – except for Chelsea’s box of Kleenex, Hilary’s glow sticks and Gordon! Gordon brought plenty of “oh’s” and “aw’s” each time the floor was “unfurled” and the audience caught a glimpse of his extremely sad face and oversized tear. The Guard did not place that year.





In **2008/2009**, the guard performed “Poor Man’s War”. Set to Clint Mansell’s “Requiem for a Dream” the performance depicted a life-sized chess game, played on a full-sized chess board interlaced with giant chess pieces and members of the guard. There were 16 members of the Guard that year. The opening set began with flags marked with chess moves, each taking turns setting themselves on the board. The battle raged on, climaxing with the “huck & chuck” and silent feature, and ending with the capture of the Dark King. The very first performance of the season proved the guard had what it took when they were awarded first place in their class and a bump up from A3 to A2. Even with all the spectacular performances that season, the Guard did not place in the AIA Championships.



### ***THIS YEAR’S SHOW!***

“Just Another Day at the Office” brings a whole new meaning to the phrase “when the cat’s away…….” The setting for this year’s show is a typical office full of cubicles. Hum drum and boredom is the order of the day; that is until the overbearing boss decides to step away from his office, leaving his staff on their own and unsupervised. What will happen next? Will the staff remain orderly or will chaos ensue? Could it possibly be a case of “office-staff-gone-wild”? Join us this season to find out!!!!!!

### **The Band Boosters Organization**

While it may seem strange, because your child is not playing a musical instrument in this activity, the color guard *IS* part of the Band program at Westfield High School. The winter guard is simply an extension of the fall marching band activities. By producing a winter guard, the performers are given more opportunity to increase and refine their skills thus increasing the overall competitiveness of the fall marching band. With that said, the color guard parents are also a very important part of the Band Booster organization and all color guard parents are encouraged to become involved with the Boosters.

The Band Boosters exist to support all band programs at the school, help to organize events such as concerts, fundraisers, and field trips. Without the support of generous volunteer parents the band program would not be able to function at its current level of excellence.

The Boosters provide **SUBSTANTIAL** funding for the winter guard program and important decisions are made at each Booster meeting that may impact the color guard. We encourage color guard parents to attend these meetings to represent the interests of students in this activity. Meetings are usually held the second Monday, every other month at 7:30 p.m. in the band room at Westfield High School. Anyone is welcome to attend and participate. See the band website at [www.westfieldband.org](http://www.westfieldband.org) for specific meeting times and for more information. If you would like to join, and haven’t already, please fill out the form included in this packet.

### **Budget Line Items**

As you know, we are funded as part of the Band through the Band Boosters, and as such our approved line items for the Winter Season are as follows:

Instructor/Clinician Fee	\$4000.00
Equipment Fee	\$ 900.00
Rehearsal Space	\$ 600.00
Show Registration	\$ 200.00
AIA Membership Fee	\$ 250.00

These are items the band pays for on our behalf. It our responsibility to raise funds for any additional items needed during the season, above and beyond what the Boosters already cover.

## **Membership Fees/Expenses and Fundraising**

**Membership Fees for the 2009-10 Season** are **\$250.00** per student, plus a costume fee and travel expenses. (Membership fees are used as our contribution to the band program. If anyone is interested in learning more about the budget line items, and our membership fees, the Booster Treasurer has offered to meet with us.) Membership fees can be paid by check, made payable to WHSBBO, or by credit card via the Band Booster PayPal account (a link for which can be found on the Guard web site). Please note: any payments made via the PayPal account will incur an additional \$5 service fee.

Travel Fees – due date and amount – TBA

### **Fee Schedule:**

You may pay the entire \$250.00 (due January 15) at one time or break it up into the following payments:

- \$75.00 due November 15
- \$75.00 due December 15
- \$100.00 due January 15

We do NOT want membership fees to keep any student from being able to participate in this activity. If your family needs more time to pay or needs to break up the payments into increments we will certainly work with you on an individual basis. Students may also use any previously fundraised money from their band accounts to help pay for membership fees or rooming expenses. We are also working on setting up several fundraisers to help students raise money towards their fees or their rooming expenses for championships.

### **Other expenses:**

1. Gloves – all students are responsible for purchasing tan, fingerless, weightlifting gloves which they will wear during practices and competitions. These can be purchased from the Coordinator for \$10.50 per pair.
2. Costume - TBD
3. Students will need money for food at competitions.

## **Fundraising**

In addition to our regular practices, we will have a few fundraising events. Some fundraising events will be optional and the money raised will go towards your student accounts and trip expenses. Other fundraisers will benefit the entire group and are mandatory.

Fundraisers that are currently scheduled are PartyLite Candles (we receive 50% profit off of each unit we sell) which begins November 13 and ends November 30, Borders Gift Wrapping in December, and our mandatory bake sale on Super Bowl Sunday in February outside the Sully Station Giant. This fundraiser generally nets us about \$400.00. The more fundraisers we have, and the more money we make, the less out-of-pocket expenses there will be for Championships, so everyone is **STRONGLY** encouraged to participate. The Band is also having their annual Salsa sale in January. Any “proceeds” made from this sale will go directly into the students band account, which can be used towards our trip to Finals.

If you have any fundraising ideas or suggestions, please feel free to pass them along. Please keep in mind that all fundraising ideas must be approved by the school and cannot conflict with another group’s fundraiser so if your idea is not chosen, please do not take it personally.

## **Championship Trip**

The season involves a MANDATORY trip to our championship competition. This year, Championships will be in Chesapeake, Virginia and will involve at least one overnight hotel stay. Students will be required to pay for a portion of their hotel stay and will also need money for food. Families are highly encouraged to attend as well to cheer on the guard. It's a wonderful weekend!

## **2010 Performance/Competition Schedule**

For now these are the competitions we are signed up for. As performance times become available we will let you know. Practice times and locations are also being set and will be announced as soon as possible.

- Potomac Sr. High School – January 30
- Broad Run High School – February 13
- Potomac Falls High School – February 20
- Mils Godwin High School – March 6
- Richmond – March 13 – WGI Regionals
- Hylton High School – March 20
- Westfield High School Family & Friends Show – March 25
- Chesapeake, VA – March 27 & 28 Atlantic Indoor Association Finals

## **Team Selection/Auditions**

This year we did not hold auditions instead, accepting every member who made the commitment. Welcome back to all of our veterans.

## **Attendance Code**

It is extremely important this year that EVERY member is present at EVERY practice. In an ensemble activity like winter guard we are constantly making changes and improvements in the routines and with even one person missing it makes these changes very difficult and requires that we spend more time in the next practice catching up the missing members instead of learning new work. In winter guard we often make changes to routine and drill at EVERY practice (this is different than fall guard) so missing practice means you are missing new stuff!

Performers are expected to be on time and ready to go at all practices. This means gloves on, in practice attire and ready to start stretching (or start pulling out the floor) at 5:00.

With that said...if you absolutely must miss a practice please:

1. Have your parents Email Mrs. Peralta at robin@westfieldcolorguard.org about the upcoming absence one week in advance.
2. If you don't have a week's notice, have a parent email Mrs. Peralta AND make sure to tell another member why you will be absent in case Mrs. Peralta does not check her email before practice.
3. You are expected to get together with another member **prior** to the next practice to learn what you missed. We will not be able to take time from the practice to stop and reteach the work.
4. Bring in a written note from a parent letting us know of the upcoming absence.
5. Absences that result in the member not catching up with routines or drill before a performance may result in that member missing the next performance.
6. School functions for a grade are considered an excused absence, provided advanced notice is given. A job is not.
7. Missing a performance without approval may result in dismissal from the team.
8. Unexcused absences may require a parent/student/coach conference before the student is allowed to perform with the group again.

Your best bet is to just let us know ahead of time if you need to miss practice for any reason. We are reasonable people but we need advanced notice except, obviously, in case of illness. Thanks for your consideration.

**ALL ABSENCES MUST HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE OR EMAIL FROM YOUR PARENT.**

**Illness**

1. Guard members are expected to be at all practices, performances and competitions, however, if you are sick we do not want to see you. Your health is priority and you need to make sure you are well in order to perform at your best, and not make others around you sick. If you are ill, a call to the Instructor or Coordinator is all that is required
2. Being sick does not include things such as menstrual cramps, minor bumps and bruises caused by weapons or flags, having a bad day, break up's with significant others, not getting homework done, etc.

**Practices**

**Schedule**

Most regular practices will be held at London Towne Elementary School in the gym:

- Mondays 5-8 p.m.
- Wednesdays 5-8 p.m.
- Saturdays T.B.A. (depends on competition schedule and space available)

Saturday Practices will be held the weeks we have competitions. Currently we are looking for space, as London Towne, Cub Run and Westfield Gym are not available. As soon as we have confirmed space, notices will be sent out with times and directions, if necessary. Occasionally, we may find it necessary to change a practice time. If this should become necessary, we will do the best we can to make the announcement well in advance and to distribute the information both verbally and through facebook and yahoo group. In the case of snow (or other possible cancellations) all members should check their facebook accounts and the website for announcements (or feel free to call).

**Check the website frequently for calendar updates.**

**Work Weekends**

We will schedule at least one long work weekend to get all of the building and painting done. These are tricky to schedule because of the size of the floor and props, and because the floor needs to left out overnight to dry. It is important that we have 100% attendance on workdays so that the work goes as quickly as possible and we can get back to practicing!

We encourage as many people to help out at work days as possible because, after all, more hands make lighter work. The more people that we have there, the fewer days it will take. Parents, siblings and friends are all welcome. All performers are expected to attend.

**Expectations during Practices, Competitions and Performances!**

This year, it is our goal to make practices as efficient as possible. In order to do this every member needs to be on time and to stay for the entire practice. With that in mind, here's what to expect at a typical practice:

1. Members should be ready to go, with gloves and shoes on (if applicable), gotten out equipment and are ready to begin warm-ups/stretching, when the coach calls time
2. Warm-ups are a time for just that. Not a time for socializing. When stretching/warm-up time is called, all members should be on the floor and performing as instructed.
3. There should be no talking while instruction is being given. Talking during this time is considered rude and disrespectful.

4. Members are to listen and follow all instructions given by Coaches, Section Leaders and Coordinators during practices, competitions and performances. Not doing so causes hardships for the remainder of the team and may result in consequences set by the Coaches.
5. When at practices, competitions or performances, Guard Members are expected to give 100% every time they step out onto the floor. Not giving 100% each and every time makes it difficult for other members of your team, sets a bad example and looks bad overall. Practice is a time to learn the routine and work out any bugs. By sitting out and/or not performing ALL of your drill you are not just cheating yourself. These actions showing a complete lack of respect for the coaches and disregard for your team mates. Continuation of this behavior may result in consequences set by the Coaches.

## **Electronic Equipment**

1. All electronic equipment is to be turned off and turned in prior to all practices, performances and competitions. They will be returned after completion of event.

## **Dress Code**

It is important that performers dress appropriately for practice in order to avoid injury and to easily perform the required skills. Please follow these guidelines for practice attire:

1. Performers may wear sweats, shorts (No short shorts!), pajama bottoms, etc.
2. No Jeans – pants must be loose enough to allow for dance.
3. Shoes must be tennis shoes or practice shoes (a second set of performance shoes) only. Even when we rehearse in socks, students MUST have tennis shoes with them to wear during fundamentals practices.
4. Rifle Gloves must be worn at ALL practices by ALL members.
5. Shirts/Tops must adhere to school dress code including no spaghetti straps and no midriff shirts. Avoid t-shirts that are too loose because equipment can get caught in the excess fabric.
6. Remove all jewelry before practice. No dangling earrings, loose necklaces or bracelets should be worn during practice. Performers may also want to remove rings and watches to avoid damage.
7. Make sure to pull long hair back out of your face.

Helpful Hint: Keep fingernails trimmed throughout the season to avoid painful breaking of the nails during practice with equipment!

## **Respect**

1. EVERYONE is to be treated with respect, courtesy, dignity and consideration, this includes all adults as well as other members of the guard.
2. Guard members will be equally respectful of any other group they may encounter during practices, competitions and performances.
3. The school dress code is in effect for all practices, performances and competitions.
4. Absolutely no promiscuous behavior will be tolerated. Significant others may not travel, or hang out, with the team prior to, during, or after practices, performances or competitions, without prior approval.
5. Public displays of affection amongst “dating” guard members will not be tolerated.
6. The Guard has a zero tolerance policy. Absolutely no alcohol, drugs, or tobacco use permitted.
7. Members need to leave all personal problems and school issues at home. Practice is for Practice. Section Leaders, Coordinators and Instructors are available for personal discussion outside practice.
8. Members are responsible for reporting problems, destruction of property or equipment, and/or breaking of rules to the Instructors, Section Leaders or Coordinators immediately.
9. Respect and Teamwork are critical. Members unable to work as a team or show the appropriate respect for other team members, Coaches, Section Leaders or Coordinators may result in dismissal from the team.

## **Guard Closet/Shed/Emergency Bag**

1. Instructors, Coordinators, Chaperones and Section Leaders are the only authorized users of the red emergency bag and guard box.
2. Instructors, Coordinators and Section Leaders are the only persons allowed in the guard closet or storage shed, for any reason.
3. The guard closet is not a personal locker. No personal items are to be left there. Any personal items found will be disposed of.

## **Equipment /Uniform Maintenance**

1. All equipment must be maintained properly and be at every practice and performance.
2. No member will leave any practice, performance or competition until ALL equipment is properly taken care of.
3. All pieces of the uniform are the responsibility of the individual member and, as such, should be properly maintained and ready and complete for all performances/competitions.
4. Members arriving for a competition or performance with missing uniform pieces or equipment will be required to travel with the team but will not be permitted to perform.

## **Rules for Safety!**

Winter Guard does have the potential for serious injury, especially if we aren't careful. In order to avoid injury follow these very important rules.

1. Never toss more than a single on rifle or saber without an instructor present supervising your practice.
2. Do not attempt new tricks such as higher tosses or toss turn-arounds without instructor supervision. – OR before you have mastered all of your basics.
3. If you are very sick do not come to practice...we don't want everyone to be sick. Please follow guidelines for notifying the staff that you will miss practice and then stay home and get plenty of rest. If you have recently been sick (especially with stomach viruses) please let everyone know, avoid sharing equipment and use hand sanitizer frequently.
4. Always look around before attempting any toss to make sure everyone near you knows that you are tossing.
5. Follow the dress code.
6. Avoid high tosses in a room with low ceilings and always check before tossing to make sure you are not beneath any lights, vents or sprinklers or basketball hoops.
7. If you experience ANY pain or injury, notify the Coach or Coordinator immediately and make sure to tell your parents when you get home. You MUST notify an adult on premisis of EVERY injury, even if it only requires a small bandaid! With that said, minor injuries happen. Once you have notified an adult, and it is determined that the injury is minor, you need to return to the floor and continue with practice. Injuries severe enough for you to sit out will require your leaving and having the injury looked at by a professional. If this is the case, you may not be able to return until you a physician's release has been provided.
8. Make sure all equipment is properly taped and padded.
9. ALWAYS PAY ATTENTION – it is when we allow ourselves to lose focus during practices that injuries occur. Pay attention and focus for your safety and the safety of your teammates.

## **Competition Information**

### ***Details for Students***

1. What to Bring:
  - a. Hairspray, gel and bobbie pins (for female performers)

- b. make-up (foundation, eye & lip color, blush) (for female performers)
  - c. Performance tights or socks and shoes (if applicable)
  - d. Rifle gloves
  - e. change of clothes for after the performance (guard t-shirt)
  - f. over clothes, (jackets, coats, sweats etc.)
  - g. change of shoes
  - h. money for food
  - i. snack for travel
  - j. Usually you also need to bring a bagged lunch. Listen for announcements at practice.
2. How to arrive:
- a. You need to have your hair either completely or part-way done,
  - b. You should have the base of your make-up on if there is no practice prior to leaving as well as eyeliner (as this is dangerous to apply on the bus)
  - c. PLEASE BE ON TIME OR EARLY!!!

### ***Competition Day Procedures/Timeline***

The specific arrival, departure and return times will be announced midway through the week of the competition via yahoo group/facebook. We are sorry that we cannot make these announcements earlier because the competitions do not post performance times until the week of the competition. As soon as we know, we will let you know.

However, we wanted to give you an idea of how a typical performance day goes.

1. We usually arrive at our practice school 3 to 5 hours prior to our departure time. We will use the first part of this time for practice and warm-up to review routines before we leave.
2. We will then take a break to eat a snack or lunch, put on costumes and use the restroom.
3. Then there will be a set time when parent and student helpers should arrive. At that point we will try and do one final run through of the show from set-up to tear-down in uniform. We will make sure that each helper has an assigned duty so that the set-up and clean-up can happen as quickly as possible so that we do not sustain penalties. We will then make sure the floor is folded.
4. Next, parent crew will load the trailer or truck while students load the bus or assigned parent vehicles.
5. We will depart Westfield (or our practice school) allowing enough time to arrive at the competition site at least 1 hour prior to our scheduled warm-up. If we are traveling by bus, parents are welcome to ride along. There will be plenty of room.
6. At the competition site we will give the students time to use the restroom and then we will begin stretching (usually in the school auditorium). During this time, parents can go watch the competition with the plan to meet us at the staging area at our assigned “on deck” time.
7. Performers will move through the warm-up process with the coaches according to schedule. They will then meet the parent crew at the “on deck” location.
8. The performance. Parents and Crew usually help with set up and then go into the stands to watch the performance.
9. Students and crew will exit performance area, refold the floor, load equipment into the trailer and all except the captains will change out of uniform into their guard t-shirts. Parents not helping with the equipment/floor may remain in the gym to watch the rest of the competitors in our class.
10. All students will return together to the gym to watch the rest of the competition. Students may take a few minutes at this time to buy dinner or a snack from the concession stand.
11. The awards ceremony.
12. After awards, the students and parents will return to the vehicle in which they arrive (bus or parent vehicle) while the Coaches attend the judges’ critique (which may take up to ½ hour). Because Coaches

generally travel separate from the Guard, upon returning to vehicles (bus or private car) parents and guard will depart for Westfield.

13. Students will call parents at this time and let them know when to expect us to arrive back at the school.
14. Upon arrival at the school ALL STUDENTS MUST help with unloading the trailer or truck and the equipment. After everything is properly stored, everyone is free to go home. No one is permitted to leave until everything is put away.

Most competitions are an all-day event so please avoid scheduling other responsibilities on these days.

We get a limited number of free admissions for parents. These free tickets will be rotated from competition to competition among those parents on the crew with priority given to those with the most overall volunteer hours. Other parents will need to pay an admission fee which is usually around \$6.00-\$10.00. Finals may be slightly more.

Concessions are available at all competitions as are souvenirs.

Occasionally, we may stop at a restaurant to eat during a long trip. These stops will be announced prior to the trip so that students can come prepared.

### ***Field Trip Conduct and Expectations***

We need to remember that we are representing ourselves and Westfield High School whenever we are out at competitions, even when we are stopping to eat at a restaurant. With that in mind, there are certain standards we must adhere to. Please consider the following:

1. You must follow school dress code policies at all times.
2. All school policies are still in place including the alcohol, tobacco and firearms policies as well as the drug policies. If you are taking prescription medications, a Loudoun County Staff Member or YOUR parent must carry these medications for you as well as administer them. This includes over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol. You must also have the appropriate permission slips on file for taking prescription and over-the-counter medications.
3. NO ONE MAY LEAVE the competition site at any time.
4. If your parent wants to pick you up early and drive you home separately from the bus or parent vehicle in which you arrived, just let Mrs. Peralta know and make a point to stop and say goodbye, with your parent, at the time you leave so that you may be accounted for.
5. Students may not drive themselves to competitions. If private vehicles are being taken, students MUST be in a parent vehicle.
6. Student Crew members are to travel together, separate and apart from the guard, if traveling in private vehicles.
7. During all trips please follow the BUDDY SYSTEM. Better to be safe.
8. When at the competition site, you should NEVER make negative comments about another group or performer. Even if you think there is no one around remember that the next person to walk by or the person sitting next to you could be a parent or grandparent of a performer in that group. You all know how hard you work to produce your show. Think about how much it would hurt to hear someone make negative comments towards your performance. Above all we must show good sportsmanship and support all of our fellow competitors and performers. Praise the positive.
9. During awards ceremonies and at all other times in the stands, performers should sit together and follow competition rules regarding where students may sit (most of the time it will be on the back side of the stands). During awards ceremonies make sure to support your student representatives by cheering appropriately when our school name is announced regardless of placement. If we win an award make

sure to cheer for your accomplishment but also make sure to quiet down before the next group is announced so they can hear their name as well!

10. Public Displays of Affection with your Boyfriends/Girlfriends is never appropriate.
11. Finally, we expect nothing but the best behavior on all trips. Thank your bus or parent driver for driving you, clean up after yourself, thank all the parent helpers, say please and thank you in line for the concession stands, say excuse me in the hall and wish all performers you see in the hallway a good performance. You get the idea! Smiles are contagious!!!

### ***Competition Details for Parents***

It is important that we have a strong “cheering section” at each competition to help the students feel confident in their performance. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend competitions and to cheer as loudly as they like! We also need parents to help with set-up and clean-up of our floor and equipment for each performance. Please see the section marked “Just for Parents” for specific information about all the volunteer positions we need filled for this season. Here is a little more information for parents regarding competition day.

1. Admission to the competitions is usually around \$6.00-\$10.00 for adults (with children a couple dollars less). We get a limited number of free admissions for parents and staff. These free tickets will be rotated from competition to competition among those parents on the crew. Other parents will need to pay the admission fee.
2. Parents are more than welcome to ride the bus, if applicable. However, the buses cannot accommodate siblings that need to ride in car seats. Other siblings may ride the bus.
3. If you would like to take your child home early from a competition you may. However, please let Mrs. Peralta know ahead of time and then personally say “Goodbye” when you are ready to leave so that we know your child is definitely safe with you! In most cases, a student may not be escorted home by anyone other than his/her parent.
4. If you are driving students to competitions and would prefer (or not prefer) to have your child in the vehicle with you, please let Mrs. Peralta know in advance. Your wishes supersede your child’s preference.
5. If you are driving students to competitions, and your child is of driving age, please do not allow them to drive to the competition, if they have been assigned to your vehicle – even if you are in the vehicle with them.
6. When students are being driven in private vehicles they will be traveling collectively as a team, not individually and separate from other members. If you are not driving students, your child may not ride with you. They will need to be in a vehicle with other members of guard.
7. Arrival time home from the competitions is somewhat difficult to predict. The competition posts a projected time for the ending awards ceremony. However, it is not at all uncommon for competition to run behind anywhere from a few minutes to 2 hours. We will project an arrival time back to Westfield. However, because of the possibility that the show will run late, we will have students call home when the bus leaves the competition site to let you know a more specific time to expect the bus back at the school. We understand this is not the most convenient situation but it is, unfortunately, unavoidable due to the nature of these types of competitions.
8. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** You may take pictures during the performance but you cannot use flash as it is dangerous for the performers. Most competitions allow only ONE person to videotape the performance at each show and this person must have the video pass (for copyright reasons). Please keep in mind, if you do not have permission to video the performance, our entire group can be disqualified. We will provide everyone with a DVD of the season performances at the end of the season. Prior to that, videos will be posted to the guard web site and Facebook.

## **Communication**

### ***Facebook & the Yahoo Group***

Facebook and the Westfield Color Guard Yahoo Group are our primary sources of communication. All announcements will be sent through Facebook and the Yahoo Group as reinforcement to verbal announcements at practices. Parents with Facebook and/or Yahoo Group accounts are copied on any announcement pertaining to scheduling, fundraising and competitions. Students are asked to check their Facebook account at least once daily throughout the entire season. Those students who do not have access to Facebook or the Yahoo Group will be assigned a “buddy,” who will call them anytime an important or time-sensitive announcement is sent out. That person will also be responsible for printing a copy of the announcement and giving it to their buddy the next school day, if applicable.

### ***Email***

Students and their parents will be asked to provide a separate email address, in the event they do not have access to Facebook or the Yahoo Group is down. When signing up for the Yahoo Group, the user provides an email address where all Group messages are sent. For privacy, this information will only be distributed to other members of the guard with permission.

Parents and Students may contact Mrs. Peralta anytime at [robin@westfieldcolorguard.org](mailto:robin@westfieldcolorguard.org).

### ***Our Web site***

To get to our website go to [www.westfieldcolorguard.org](http://www.westfieldcolorguard.org). To sign up for the Yahoo Group, click the link on the homepage and enter your information. Please check the calendar often, as new information will be posted as it is received.

## **Just for Parents**

### ***Help Wanted!***

Parental involvement is essential to the success of this organization. Without it we just wouldn't be able to produce a show that would be competitive at the level at which we are currently competing. Surprisingly enough, it takes more hours from more people than anyone could imagine to produce our 4-minute performance. Here are some of the things we need help with this season. Please consider whether you can find time to participate in some way.

1. Sewing Committee: We will probably need volunteers to help with hemming/repairing costumes and possibly sewing flags.
2. Floor Painting: The set is the most dramatic difference between marching band and winter guard. We cover the floor with a large vinyl tarp which we paint. In order to make this all happen we need parents to help.
3. The Trailer Pull!: This year we are looking into transporting our equipment to and from competitions in either a large rented trailer that is pulled behind a pick-up truck or a rented box truck. We will need a parent who would be willing to pull the trailer for us – if you have one we could borrow, that would be even better! or a parent willing to drive the truck. This parent would also help at the competitions by bringing the trailer around after the performance to be reloaded.
4. Floor Crew: These parents help on the day of the competition. The students are given only 8 minutes total to set up their equipment, perform their 4 minute show and take their equipment off the floor. This is a monumental task and extra hands make faster work! If we run over time we are penalized and this could affect our overall placement. So it's very important that we are organized and have lots of extra hands to help. Floor crew meets prior to each competition at the school to be assigned “jobs” so that

everyone knows exactly what to do. We also do one full run through before each competition to make sure everyone knows where they should be, when. They then meet the kids in the hallway just before the performance, help set up, watch the performance and then leave with the kids to reload the equipment into the trailer/truck. We need as many parents as possible for floor crew at each competition. Parents will work in conjunction with our Student Crew.

5. Fundraising: This is an area where we have been struggling to find parents able to help. We need one or two people who will actively go out and seek business sponsorships to cover the expenses of our season which go well beyond the support given by the band booster organization. Also – if you're willing to run a student-accounts fundraiser to help in making money towards trip expenses I'm sure everyone will be grateful!
6. Photographers! This is an area where most of you will probably help out without even thinking about it! After all! Who doesn't want beautiful photos of their child having a great time? At the end of the season, Mrs. Peralta will make a DVD of the season performances along with a photo slideshow for each student to commemorate their season. If you have photos you would like to share please email them to [robin@westfieldcolorguard.org](mailto:robin@westfieldcolorguard.org) or you send them in digital format on CD or memory key. Anything sent in this manner will be returned as soon as they downloaded to her computer.

## ***Parent Meetings***

Parent meetings may be scheduled throughout the season, as necessary. We will try to give you enough notice so it will make it easy for you to attend. Parent meetings are only called when there are issues or concerns that must be discussed. Because of this, it really is important to have at least one parent in attendance, even if you are veteran parents.

## **Atlantic Indoor Association Webpage**

The Atlantic Indoor Association is the organization that runs the competitions our group attends. Individual competitions are hosted by area schools throughout the states of Virginia and North Carolina. However, the AIA oversees every competition and posts competition information on their website including schedules, directions to the competition sites and, afterwards, scores. We typically do not get exact times for our performances until the Tuesday or Wednesday of the week of a competition. As soon as we receive that information it will be passed along through Facebook, the Yahoo Group and the web site. However, if you would like to check yourself or to copy the directions to the competition site you can visit [www.atlanticindoor.org](http://www.atlanticindoor.org). The website also has a discussion forum where staff, parents and students can ask questions or discuss colorguard-related topics.

## **The Competition Circuit (AIA and WGI)**

The Atlantic Indoor Association (AIA) is the local competition circuit that Westfield Winter Guard belongs to. This circuit includes color guards from throughout Virginia and North Carolina as well as a small number of Maryland and West Virginia guards.

AIA is considered a "local circuit" meaning that its competitions cover a limited geographical region. The national winter guard competition circuit is WGI (Winter Guard International). WGI holds regional competitions throughout the country as well as a World Championships held each April.

AIA has set up their competitive divisions according to the standards set by WGI. There are two main separations of competition, the scholastic guards (those associated with a school) and the independent guards (those not associated with any particular school...or made up of students from many different schools). These two divisions are divided into competitive classes based on the skill level of the performers and designers. On the national level, "A class" is the lowest competitive class, "Open Class" is the next step up and "World Class" guards feature the most skilled competitors and design teams. A Class and Open Class Independent color

guards have an age limit of 22 years old (Scholastic guards are limited to students who are still in high school) while the World Class independent guards have no age limits.

Because the majority of groups competing at the local level are “A class” color guards, AIA has further divided this class for competition. In AIA, novice class is set up for 1<sup>st</sup> year beginner color guards. The next step up is Regional A, then A-3, then A-2 and finally A-1. The A-1 color guards are considered the “National A” guards as they are theoretically capable of being competitive at the national level. Westfield is competing in the A3 class this year. As in the national hierarchy, AIA also has open class and world class color guards. There are also middle school and senior guards competing in AIA.

The various classes have slightly different requirements in terms of how the performances are judged so you can't necessarily compare scores between classes. The time limit for the A Class guards is between 4 and 5 ½ minutes for the whole show. World Class groups are allowed longer time intervals. The reason for this discrepancy is that for the lower level groups the focus is geared more towards perfecting skill. The thought is that with a shorter show to learn they have more time to work on perfecting what they have.

Each year, the medalists in each class are promoted to the next higher class for competition. There are instances where a color guard might be promoted earlier in the season. If a color guard, for example, begins competition in the regional A class but is clearly far superior to every other group in that class, that group will be promoted mid-season to the next higher competitive class. A group promoted mid-season is automatically recognized at championships with a medal marking their achievement regardless of their success in the new class.

AIA and WGI also host percussion competition in conjunction with their color guard competition so you may get an opportunity this season to see some marching percussion units at a competition as well. For more information about AIA see [www.atlanticindoor.org](http://www.atlanticindoor.org) or for WGI see [www.wgi.org](http://www.wgi.org).

## ***Judging***

To fully understand the judging process one would probably need to attend workshops. However, here is a brief overview of the structure of the judging process.

Five Judges: There are usually five judges watching each performance: A Movement (dance) judge, An Equipment judge, an Ensemble Analysis judge and two General Effect judges. Each looks at his/her specific area and ranks performing units within the class.

The four areas listed above (movement, equipment, ensemble analysis and general effect) are called “Captions.” Each Caption score is further split into two parts: Repertoire (or vocabulary) and Excellence (or performance). For general effect and ensemble analysis, 50% of the score is based on how the show is written or designed and 50% is based on how the show is being performed. For equipment and movement the split is shifted with a higher percentage of the points based on performance. There are usually two General Effect Judges, making General Effect the most weighted caption. The scores of the five judges are then added together to get the final score and determine final ranking.

Penalties can be assessed for going over the time limit, crossing over a sideline boundary or leaving equipment (or props such as confetti) behind on the performance area.

Typically the scores early in the season range from the 30s up to the 60s while later in the season will range from the 50s up to the 90s.

Following the performance, the coaches are given tapes or CDs from each judge where the judge records comments about the performance. After the awards ceremony, the coaches have the chance to meet with the

judges in what is called a “Judges Critique” to ask questions about the comments made on the tapes. You will often see coaches with headphones on or huddled in the hallway listening to the tapes at competitions so that they will be ready to make the best use of the judges’ critique. We will listen to the tapes as a group during the week following each performance.

In general, the biggest question new students usually ask is whether we will get “marked down” if they drop their flag. The idea of getting “marked down” is a misconception as there is NOT a judge sitting in the stands recording tick marks when people drop or make other mistakes. In general, it holds true that if you make a mistake you simply “recover” from that mistake as quickly as possible (by picking up your flag or getting back into routine). Often the judge may not even see the mistake because he or she might be looking at someone else. Even when the judge sees the mistake, the performer is often praised for a quick recovery if they don’t let the mistake upset their facial expressions and they get back into routine quickly. A drop or a mistake in routine does NOT result in a subtraction of points. However, mistakes do detract from the overall effect of the show. Many mistakes will also add to a lower performance score in the equipment caption. But one drop, unless you let it ruin the rest of your performance by allowing it to upset you or break your concentration, will typically not significantly hurt the overall score. SO...remember not to let a mistake get you down. Even the best guards in the world have drops and individual mistakes in their show. It’s all part of performance.

# FORMS

# Westfield High School Winter Guard

## Signature Checklist

### 2010 AIA Competition Season

- Potomac Sr. High School – January 30
- Broad Run High School – February 13
- Potomac Falls High School – February 20
- Mils Godwin High School – March 6
- Richmond – March 13 – WGI Regionals
- Hylton High School – March 20
- Chesapeake, VA – March 27 & 28 Atlantic Indoor Association Finals

Attached please find all documents that are required by FCPS and Westfield High School Band for students traveling on these competition trips. Questions? Please call Robin Peralta at 703-409-8821 or Stephan Panoff at 703-488-6363 ext. 6436.

Please use the following checklist to ensure that all paperwork is completed accurately. Please return all documents stapled together and return to Mrs. Peralta no later than January 15, 2010. Forms not turned in by that date will result in non-performance by student on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January.

<b>Forms</b>	<b>Parent Signature</b>	<b>Student Signature</b>
Commitment Form	_____	_____
Parental Authorization	_____	_____
Medication Authorization	_____	_____
Westfield Band Rules	_____	_____
Field Trip D.L. & Vehicle Insurance Info	_____	_____
Optional: Band Booster Form	_____	_____

Student's PRINTED Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work/Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Commitment Form

*I understand that being a member of the Westfield Winter Guard requires a great deal of commitment and dedication and that, as a member of the WHSWG, I am part of a team. By signing this Commitment Form, I am acknowledging that I have read, and understand what is expected of me and that I am willing to be a team player, that I am willing to work with my coaches, coordinators and the other members of my team, that I am willing to support the decisions of my coaches even if those decisions do not include showcasing myself as an individual, that I will do everything in my power to work for the betterment of the team, that I am willing to abide by all of the rules stated above and that I will treat every person related to the Guard with the respect and dignity in which I wish to be treated.*

*I further understand that if I cannot follow these rules, within reason, I may be asked to sit out a competition and/or forfeit my position on the Guard.*

Please sign and return no later than Monday, November 30, 2009. After this date, students may not be able to participate in practices until all forms are returned.

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

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

I have signed up for the Yahoo group. My yahoo user ID is:

\_\_\_\_\_

My parent(s) have also signed up for the Yahoo group. Their yahoo user ID is a follows:

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Father: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate below any dates you will not be available for practice and/or competition due to scheduled appointments or vacations.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# **WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL BAND TRIP RULES AND REGULATIONS**

1. All Fairfax County Public School rules and regulations apply. Please review Reg. 2610.8 regarding Student Rights and Responsibilities. Illegal substances, alcohol and any tobacco products are strictly forbidden. Chaperones will be instructed to bring any proven or suspected infraction of these rules to the immediate attention of the Band Director.
2. No student will be permitted to bring coolers, or beverage cans or bottles (including water bottles) on field trip busses.
3. Civilized behavior is expected. Dress, act and speak like mature ladies. Be courteous, considerate and respectful of other students, chaperones and all people you meet and interact with. You are representing your school, Music Department, Fairfax County, Virginia, your parents and most importantly, yourself and all teenagers.
4. Students must use common sense in regard to things such as dress, public displays of affection, language and other behavior. Respect for all is key!
5. Chaperones are the eyes and ears of the Directors. Do not argue with chaperones about any situation. They are joining us because they enjoy being around young adults and their first concern is to make this a pleasant, safe and fun experience for you. Please make this a pleasant experience for them as well.
6. Late arrivals to the bus or other locations will not be tolerated. Be where you are supposed to be when you are supposed to be there, with what you are supposed to have!
7. All medications must be registered prior to departure and held by the designated chaperone.
8. Due to noise levels and safety risks, no boom boxes, water guns, skateboards or rollerblades will be permitted.
9. Hotel boundaries and ground rules will be established when we arrive at the site. If you leave the hotel area, you must remain within these boundaries and have no fewer than 2 other people with you. Chaperones must be informed of your whereabouts at all times.
10. Disciplinary measures for infractions of the rules listed above will be at the discretion of the Directors, including restriction from participating in group activities, or immediate return home at the expense of the parent/guardian without recourse to reimbursement for missed activities. Further disciplinary action may be undertaken by Westfield High School administration.

I have read the rules printed above, and agree to uphold these expectations while on this trip.

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

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the rules printed above, and agree to uphold these expectations while on this trip.

Parent's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# WESTFIELD HIGH SCHOOL BAND BOOSTER ORGANIZATION

*"Celebrating the joy of music through Band"*  
2009-2010 Membership/Sponsorship Application



MEMBER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_

Name (as it will appear listed in Programs  
e.g. (John & Jane Doe, Mr. and Mrs. Doe \_\_\_\_\_)

PARENT-E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Please do not include my personal information in a Band Booster Organization Directory

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES Select Category (Per Member)

Category	Quantity	Cost Per Item	Amount
Basic Member: Entitled to all benefits of voting membership		\$0.00	
Bronze Member: Listed as a Bronze Member in Performance Programs		\$25.00	
Silver Member: Listed as Silver Member in Performance Programs		\$50.00	
Gold Member: Listed as a Gold Member in Performance Programs		\$75.00	
Platinum Member: Listed as a Platinum Member in Performance Programs		\$100.00	
Directors' Circle: Listed as a member of the Directors' Circle in Performance Programs		\$150.00	
Golden Grandparent: Listed as Members in Performance Programs			

### SPONSORSHIP CATEGORIES

Category	Quantity	Cost Per Item	Amount
Friend: Recognized as a Friend in Band programs. One quarter page ad in Band programs		\$250.00	
Sponsor: Recognized as a Sponsor in Band programs. One half page ad in Band programs		\$500.00	
Patron: Recognized as a Patron in Band programs. Full page ad in Band programs		\$1,000.00	

Comments

**Grand Total**

## Thank You!

Make check Payable to "WHSBBO"

**Westfield High School Band Booster Organization**  
is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.  
Your donations may be tax deductible as provided by law