

Marching Eagles  
**Drum Major Auditions**

*Audition Number* \_\_\_\_\_

**Scoring Scale**      1 2 3 4 / 5 6 7 8 / 9 10 11 12 / 13 14 15 16 / 17 18 19 20  
*Pitiful / Fair / Good / Excellent / Superior*

I.      **Marching Style and Control**      \_\_\_\_\_

- II.      **Teaching Ability (Banner)**
  - A. **Preparation**      \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. **Clarity of Instruction**      \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. **Knowledge of Music/Interpretation**      \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. **Presence**      \_\_\_\_\_

- III.      **Conducting (Banner)**
  - A. **Technique**      \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. **Showmanship**      \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. **Conducting Patterns**      \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. **Dynamic Expression**      \_\_\_\_\_
  - E. **Cues, Entrances**      \_\_\_\_\_

IV.      **Salute**      \_\_\_\_\_

V.      **Essay**      \_\_\_\_\_

**Judges Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools High School Bands

## **Drum Major Handbook**

### *Section 1: Drum Major Duties*

1. The Drum Major is the link of communication between the band director and his staff and his band.
2. A Drum Major always takes initiative with the band. Whether it be warming up the band or starting drill out on the field, it is the job of the Drum Major to get and keep the ball rolling without having to be told to do so.
3. The Drum Major is the motivator of the band. It is his/her job to keep band members motivated when learning music, drill, and when going into a performance situation.
4. A responsible Drum Major also disciplines with respect. If someone is doing or saying something inappropriate, it is his/her job to correct the behavior in a stern, yet respectful manner. Remember, you have to GIVE respect to EARN it.
5. Being that it is a leadership position, the Drum Major needs to exhibit a great amount of maturity and to take on a great amount of responsibility. YOU are responsible for the band and its actions. Please act accordingly. The best way for someone to learn something is to watch and mimic the actions of others. Instead of telling someone about something, do it. Be an example.
6. Even after marching season is completed, the Drum Major still maintains the role and the title as Drum Major, which means that everything that was expected of him/her is still, and will continue to be, expected of him/her.

7. A Drum Major is responsible for every aspect of the band. Please be sure that your band members know their roles and what is expected of them. The Drum Major needs to make that clear from the beginning.

8. Don't be afraid to "Put yourself out there." Be verbal with your band and talk with them. Sing their parts to them and correct them (in a polite and constructive manner) if they happen to be wrong (drill, note, rhythm). Let the band know when it is time to work and when there is down time. Verbalization is the key to having a successful band and a happy director! The band doesn't know what the Drum Major wants until it is expressed!

9. Always be a positive energy for the band. Negativity brings nothing positive to the band, the members, or the program. Remember, the glass is always half FULL.

10. Oversee the band in all its aspects. The band director or a staff member may not always be present, so run the show. The Drum Major is the leader of the band, so live up to the title. On the field and at practice, the band belongs to the Drum Major. Remember that, and remember the responsibilities and expectations that come with the position.

## *Section 2: Field Conducting, Cues, and Commands*

1. Do not show your palms to the audience when conducting. Keep them facing in towards each other.
2. Visualize conducting within “The box.” Remember, boxes will vary based on the size of the person’s torso, but the box should be contained.
3. Be sure to hit each of the ictus points located at each extreme of the box. If each of the points is not hit accurately, the pattern becomes sloppy and unclear to the band members.
4. Facial expression is **NECESSARY** when doing field conducting. They rely heavily on you and your expression to see what they need to do and how they need to play. Exaggerate the facial aspect. If you give expression, they will give you something positive in return in the way of their performance.
5. Use your pattern as a way to indicate crescendo and decrescendo. The pattern should become larger with a crescendo and smaller with a decrescendo. Even though the pattern is getting larger and smaller, all of that needs to be done within “The box.”
6. Patterns can also be very helpful in alerting the band of different musical styles. For instance, if the band was playing a strict march, a stronger and tighter pattern is appropriate. If the band is playing a legato, the pattern should be soft and flowing. Adjust the conducting style based on the music. There can be more than one style of conducting in one piece of the music, which is usually the case.
7. Don’t have an excess of body movement. When the upper and lower halves of the body begin to move too much, it can be a **TOTAL** distraction from the conducting pattern, which is the **MOST IMPORTANT** thing of all. The pattern should be the focus of the Drum Major and the band members.
8. Keep eye contact with the band. If a section of the band has a **BIG** entrance, **LOOK AT THEM!** Don’t assume that they know this is their entrance. The Drum Major needs to look at the section to give some guidance and reassurance.

9. CUE! Cue big entrances as well as sections. Cuing is just a reminder for sections or the entire band that they need to come in here or there is something big about to happen in the music. ALWAYS cue with the left hand.

10. Don't be afraid to put yourself into the music. Be expressive and let the band see you get into the music and its style. If you do this, the band will be more likely to do the same, which is what you want.

11. Give the band what you want them to give you. Model what you want. For example, if you want a part to be played a certain way, sing it how you want them to play it. Give them something and they will give something back to you. Give them nothing and that's exactly what you'll get.

12. Make sure that cutoffs are clear, crisp, and snappy. Avoid sloppy or extended cutoffs.

13. Conduct at chest level. The band isn't looking above or below chest level for your pattern. The chest is eye level and is a comfortable level for conducting. If you conduct at this level, correctly, it will prevent overexertion of the arms and upper body.

14. When bringing up the arms for the downbeat, do not bring them too high. You don't want them going any higher than your face. If you bring them up too high, you take too long for the downbeat, which throws your pattern and rhythms off.

15. If the band (or yourself) should ever get lost in the music, be sure to beat "1" until you (or the band) can find where you are. The band will be looking for a solid downbeat, so always know where your "1" is.

16. NEVER cross your pattern. Never let your arms or wrists or any part of your hand cross.

17. Don't use your whole arm when conducting. Only make use of the arm from elbow to wrist. Everything else should feel and appear to be frozen and in place.

18. Don't hold your pattern too close to your body. Push your pattern (to a comfortable and natural position) out away from your body. It will be closer to the band.
19. Don't let your elbow sag down. Elbows should always be pointed out to the side and not down. If they are down, this means that your pattern is dropping and will not be readable.
20. Don't conduct with "gerbil fingers" (ones that are spread apart). Keep them all together except for the thumb, which can be separated from the rest.
21. Practice conducting in front of a mirror. This lets you do a self-evaluation of your conducting and the progress that you're making.
22. Don't hold your left hand in the air without doing something with it. Move it up or down to vary dynamic level or use it for a cue. Don't just let it hang out up there!
23. Be sure to cue only when there is a section or soloist to cue. Don't randomly cue for the heck of it. Always have a section or person in mind for a cue.
24. Conduct the soloist with the right hand ONLY. But remember, after you have introduced your soloist, use two hands because you have an entire band that needs your instruction.
25. Know when to use formal and informal commands. Use "Band, Ten, Hut!" when starting the day, after lunch and at the end of rehearsal. ALWAYS use the formal command when at a competition or football game. Use "Set" when on the practice field.
26. Command the podium. You have been given a great responsibility, so take it and use it appropriately. When you get on that podium, you need to mean business.
27. When calling commands, do not call from your throat, but use your diaphragm instead. Grab a nice patch of air and then belt out the command from your diaphragm.

28. Be sure to vary the inflection in your voice. Don't keep all of your commands at one level. For example, "Band, Ten, Hut!" should be varied. "Band" and "Hut" should be higher in pitch and "Ten" should be lower.
29. Don't draw your commands out. Keep them short, clear, and snappy so that they can be heard.
30. Be sure to call "Set" and "Horns Up" before mobbing to the next set.
31. If the band is going set-by-set or is playing through that show and they miss entrances or sound bad, cut them off and tell them to "Go Back."
32. Be confident! Know your score and each of the sections' parts. You can troubleshoot easily if you know this. If phasing occurs (where there are musical issues between each side of the field), jump off of the podium (only in practice) and go down there and get the band or section back together. This is the most problematic thing for a band and a Drum Major.
33. Never sing with the band while you're formally conducting. You cannot be in your own little world when you have about 50-70 other people on the field that need your direction.
34. When the music is faster, your pattern needs to be smaller and tighter. And when the music is slower, your pattern needs to be more fluid and open (all within the box, of course).
35. Make sure you distinguish between the downbeat and beat "3." The downbeat is closer to the middle of your body, whereas the "3" is at the extreme of your box.
36. When cuing, always cue up, out, and at an angle. The band needs to see the cue, so make it stand out from your regular pattern of conducting.

### *Section 3: Miscellaneous Information*

1. Always treat every band member with the utmost respect. Never talk down to any member of your band.
2. Never address problems with ANYONE in front of other band members. Always take them to the side (at an appropriate time) and discuss issues with them privately.
3. Try and get to know each member of your band members to a certain degree. This shows that you care and you create a bond with your band members.
4. Rely on the other leaders within your band. They are a great group of allies and the Drum Majors, Horn Line Captains, and Section Leaders need to be in one accord.
5. Be proactive, not reactive. Look ahead to avoid large issues and potential problems.
6. If you are having a constant problem with someone or if there is an emergency, do not hesitate to go to the band director or a staff member. Safety is our top priority.
7. Always be courteous and respectful to the director and the marching staff. They are here to help you.
8. Have fun with your position! It goes by quickly, so make the most of it and make it memorable. Not everyone gets to be a Drum Major.



## *Section 4: Warm-Ups*

Drum Majors can use the following to warm up the band:

- A. Whole notes – Concert B-flat (ALWAYS begin with these, no matter what).
- B. Quarter notes – Concert B-flat
- C. Quarter-eighth notes – Concert B-flat

With any of the following, you can change the tempo, articulation, and dynamics. You can tell the band to play concert B-flat staccato up and slur down, etc. Vary the warm ups so they don't become TOO predictable.

- D. The “Bump” exercise is a good one, too. See your band director for more details.
- E. Written chorales are good to play, also, depending on whether you have access to them.
- F. After being warmed up, begin run portions of the show or work on problem areas. Don't run the whole show or tune over and over again. Pick portions that you know need some attention and work. This is a good time to highlight those.

JHS School Songs

Score

A B Banner C

Flute

Clarinet in B $\flat$  1

Clarinet in B $\flat$  2

Alto Sax.

Tenor Sax.

Trumpet in B $\flat$  1

Trumpet in B $\flat$  2

Mellophone

Trombone

Euphonium

Tuba

Snareline

Tenorline

Bass Drums

Cymbal Line

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*p*

*mf*

*f*

roll on cymbal with mallets

hold for bass drums

*cresc.*

Right Song

Detailed description: This is a musical score for a school band performance of 'JHS School Songs'. The score is written for 14 instruments: Flute, Clarinet in B-flat 1 and 2, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Trumpet in B-flat 1 and 2, Mellophone, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, Snareline, Tenorline, Bass Drums, and Cymbal Line. The music is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The score is divided into three sections: A, B, and C. Section A starts at measure 1. Section B begins at measure 11. Section C starts at measure 21. The Flute part is mostly silent. The Clarinet and Saxophone parts play a melodic line with some dynamics like *mf* and *f*. The Trumpet and Mellophone parts play a similar melodic line. The Trombone and Euphonium parts play a bass line. The Tuba part plays a steady bass line. The Snareline, Tenorline, Bass Drums, and Cymbal Line provide the rhythmic foundation. The Bass Drums part includes a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking. The Cymbal Line part includes a 'roll on cymbal with mallets' and 'hold for bass drums' instruction.

JHS School Songs

This musical score page contains the following parts and markings:

- Flute (Fl.):** Part with dynamic markings *ff* and *f*. Includes a key signature change to E major (E).
- Clarinet 1 (B♭ Cl. 1) and Clarinet 2 (B♭ Cl. 2):** Parts with dynamic markings *ff* and *f*.
- Saxophones (A. Sx. and T. Sx.):** Parts with dynamic markings *f*, *ff*, *sf*, and *f*.
- Trumpets (B♭ Tpt. 1 and B♭ Tpt. 2):** Parts with dynamic markings *f* and *ff*.
- Mellophone (Mello.):** Part with dynamic markings *ff*, *sf*, and *f*.
- Trombones (Tbn.):** Part with dynamic markings *f*, *ff*, *sf*, and *f*.
- Euphonium (Euph.):** Part with dynamic markings *f*, *ff*, *sf*, and *f*.
- Tuba (Tuba):** Part with dynamic markings *ff*, *sf*, and *f*.
- Drum Set (S.Dr., T.Dr., B.Dr., Cym.):** Parts with dynamic markings *ff* and *ff*.