

MASSILLON TIGER *Swing* BAND

Handbook

2026-2027



“The Greatest Show in High School Football”

Class ~ Effort ~ Performance ~ Family

BUILDING A BETTER BAND

Welcome to the 2026–2027 Season of the Massillon Tiger Swing Band!

The Massillon Tiger Swing Band has been a proud part of this incredible tradition since 1938. By joining this band, you are stepping into something far greater than just a musical group—you are becoming part of a legacy that includes the football team, cheerleaders, students, and an entire community whose passion and support create a high school experience unlike any other in the country. This tradition is alive in our Opening Routine, Pregame, and Alma Mater—but above all, it's a tradition of **excellence**.

As a member of the 2026 Tiger Swing Band, you will enjoy unforgettable performances, share tons of fun, and create life-long friendships and memories. But with these rewards comes the responsibility to uphold the high standards set by the many who have come before you. You're not only representing this year's band—you're honoring the legacy of **over 85 years** of Tiger Swing Bands and helping shape the future for those yet to come.

We will uphold the past and build for the future by committing to:

- **CLASS BEHAVIOR**
- **RELENTLESS EFFORT**
- **SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE**
- and experiencing **THE POWER OF BAND AS A FAMILY**

When you fully embrace this culture, **there is nothing we can't accomplish together**.

As we kick off a new season and school year, let's enjoy the process of becoming a team, learning and making amazing music, putting on exciting and unforgettable shows, and lifting each other up every step of the way as we strive to **Build A Better Band!**

We're excited for everything this year holds and hope you make the 2026–2027 Tiger Swing Band one of the most special yet!

Attendance Policy

1. Students are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances.
2. If a conflict arises fill out a “Request to be Absent Form” **AS SOON AS YOU KNOW OF THE CONFLICT, PRIOR TO THE ABSENCE.**
3. If you are sick and unable to attend rehearsal please notify a director immediately by phone, text, Remind message, or email. Make sure that we get parental confirmation ASAP if the parent is not the one that made the initial contact.
4. Excused Absences include, but are not limited to:
 - Illness
 - Death in the Family
 - Family Event that cannot be scheduled at another time (i.e. Wedding)
 - Participation in other school event WITH PERMISSION OF DIRECTORS (let us know of conflicts as soon as you know about them)
 - Study Table- pass from teacher required
 - Family vacation
 - Other unique circumstances... If you're unsure, please ask a director

****Even though an absence is excused, your marching status may be affected.**

- If your absence is excused and your spot gets reassigned (at the directors' discretion) while you are away, you must challenge to regain a spot when you return. Refer to the challenge process detailed in this handbook.
- If you miss half (or more) of the rehearsal preparation for any upcoming halftime show, you **will not be permitted to march** that particular show.

5. Unexcused Absences include, but are not limited to:
 - Work
 - Detention
 - Observance of other school events
 - Family events that could be scheduled at other times (i.e. birthday party)
 - Non-emergency transportation problem (there are plenty of people that would be glad to pick you up as long as you ask)
 - Other unique circumstances... If you're unsure, please ask a director
6. An Unexcused Absence from a rehearsal will result in 1 Demerit. An Unexcused Absence from a performance will result in 3 Demerits.
7. Tardiness to rehearsals or performances will result in running laps.

Expectations

General Expectations:

1. All school policies are in effect.
2. Be respectful to everyone around you.
3. Be prompt, "If you are early you are on time, if you are on time you are late..."
4. Be prepared.
5. Bring a positive attitude.
6. Turn in all forms on time.
7. Follow directions of those in authority.

Rehearsal Expectations:

1. Come ready to rehearse...physically prepared, mentally prepared, have everything you need, bring your best attitude and work ethic.
2. Have your instrument in good playing condition.
3. No cell phone usage during rehearsal. (Breaks only)
4. Bring your music in a flip folder (with drill written in).
5. Lyres are required for Flute-Trombone.
6. Bring a pencil.
7. Bring your own water.
8. No athletic activity during breaks in rehearsal.
9. Wear appropriate marching attire:
 - Low-top Athletic shoes (no sandals, boots, dress shoes, etc.)
 - Socks
 - Shorts, athletic wear, or loose fitting pants (no tight pants that restrict movement, shorts should have at least a 3 inch inseam)
 - Shirt (Sleeveless shirts are OK, no cut-off T-shirts with big arm holes, please wear reasonably modest shirts appropriate for athletic activity)
 - SUNSCREEN at least SPF 15
 - Clothing may not contain inappropriate slogans or pictures
10. Pick up after yourself.

Equipment Expectations:

The use of school owned instruments is a privilege. They should be well maintained, and returned in the same condition that they were issued.

Woodwinds:

1. **3 working reeds- rotate them**
2. Cork grease
3. Neck strap (sax)
4. Swab

Brass:

1. Clean mouthpiece
2. Polishing cloth
3. **Slide/valve oil- use it at least every other day**
4. Slide grease (tuning slides that move)

Percussion:

1. Stick/mallets as appropriate- taped white
2. Drummers are financially responsible to replace drum heads that are broken.
 - One replacement set is given for normal wear and tear to tenor players.

Bus Expectations:

1. Be respectful of those around you. Keep conversations and games to an appropriate “inside” volume level.
2. Upon arrival at the completion of a trip, percussionists and tubas will change quickly and then take care of their equipment. Others with instruments on the truck should unload and take care of their instrument immediately (before changing out of uniform).
3. Movies may be viewed at the Director’s discretion.
4. No messy snacks. Drinks must have lids.
5. Keep your area clean.
6. Public displays of affection should be limited to hand holding.
7. Quiet times will be designated and observed. Bring something to occupy this time if necessary.
8. No singing in groups of one or more.
9. No blankets on the bus.

Game-Day Expectations:

1. Some days we wear a designated outfit to school/rehearsal. Everyone participates.
2. Failure to attend a final rehearsal may result in loss of spot.
3. Be prepared and on time for inspection.
4. Gloves and plumes may come off once you are dismissed into the stands.
5. Hats, Jackets and/or Parkas will remain on unless instructed by a director to take them off.
6. When we play in the stands everyone participates.
7. Cell phones may be used on breaks only.
8. Band members, staff, and designated booster helpers are the only people allowed in the band seating area.
9. No food is allowed in uniform, unless provided by the band.
10. Restroom trips will be taken after pregame, and again after halftime.
11. Band members, staff, and designated booster helpers are the only people allowed in the high school.

Miscellaneous Expectations:

1. Public displays of affection should be limited to hand holding.
2. We are lucky to have such nice facilities. Keep them neat by picking up after yourself.
3. No horseplay. (Yes, it may seem like harmless fun, but people get hurt!)
4. No “energy drinks” at band. We highly discourage using them before rehearsals and performances as well, because they are unhealthy and potentially unsafe given the nature of what we do.

MTSB Culture Blueprint

What We Believe	How We Behave	Outcome We Achieve
<i>Class Behavior</i>	We act respectfully, with good manners, treating each other kindly, and always Above the Line (Intentional, with purpose, skillful).	We create a positive, enjoyable environment. We also represent ourselves, our fellow band members (present and alumni), our school, and our community in a positive way.
<i>Relentless Effort</i>	We are giving our maximum effort at all times (Focus, ability, and energy).	We are physically and mentally conditioned to be at our best both on and off the field.
<i>Superior Performance</i>	We have a constant focus on discipline-driven practice (Individual and group).	We are prepared to perform when it is Showtime.
<i>The Power of Band as a Family</i>	We display an uncommon commitment to each other and to the work necessary to achieve our purpose.	We create a bond of trust and love for one another. We have motivation to perform well for each other.

Merit Point Criteria		
FULL BAND - PERFORMANCE		
each perf.	1. Class Behavior - Follow directions of those in authority (staff, squad leaders, band parents, etc...) and present a positive image of the Tiger Swing Band.	Full Band
each perf.	2. High Energy - Display a high level of energy and enthusiasm throughout the entire performance.	Full Band
each perf.	3. Straight Lines - and accurate marching formations for the majority of the performance.	Full Band
each perf.	4. Good sound - all music is performed at a high quality and sounds good.	Full Band
each perf.	5. On Time - Everyone is in their spot on time	Full Band
each perf.	5. Passing Inspection - Everyone is fully prepared and passing inspection.	Full Band
each perf.	7. Clean Dressing Rooms - Dressing rooms and band spaces clean at the end of the performance.	Full Band
FULL BAND - REHEARSAL		
1 per day	Superior Rehearsal - Overall energetic, positive attitude and little time is wasted	Full Band
RANK - PERFORMANCE		
each perf.	Entire rank is on time (or properly excused) - AND passing inspection - AND uniform returned properly at end of performance.	Rank
RANK - REHEARSAL		
1 per week	Entire rank is on time (or properly excused) AND fully prepared for the entire week of rehearsals. (instrument, attire, music, pencil, drill written in)	Rank
INDIVIDUAL - MUSIC		
1 per song	Individual passes a single song from memory.	Individual
SECTION - MUSIC		
1 per song	Entire Section passes a single song from memory.	Section
INDIVIDUAL - ATTENDANCE		
weekly	Individuals with no unexcused tardies or absences during the week will receive 1 point. Individuals with complete perfect attendance during the week will receive 3 points.	Individual
BONUS POINTS		
Any time	Any time a director witnesses any outstanding action from the band, section, rank, or individual - a bonus point(s) may be given. (Director's Signature required on MP sheet)	ANY

MTSB MERIT SYSTEM

(Merit points will be earned toward BOTH of the following rewards...)

1. Tiger Swing Store

Store closes at end of the regular season. (Auction will be held @ 1st week of November)

*Once you have earned points, they can be used to
"purchase" the following items...*

<u>25 Points</u>	<u>75 Points</u>	<u>100 Points</u>
Lap Free Card**	Gloves	Spats
	Instr. Item	

**Not valid for behavior infractions. limit 3 per season

2. Tiger Swing Stripes

*Once you have earned enough points, you will automatically
earn a stripe for the shoulder of your uniform...*

<u>50 Pt. Level</u>	<u>100 Pt. Level</u>	<u>150 Pt. Level</u>	<u>200 Pt. Level</u>	<u>250 Pt. Level</u>
Orange	Black	White	Silver	Gold

Demerit System

As a member of the Tiger *Swing* Band, students are expected to be prepared and follow the guidelines set out for them in this handbook. Failure to do so will result in running laps, and/or receiving demerits.

3 laps = 1 demerit (a form to take home and get signed by a parent/guardian.)

3 demerits = suspension from a game

- ~ Student will attend the game, in uniform, with the band. The student will stand on the sideline at attention during all performances. The student will play in the stands.
- ~ Upon completion of suspension the student must challenge to get the spot back following the standard challenge procedures.

6 demerits = suspension from a game and parent conference

- ~ Student will attend the game, in uniform, with the band. The student will stand on the sideline at attention during all performances. The student will play in the stands.
- ~ Upon completion of suspension the student must challenge to get the spot back following the standard challenge procedures.
- ~ A conference will be held with directors, student, and parents to discuss needed behavior modifications.

9 demerits = suspension from band for one week and parent conference

- ~ Student will not attend any practices or performances.
- ~ At the end of this suspension student and parents will meet with directors to determine if the student desires further participation in the band and to outline final expectations.
- ~ Upon completion of suspension the student must challenge to get the spot back following the standard challenge procedures.

10 demerits = loss of membership

- ~ Student is no longer a member of the Tiger *Swing* Band, and loses all privileges of being a band member; including but not limited to: participation in band events, awards, recognition, and travel.

Offenses resulting in a lap include, but are not limited to:

- Being unprepared for rehearsal (no pencil, no music, no instrument, inappropriate attire, etc.)
- Gum during rehearsal/performance
- Unexcused Tardy to rehearsal/performance
- Uniform infractions
- Talking during rehearsal
- Borrowing uniform items (gloves, spats, etc.) for performances. (These laps will not count towards demerits, unless they are not run or the item is not returned)
- Uniform not returned properly

Offenses resulting in demerit(s) include, but are not limited to:

- Accumulating 3 laps
- Failure to run a lap
- Unexcused Absence
- Disrespectful attitude/behavior

Lap Procedure

- If a student is issued a lap they will be notified before the end of rehearsal.
- If a student earns a lap outside of rehearsal (i.e. uniform infraction, at a performance, etc.) the lap is to be run after the very next regular rehearsal.
- Laps need to be run directly after rehearsal.
- Check in with the designated director before and after you run to be sure you get credit for running.
- If for some reason a student cannot run a lap at the rehearsal it is given they must talk to the designated director that same day. The lap must then be run after the next rehearsal. Failure to follow this policy will result in the lap automatically turning into a demerit.

Demerit Procedure

- Demerits will be given by the directors. The directors reserve the right to issue the number of demerits for any offense according to the circumstance. Serious offenses such as fighting or blatant disrespect may receive multiple demerits.
- Students receiving demerits will be given a form to take home and get signed by a parent/guardian.
- Forms must be turned in no later than two rehearsal days after they are issued. (For example: If a form is issued on Monday, the form is due no later than Wednesday; if the form is issued on Friday it is due no later than Tuesday.)
- Failure to turn in Demerit forms on time will result in a call home and a lap for every day the form is late.

Marching Status

1. All members in good standing will march during the pregame show.
2. Due to the nature of the drill, the Opening Routine of our halftime show has a limited number of spots.

Marchers will be chosen according to the following criteria:

- Challenges (Process outlined below.)
 - Marching ability
 - Passing music check-offs
 - Standing in the band (merits/demerits)
 - Attendance
3. After the Opening Routine, members in good standing will be added for the rest of the show.

Challenge Process

1. Challenges will take place before the second rehearsal of each week. Those wishing to challenge should select which section/rank member to challenge and then notify Mr. Neel before the first rehearsal of the week. Directors will inform the other party.
 - In the case of an unexcused absence, the party who was absent forfeits the challenge. If the absence is excused, the challenge will take place before the next rehearsal.
2. The challenge will be done in small groups or individually depending on the number of challenges. Each challenge will be judged by the directors.
3. Challenges will consist of the following:
 - March and play all of the Opening Routine (Entrance, Fanfare, Tiger Rag and Carry On)
 - Music check-offs completed prior to challenge

** If a challenge is close, attendance and attitude will play an important role.

** Directors reserve the right to assign spots as deemed necessary.

Uniform Requirements

Each Tiger Swing Band member will be assigned a uniform for the duration of each marching season. Uniforms will be stored at WHS. Students will change into and out of uniforms at the WHS in the provided Dressing Areas before and after each performance.

Uniform pieces:

1. Pants- must be zipped and buttoned. Straps must be worn at the correct height.
2. Jackets- Must be zipped all the way with all appropriate buttons/snaps done.
3. Shoes- Must be black and clean.
4. Socks- Must be solid black and be visible above spats.
5. Spats- must be clean and white.
 - 1st pair is provided at no charge to first time marchers.
 - Replacement spats will cost \$8.
6. Gloves- must be clean and white.
 - 1st pair is provided at no charge to first time marchers.
 - Replacement gloves will cost \$4.
7. Parka- Worn in inclement weather.
 - When worn, the parka should be zipped all the way.
8. Hat- Should be secure on head and down in the front so that the bottom of the brim is even with the eyebrows.
 - Don't carry your hat by its strap.
9. Plume- Will be passed out at performances. They should be treated **with care**.
 - When not in the hat, plumes will be placed under the left epaulet.

Hair requirements:

1. Hair may not touch below the collar.
2. All of your hair should be neat and inside your hat. A tight neat bun just below the hat is also acceptable if length or bulk of the hair make it necessary.
 - No loose hair hanging out.
 - Hair must remain pulled up whenever in uniform, even when the hat is not worn.
3. No unnatural hair color (blue, purple, etc.)
4. Majorettes must have hair neat for performances as dictated by the Advisor.
5. Hair Accessories should all be Orange, Black, Gray, or White, or match the individual's hair color.
6. Any facial hair must be neatly kept.

Jewelry:

1. No visible jewelry is to be worn in uniform.
 - No earrings (clear posts are acceptable)
 - No facial piercings (clear space holders are acceptable)
 - No necklaces or bracelets
 - "I just got this piercing" is not an excuse. Wait until after the season if you plan to acquire new piercings.
 - Twirlers will not wear any jewelry due to the safety issue.
2. Watches with a black strap (and/or "Swing Bands") may be worn in uniform.

Makeup/Nail polish

1. Make-up should be minimal and modest (at director's discretion). No lipstick.
2. Majorettes will wear makeup as specified by the Advisor.
3. Any nail polish should be muted/neutral colors (soft pink, tan, etc.).

Under Uniform:

1. White **band** shirt or **plain** white shirt
2. Black shorts
3. When the weather gets cold layering is encouraged.
 - No jeans.
 - Keep visible neckline school colors or neutral (white, black, orange, gray, nothing bright or flashy.)

Miscellaneous:

1. Uniforms are to be hung up properly.
 - When hanging the jacket, the number should be visible on the hanger.
 - Pants should be hung inseam to inseam, so that the creases line up.
2. Hat boxes are only for storing HATS. (We don't call them "hat-glove-spat-and-dirty-black-sock boxes".) Hat boxes should be closed on the shelf, unless instructed otherwise.
3. New spats and gloves are available for purchase in the uniform room before every performance.
4. Spats and gloves are available to borrow at the uniform room if you forget yours.
 - Each time you borrow a uniform piece, the penalty will be one lap to be run at the next rehearsal.

Inspection Requirements:

1. Be in your spot at the designated time.
2. Wear the uniform as outlined above. All pieces must be worn for inspection.
3. Instruments should be clean and in good working order.

SCHOOL SONG LYRICS

ALMA MATER

Oh, Alma Mater, Massillon,
We stand to sing thy praise,
With hearts that thrill with worthy pride,
At thoughts of high school days.
Thy friendships true, thy spirit too,
A part of us shall be,
Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
We're true to thee.
And through the long, long years to come,
Wherever we may be,
Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
We're true to thee.

Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
God keep thee ever so,
Thy sons and daughters stand four square,
To all the winds that blow.
And as the seasons come and go,
We only ask, may we,
Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
Be more like thee.
And through the long, long years to come,
Wherever we may be,
Oh, Alma Mater Massillon,
We're true to thee.

Carry On

Carry on for Massillon,
Fight square. That's all.
We ask no odds of anyone;
Play fair. Play Ball!
We're all for one in Massillon
And when, the game is won
We will march with proud hearts ever on
For Massillon

Massillon Will Shine

Massillon will shine tonight, Massillon will shine!
Massillon will shine tonight, Massillon will shine!
Massillon will shine tonight, Massillon will shine!
When the sun goes down and the moon comes up,
Massillon will shine!

Stand up and Cheer

Stand up and cheer for our team;
And when they come on the field
We'll let our team know we're here
And give a cheer for team! (Team, Team)
And when the game has begun
Our team will fight with all its' might.
And when you hear the gun
You'll know the game is done
And that our Massillon team has won!

MTSB MANNERS - A Culture of Class

Manner #1 - When asking for something, say "Please."

Manner #2 - When receiving something, say "Thank you."

Manner #3 - Do not interrupt people who are speaking with each other unless there is an emergency. They will likely notice you and respond when they are finished talking.

Manner #4 - If you do need to get somebody's attention right away, the phrase "excuse me" is the most polite way for you to enter the conversation.

Manner #5 - When you have any doubt about doing something, ask permission first. It can save you from many hours of grief later.

Manner #6 - The world is not interested in what you dislike. Keep negative opinions to yourself. (We strive to eliminate BCD - Blame, Complain, Defend)

Manner #7 - Do not comment on other people's physical characteristics unless, of course, it's to compliment them, which is always welcome.

Manner #8 - Always clean up after yourself. Leave things better than you found them.

Manner #9 - Be appreciative and say "thank you" for any gift you receive. In the age of email and texting, a handwritten thank-you note can have a powerful effect.

Manner #10 - Don't use foul language. It is not class behavior.

Manner #11 - Don't call people mean names.

Manner #12 - Do not make fun of anyone for any reason. Teasing shows others you are weak, and ganging up on someone else is cruel.

Manner #13 - Even if a presentation or an assembly is boring, sit through it quietly and pretend that you are interested. The presenters are doing their best.

Manner #14 - If you bump into somebody, immediately say "Excuse me."

Manner #15 - As you walk through a door, look to see if you can hold it open for someone else.

Manner #16 - If you come across a friend, parent, a teacher, or a neighbor working on something, ask if you can help. If they say "yes," do so - you may learn something new.

Manner #17 - When someone asks you for a favor, do it without grumbling and with a smile.

Manner #18 - When someone helps you, say "thank you." That person will likely want to help you again. This is especially true with teachers!

Manner #19 - When receiving feedback or constructive criticism, listen intently and keep an open mind. (No BCD)

Manner #20 - When you make a mistake, own up to it, correct it, and move forward. (No BCD)

Tiger Swing Band Contact Information

www.tigerswingband.com

“Like” us on Facebook

Boosters

Massillon Tiger Band Boosters
PO Box 1063
Massillon, OH 44648

High School

Massillon Washington High School
One Paul E. Brown Dr.
Massillon, OH 44646

WHS Band Office Phone: (330) 830-3901

Mr. Neel voicemail: x-51501

Mrs. Smithhisler voicemail: x-51503

** If you call the school, go to the operator and request to be transferred to the band office.

If you just dial the extension, it goes straight to voicemail. **

REMINDERS = text @mtsb to 81010 to join the MTSB reminder group

Band Staff

Mr. Jason Neel.....jneel@massillonschools.org
~Head Director

Mrs. Jenn Smithhisler.....jsmithhisler@massillonschools.org
~Assistant Director

Mr. Chris Nussbaum.....cnussbaum@massillonschools.org
~Assistant Director/Percussion Instructor

Miss Emily Butz.....ebutz@massillonschools.org
~ Assistant Director

Mr. Tyler Lehman.....tlehman@massillonschools.org
~ Assistant Director

Mrs. Karla Marsh.....majorettes@tigerswingband.com
~Majorette/Front Rank Advisor

Booster Officers

Mr. Ben Moretta.....boosterpresident@tigerswingband.com
~President

Mr. Jason Deuble.....boostervicepres@tigerswingband.com
~Vice President

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~ Recording Secretary

Ms. Heather Kohl.....boosteralumnirep@tigerswingband.com
~Alumni Rep

Mrs. Katie Barber.....pastboosterrep@tigerswingband.com
~Past Booster Rep