

West Bloomfield Winter Guard Program 2016 Membership Handbook

Chad Mielens chad.mielens@wbsd.org
Director of Bands at West Bloomfield High School and Abbott Middle School

Mark DeDeckere dedeckeremark@gmail.com
Color Guard Caption Head and Winter Guard Director (734) 560-5629

Design/Instructional Staff : Katie Bakula, Carlie Critchett, Alex Lane and Mindi Murray

Welcome to the Winter Guard Family! Whether is this your first season with the program, or you are a returning veteran, we hope you will find a strong sense of pride and growth within our program!

We are very excited to begin the 2016 season and for each student to experience the JOY of membership on such elite teams! West Bloomfield Winter Guard has quite an *award winning* history! Last season, our JV Winter guard team earned the silver medal in the Jr. Regional A class! In 2014, the guard was named the Scholastic AA State Champion after a very successful return to the competitive arena.

There are plenty of exciting things planned for this season; I can't wait to work with your students and see what they can achieve! With everyone's communication and support, we will give your students life lessons that they will take with them to create more responsible, compassionate and team-oriented young adults in a fun, caring environment. We do expect a lot out of our members as far as commitment and hard work is concerned, but we do know how to have fun, too. Below is a detailed outline and structure for our program. Should you have any further questions or concerns, feel free to e-mail. I love hearing from new guard families and making connections! Here's to making 2016 our **best** yet!

Mark DeDeckere, Winter Guard Director

Mission and Philosophy

The mission of the West Bloomfield Winter Guard program is to foster the opportunity for young women and men within the district to explore the art of expression through basic and intermediate training in dance, flag, weapon and performance. “It's great to have fun, it's more fun to be great.” This philosophy allows both excellence and fun to coexist. The ideology that hard has reward through a high-level success is a great tool for young people to experience. Working cohesively as a team, building trust, and making memories are just a few of the life skills are members will develop throughout the season. We operate not only as a team, but also as a family. With the continued support of the WB band programs, administration and our community, we are able to uphold values of showmanship and integrity for pageantry arts.

Rehearsals and Shows

Rehearsals are the primary source for education, staging and replicating the feel for a show. Attendance from each member is vital, as each performer plays a significant role in the production. Our full rehearsal and performance calendar is available at our website: **wbbands.info**

JV Rehearsals:

West Bloomfield HS Cafeteria

Tuesdays & Thursdays

5:00-8:30pm

Varsity Rehearsals:

Abbott Middle School Gymnasium

Mondays, Fridays and some Saturdays

6:00-9:00pm

We compete at several different contests throughout the season. Varsity guard will travel to a WGI regional in the Flint area, as well as to Dayton, OH for the WGI World Championship! Most of our shows are local, in fact, our school even hosts an invitational at the end of January (more information coming soon). Carpooling is always available to and from shows and rehearsals, in fact we encourage our members to travel together! A detailed itinerary of each contest weekend will be provided a week prior.

Student expectations

Each member, as a representative of West Bloomfield Winter Guard, is expected to follow the school's code of conduct, respect themselves and each other and always try his/her **personal best** in and out of a rehearsal setting. Being on time (approximately 15 minutes before rehearsal), being prepared (equipment, belongings, etc.) and having a great attitude are always expected and necessary for success!

Winter Guard is a **time commitment**. It is very important for each member to be at rehearsal and be on time! As young performers, guard rehearsals are often structured around the training and building of skill sets which require everyone to present. As the season progresses, many edits and details to the show are added. This makes it very important that every member is always at each rehearsal and be on time to make sure they are prepared for performances, etc.

An unexcused absence the week of a performance will result in that member missing the next performance. Two unexcused absences throughout the season will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Unexcused absences include: work, hanging out with friends, skipping etc. Excused absences include: doctors notes, emergencies, deaths in the family, serious illness, etc. If you know you need to be absent for a legitimate reason, let Mark know in advance!

At rehearsal, students must wear comfortable, form-fitting clothing as they will always be exploring dance and movement during rehearsals. Dance shoes, athletic shoes, etc. are expected during equipment training. The winter guard program will enforce the dress code of WBHS band rehearsals. No jeans, tank tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, short shorts, etc. Use good judgement!

Financial commitments

Comparatively, our membership tuition is significantly lower than most teams in this activity; many pay upwards of \$1,000 for a competitive season. To defray a high cost, we have worked out a budget that is realistic and achievable for a successful season for our students. Membership tuition covers: staff (instructional and design), floor tarp, props, flags, rifles, uniforms, etc. *We also require each member to participate in a fundraiser each month to go toward the general funding of the guard program. Families may prefer to “opt-out” of any fundraiser by providing a \$75 donation. These fundraisers are mandatory!*

“I <3 VVB Guards” t-shirt (each student must sell 5) beyond 5 go to SA
 Show Shirt Ad Sponsors (each student must sell 1) beyond 1 go to SA
 Yankee Candle/Valentines Day Candy
 Restaurant coupons/Vouchers (The Lodge, Panera, Bagger Daves)

Dues may be paid all at once, or may follow the payment plan below (payments due on the 15th of each month). All dues are non-refundable. Please include your student's dues in a sealed envelope with his/her name clearly visible. All checks should be made payable to: **BBAWB**

JV Guard

November	\$100.00 uniform deposit (due w/membership contract)	
December	\$100.00 payment member dues	
January	\$150.00 payment member dues	
February	\$100.00 payment member dues	Total: \$450.00

Varsity Guard

November	\$100.00 uniform deposit (due w/membership contract)	
December	\$100.00 payment member dues	
January	\$150.00 payment member dues	
February	\$150.00 payment member dues	
	\$150.00 Dayton trip (meals, lodging)	Total: \$500.00
		Travel expenses: \$150.00

West Bloomfield Winter Guard Program Student/Parent Membership Contract

I _____ (student name) have carefully read the 2016 West Bloomfield Winter Guard Membership Handbook in its entirety. I agree to represent my school district, my winter guard program, staff, members and the West Bloomfield band programs with respect. I have read and agree to follow the dress code in place. I can commit to follow the rehearsal and competition schedule and am aware of the attendance policy in place. I can commit to the financial obligations as stated in the handbook. I understand that should I choose to no longer participate in the VB Guard program, I still have an obligation to my financial commitments, per the month I choose to exit the program. *Several of our materials are purchased in advance, so should the student dismiss themselves, they are still required to uphold the financial commitments as outlined in the handbook.* I have read and agree to follow the "Winter Fee Policy" as drafted by the Band Booster Association of West Bloomfield executive board (attached). I am committing myself to excellence and will try **my personal best** throughout the coming months in this activity.

Member Signature	_____/_____/_____ date
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature	_____/_____/_____ date
Mark DeDeckere, WBCG Director	_____/_____/_____ date

This membership contract, November uniform deposit and health history form, due no later than Tuesday 11/24/15. Checks can be made payable to: BBAWB

Enclosed is \$100.00

_____ Check (# _____)

_____ Cash

_____ Student credit transfer (must attach form)

West Bloomfield Winter Guard Program **SAMPLE** Sponsorship Letter

Dear Supporter,

My name is _____ and I am a member of the 2016 West Bloomfield Winter Guard Program. Winter Guard combines the art of dance, flag and expression which allows me the opportunity to grow as a young performer. As an youth organization, we count on contributions such as yours to help us represent our school and community at performances and competitions throughout the state of Michigan. Our organization proudly competes in the Michigan Color Guard Circuit (MCGC) and will be working hard on a competitive show throughout the coming months. Our season concludes at our State Championship at Saginaw Valley State University in March of 2016.

West Bloomfield Winter Guard is a small group of dedicated youths in the South East Michigan area. It takes several hours of practice each week to learn and perfect our competitive show. After several weeks of training, conditioning and preparing, we will travel just about every weekend competing and representing our school at local circuit shows. For your information, more on this activity can be found at: www.mcgc.net, www.wgi.org or our own website: wbbands.info/winter-guard

Your support will go toward supplying our equipment, uniforms, props, travel expenses and a staff to coach us along the way. We have a spirited group of individuals that would be undoubtedly grateful to you and your organization.

In order to achieve our financial goals this season, we must depend on contributions from local businesses and other fund raising that we can manage. The total cost to operate the season is roughly \$7,000, which is a large amount for such a small group to raise. Any donation is welcomed as it helps defray the total cost for everyone involved. All supporters and sponsors will be listed and advertised on our website and in the State Finals program.

Without partners such as you, we would not be able to experience quality in arts education. Again, thank you for your time to read through this and many thanks in advance for your generous contribution. Please return this letter with your sponsorship to:

Band Boosters Association of West Bloomfield Attention: Winter Guard

4925 Orchard Lake Road
West Bloomfield, MI 48323

Member being sponsored: _____
(please also include this on the memo of the check)

Amount enclosed: _____ \$25.00 _____ \$50.00 _____ \$75.00 _____ \$100.00

