

Starr's Mill High School Panther Pride Marching Band Attendance Policy

In order for **all** students to have a successful experience and for the band to achieve the success it has enjoyed and continues to desire, each family's (student and parents) commitment to the success of the ensemble will be directly reflected by the student's attendance and preparation for each and every band activity. One student's absence affects more than one student. This organization can only be successful when it acts as a cohesive team. In intricate drill and musical preparation, one single absence can hold back the entire organization. Every member is critical to our maximum achievement. With proper planning, conflicts CAN be avoided.

Band activities are the means by which students learn; therefore, by their very nature, cannot be reproduced or made-up. Any deviation to the calendar is rare and unavoidable (out of our control) and will be communicated immediately through multiples means. The attendance policy will go into effect upon the first day of summer rehearsals in July and will remain in effect for the entire year. The Panther Pride will succeed or fail as a group, not as individuals; therefore, it is mandatory that students are present, prepared, and prompt for all band activities.

Each student is expected to come to a band activity prepared and ready to participate to the fullest of his/her ability. This includes, but is not limited to: forgetting an instrument, not having all necessary instrument-related items, not having music, not having the correct shoes, attire (including the correct color for the guard), etc.

The attendance policies listed below apply to all Starr's Mill High School Panther Pride Marching Band rehearsals, performances, football games, parades, and special events.

Per the Starr's Mill High School Student Handbook, p. 5, #3: "Students involved in extracurricular activities must be present in school at least ½ of the instructional school day in order to participate in a school activity that afternoon or evening." Please remember this policy when scheduling appointments, etc. so each marching band performer is able to participate.

Excused Absences according to State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-10 which apply to Marching Band participation

- Personal Illness – with parent email (If the student is present at school by the end of the day, he/she is expected to attend rehearsal)
- Serious illness or death in the immediate family
- Court Order
- Religious Holiday

The following will not be excused reasons for missing rehearsals or performances:

Vacation/trip, college visit, college/professional/etc. sporting event, professional concert, recreation league sports, outside school activities, birthdays, baby-sitting, catching up on homework, job, punishment from parent, relatives in town, or scheduled doctors and dentist appointments (unless of an emergency that will harm student otherwise).

If a student is at school, he/she is expected to fully participate in the rehearsal/performance that day.

Approving Absences:

There are occasions when absences cannot be avoided. These must be cleared with the Director at least two weeks in advance by filling out the Panther Pride Absence Request form (on our website) and awaiting a determination by the directors. If the directors are not given at least two week's notice of the absence, then the absence will be counted as unexcused. Please give as much information as possible in order to facilitate the directors' determination. The mere filing of a request does not guarantee an excused absence. All follow-up is the responsibility of the student/parent.

1. Excused absences would include:

- a. court order
- b. religious holiday
- c. you have a significant family responsibility (wedding, etc.)
- d. drum & bugle corps participation
- e. summer music camp/festival
- f. a "once in a high school career" opportunity that helps to develop character, leadership, morals, etc. (National Scouting Jamboree)
- g. participation in a Starr's Mill competitive activity's game (priority only over our rehearsal)
- h. Thanksgiving holiday weekends

2. There are occasions when emergency absences cannot be avoided. At the latest, please send an email to both directors on the day the student arrives back to school. Excused absences would include:

- a. medical emergency, accompanied by a physician's note
- b. death in your family
- c. you have a personal illness

The following procedure will be followed for absences from performances:

1. In the event that a student belongs to a non-Starr's Mill HS organization, which may be appearing, rehearsing, or meeting during the same time, the SMHS Panther Pride Marching Band will take preference.
2. a. A Starr's Mill athletic game or other Starr's Mill event will take preference over a Marching Band rehearsal
- b. a Marching Band performance will take preference over any Starr's Mill practice or meeting
- c. In the event that a Starr's Mill game or event is scheduled opposite a Marching Band performance, the student must inform the Directors at least two weeks (or when initially receiving the sport/activity schedule) in advance of the conflict (using the Panther Pride Absence Request form on our website) so that a solution may be reached between the sponsors/coaches
3. The Marching Band will perform as long as the Football Team remains in the playoffs. These games are required and are subject to the attendance policies (with the exception of the two Thanksgiving break weekends). It is our responsibility to cheer on and support our Panthers!!!
4. Saturday rehearsals count for 3 weekly rehearsals.

Absence Consequences

Tardies:

- An excused tardy is when a student has pre-arranged a tardy because of making up a test (student was previously absent). This must be cleared with the Directors by 8:40am when arriving back to school by filling out the Panther Pride Absence Request form (on our website) and awaiting a determination by the directors. Attending a club meeting that also meets before school is not an excused tardy (unless it directly conflicts with another school meeting).
- Unexcused tardy: one lap (after rehearsal) per two minutes late
- The 3rd and 4th unexcused tardies = one unexcused rehearsal absence: not marching next performance

Excused Rehearsal Absences:

- One excused rehearsal absence in a week: no penalty for missing Monday or Tuesday
- Two or more excused rehearsal absences in a week: not marching next performance and possibly future performance depending on time it takes for the student to catch up. This is not a punishment but rather a situation where the student has missed too much information to be able to perform well. This also protects the other students from possibly getting injured.

Even though circumstances may not permit a student to march in a performance, he/she is expected to attend in uniform with the marching band. Should the student choose not to attend, he/she will be charged with an unexcused performance absence.

- Thursday rehearsal absence: probably not marching the next performance (the directors will evaluate the student's overall progress and possible detriment to the upcoming performance)

Unexcused Rehearsal Absences:

- One unexcused rehearsal absence in the season: not marching next performance, loss of next 3rd quarter break
- Two unexcused rehearsal absences in the season - this equals one unexcused performance absence: not marching next performance, loss of next 3rd quarter break, losing leadership role, not lettering/awards
- Three unexcused rehearsal absences in the season: removal from marching band, not lettering/awards

Unexcused Performance Absences:

- One unexcused performance (not including contest) absence in the season: not marching next performance, losing leadership role, not lettering/awards, loss of next 3rd quarter break
- Two unexcused performance absences in the season: removal from marching band, not lettering/awards
- One unexcused contest absence: removal from marching band, not lettering/awards

If the student receives Alternative School or is suspended from school, they are not allowed to attend any band function for the duration of the punishment. These would be considered unexcused absences and would be treated as such.

If a student becomes medically unable to march, the directors will determine the course of action in regard to the student's future participation. Such factors as the severity of the injury, recovery time, time in the season, doctor's information, etc. will be considered. Please give the directors as much information as possible to facilitate their decision.

Individual needs will be addressed as they occur. This system is subject to modification by the directors.