



Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard Handbook

2024 - 2025

www.cherokeebluffband.com

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Cherokee Bluff High School Winter Guard. This handbook provides information regarding program operation, requirements for membership, student and parent expectations, rehearsal and fee schedules, as well as a contract to be signed and returned at the first rehearsal.

Please take time to read through this information carefully with your parent and/or legal guardians

What is Winter Guard?

Winter Guard is an indoor color guard activity. Unlike traditional color guard, winter guard is performed indoors, usually in a gymnasium or an indoor arena. Performances make use of recorded music rather than a live band or orchestra. Winter guard ensembles perform at judged competitions officiated by local and regional associations using criteria developed by Winter Guard International (WGI). The Cherokee Bluff Winter Guards will be performing in the Southern Association for Performance Arts (SAPA) circuit. www.sapaonline.com SAPA is a regional circuit serving Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee. The winter guard program functions as an auxiliary performance ensemble of the Cherokee Bluff High School Band. All winter guard activities will be facilitated and governed by the Cherokee Bluff Band and its Booster Organization (CBBA). The mission of the Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard program is to provide an opportunity for Cherokee Bluff color guard students to further develop their artistic and technical performance skills through the marching band off-season. Through performance, the students will also learn valuable life skills such as teamwork, self-discipline, hard work, commitment, and sportsmanship.

The Winter Guard

The Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard Program fields three competitive winter guards.

The Cadet Guard: (Inactive for 2024-2025)

The Cadet Winter Guard is designated for middle school students in grades 6-8. The Cadet program functions as a feeder program for the high school Fall and Winter guards. Students in the cadet program will compete in the SAPA regional circuit and will do a full winter guard production. The cadet program is designated to give the students a head start on high school color guard focusing on basic movement and equipment fundamentals. Equipment may include Flag, Wooden Rifle and Saber. Cadet students will have reduced rehearsal hours and performance demands in comparison to the high school guard. Students must attend Cherokee Bluff Middle School and be in good academic standing.

The JV Guard: (Inactive for 2024-2025)

The Junior Varsity Guard is a high school guard designated for beginner and intermediate color guard students. Students in the JV guard will compete in the SAPA regional circuit and will do a full winter guard production. The JV Program will focus on developing beginning and intermediate movement and equipment fundamentals. Equipment may include Flag, Wooden Rifle and Saber. Students must attend Cherokee Bluff High School and be in good academic standing.

The Varsity Guard:

The Varsity Guard is a high school guard designated for our advanced color guard students. Students in the Varsity guard will compete in the SAPA circuit and will do a full winter guard production. Students in the Varsity guard must exhibit a high degree of skill in one or more color guard performance categories. The categories can include Movement, Wooden Rifle, Saber, or Flag. The Varsity students are held to the highest performance standard for the Cherokee Bluff Guard. Students must attend Cherokee Bluff High School and be in good academic standing.

Auditions:

Winter guard auditions are held for 3 days at the conclusion of the marching band competition season. This time usually falls in November. Auditions for the high school guards are open to any Cherokee Bluff High School student who meet the extracurricular participation requirements. No prior experience is required. During the audition clinics, students will be taught both a dance and flag routine that must be performed during the audition process on the final day. The students will be placed based on the results of their performance. Students not meeting the standard will not be placed in the winter guard program.

Costs/Registration:

The Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard receives a small amount of money from the band booster association, but this amount is not nearly enough to cover the multiple expenses faced by fielding a winter guard program. Student costs will be held to the lowest level possible to effectively run the winter program. Student fees are used to cover these items:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staff Instruction- Competition Registration- Equipment Purchase (Rifle, Sabers)- Flags/Flag Design- Props and Mat Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Uniforms- Hotel for SAPA Championships (Chattanooga)- Travel expenses for Equipment Transportation
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Each student joining the Winter Guard program will need to complete the registration process at the designated registration time. A parent will need to be present at registration. At this time students and parents will need to complete a packet of paperwork which will include parent contact information, medical information, Hall County Permission forms, and a member contract.

Student Fees for 2024-2025

December	January	February	March
\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100

Payment method:

You may pay with a check, payable to CBBA (Cherokee Bluff Band Association), cash, or credit card. Installment payments can be made by mail or placed in the DropBox located in Mr. Cantrell's office. If you prefer to pay by mail, our address is:

**Cherokee Bluff Band Association
6603 Spout Springs Road
Flowery Branch, GA 30542**

Please do not let any financial issues stop you from having your student participate in the program. Fundraising activities are made available to families to help with fees and we will gladly work with you to address any financial questions/concerns you may have. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Treasurer, Amanda Mink at treasurer@cherokeebluffband.com

Student Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory for every rehearsal. We expect 100% participation and determination from everyone at all times. This is the only way we can achieve our goals as a competitive winter guard program. Familiarize yourself with the following:

- Students are expected to attend all rehearsals, camps, performances, and competitions as scheduled
- A missed rehearsal can result in a non-compete status for the next performance if a student misses important show design material or choreography. Changes and content should be expected at each rehearsal.
- **Any student missing the last rehearsal before a performance will automatically be in a non-compete status.**

- Non-compete status will be determined by the guard staff and directors
- If a student cannot attend a rehearsal the guard staff and/or band directors must be notified before the rehearsal begins.
- Before or After a missed rehearsal please submit a written note from a parent or guardian for our records.

Student Conduct:

Winter guard members are expected to maintain a high level of commitment and have a positive attitude. Everyone is expected to give 100% while at rehearsals and during performances. **Members are also expected to follow all of the rules and regulations of the Cherokee Bluff High School Band Program and the Hall County School District.**

Communication with each other should be respectful, constructive, and encouraging. When addressing any individual, instructor, director, parent, competitor, etc. you are expected to use appropriate language and tone. Treat other members as you would like to be treated. Failure to do so could result in dismissal from the organization and guard program.

Rules and Guidelines:

- We work as one big family for many hours. Therefore, do your absolute best to get along with all members.
- We would like all members of the color guard to have an enjoyable season. We will utilize your talents where we feel you will be able to perform your best. Therefore, all members of the winter guard may not be in the entire production of the competitive show.
- All rehearsals and performances are mandatory. We plan our rehearsals assuming all members will be in attendance. Birthday parties, work, babysitting, Pop Concerts etc. are not acceptable excuses for missing rehearsals.
- SAT and College visits must be done on free Saturdays. (see rehearsal calendar)

- Please remember if you miss a rehearsal, you may be written out of that section of the show. If you remain in that section of the show it is your responsibility to learn what you may have missed. The winter guard does not have time to go back and review/teach with an individual member if they miss rehearsal.
- Always wear appropriate clothing to rehearsal. Athletic tops and pants. All long hair must be pulled back into a ponytail. No jeans, jewelry or make-up. All pants should be appropriate length and not drag on the ground. If wearing shorts please wear bike shorts, exercise shorts or body tights underneath.
- No gum chewing.
- All female members must wear a sports bra at all rehearsals and performances. All male members must wear athletic or compression shorts for rehearsals and performances.
- All members should wear black on their last rehearsal of the week. This is to provide a dress rehearsal format at the end of the week.
- If you are taking medication not listed on your medical form, please inform a chaperone before rehearsal. This is very important in the event you would need medical attention.
- Always have a non-carbonated beverage with a lid for breaks.
- Please make sure all garbage is removed from the rehearsal facility at the end of each rehearsal.
- Please be open to constructive criticism. You must be able to separate friendship from professionalism.
- Absolutely no cell phones on during rehearsals. Staff members will have their phones on in case of an emergency and to play music. Parents, please do not call your child on their cell phone during rehearsal unless there is an emergency. They will be allowed to use their phone during breaks.

Weekly Rehearsal Location and Times: TBA

- During some weeks the rehearsal schedule and/or location will change. Please make sure you're reading the calendar accurately each week. In the event of a sudden change, an announcement will be made at school and parents/students will be notified

Show Days:

The performance schedule will be set at the beginning of each winter guard season. Shows will be held at area high schools and are adjudicated by the Southern Association for Performance Arts (SAPA).

A schedule for each of the competitions days will be produced on Tuesday the week of. A hard copy of the schedule will be given to each student and a pdf version will be emailed to the parents or guardians of performing members. A master schedule can be found at <http://www.sapaonline.net/events>. Just look for the show on the designated date.

Please read the schedule correctly as it will mark exactly the schedule for the day. Guard members are expected to attend ALL shows. A missing student can adversely affect the design and performance of the show.

Members are expected to remain at the show site and with the group AT ALL TIMES. Each member is expected to remain at the show site until the awards retreat is done.

Inclement Weather:

Please be prepared for all types of winter weather conditions during the winter guard season. In the event of inclement weather or the threat of poor weather, the Cherokee Bluff guard staff and parents will work in concert with the band directors to make informed decisions to protect student safety at all times. Our decisions will be based on guidelines set by the Hall County Schools weather policies. If rehearsal is canceled, students and parents will be notified accordingly.

Transportation:

Each parent is responsible for providing or arranging their student's transportation to the performance location. Parents have the option of driving their child to the performance, making arrangements with another parent, or giving their child

permission to ride with a "Designated Driver" appointed and cleared by the guard liaison and lead parents. **No student drivers allowed please.**

On show days **ALL** performing students will need to meet at the designated carpool location. **The Cherokee Bluff High School parking lot.** Cars will gather behind the lead driver and must follow closely as the group travels **DIRECTLY** to the show site.

There will be no deviations for the carpool caravan unless there is an emergency. In case of an emergency, the lead driver and guard liaison will need to be notified immediately to follow the correct safety protocols. Meeting times will be determined by the produced schedule for each performing guard that day. It is highly likely that the guard will meet at separate times. It depends on the SAPA performance schedule. For instance: If the Varsity performance time is much later in the evening they will have a later report time.

Championships:

The Southern Association for Performance Arts Regional Championships are held in Chattanooga, TN at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga's McKenzie Arena on March 29-31, 2025.

UTC McKenzie Arena
720 E 4th St
Chattanooga, TN 37403

The regional championships will consist of all of the performing guards in the SAPA regional circuit. This is a large event that will span the majority of the weekend beginning on Saturday morning and ending on Sunday afternoon. There will be two awards retreats for the event. One on Saturday night and the other on Sunday afternoon. The SAPA Winter Guard Championship will be awarded to each of the participating guards in the designated classifications.

The performance schedule for championships will be published two weeks before the event from the SAPA organization. We will then publish our own weekend schedule based off of guard performance times and award ceremonies.

Booking information will be provided once provided. Students should expect to stay overnight and return home on Sunday evening.

Championship Lodging:

Students will stay overnight in Chattanooga for the championship weekend. The hotel and lodging will be booked and arranged by the CBBA

Once these items are booked and travel information solidified, this information will be published to the parents of participating students.

Since this is an overnight trip. All of the Hall County Schools Guidelines and student rules for overnight stay will be in effect. In addition to the Hall County Schools Guidelines, students and parents will need to follow an additional layer of rules and procedures set in place by the Cherokee Bluff High School Band. These guidelines will be organized and enforced by the Head Chaperone

Students will return to Cherokee Bluff High School at the conclusion of awards on Sunday.

Parent Involvement:

Parent involvement and support is vital to the success of the Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard Program. The Cherokee Bluff Band Directors, Guard Director and Guard Liaison will all work together to organize and structure the winter guard program to make things run as smoothly as possible. There are parent roles in the winter guard program that are vital to the successful operation of the winter season. Below is the parental structure for the Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard Program. It is of important that this parental structure is followed.

General Parent Guidelines:

It is imperative for the safety of the students and the general health of the Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard Program that staff and parents follow these set guidelines.

With the size and scope of the program it's very easy for lanes to be crossed, which could lead to confusion and a breakdown in the structural design of the program.

Please follow these guidelines below:

- The parental structure of the Cherokee Bluff Winter Guard Program is a support system only and all must operate within the set structure of the CBBA and Winter Guard Handbook.
- All parents must follow the defined structure of communication. This will ensure everyone has the same information and will not create confusion. Decisions made at the top will always be made with the best interest of the students in mind.
- Parents should make every attempt to pick their children up from rehearsals or performances within 30 minutes of the ending time. Staff and chaperones cannot leave until all students have been picked up.
- Parents must refrain from interrupting and/or interfering with guard rehearsals or warm-ups. This can include: instructing students, yelling or shouting during instruction, doing "housekeeping" tasks with students during rehearsal time (unless cleared by staff), and any activity or action distracting students from rehearsal.
- On show days please do not visit the students in the back hallway/classroom staging area unless there is an emergency. Only lead parents and staff should accompany the guards in this area. The areas are usually really small and can get crowded very easily. There will be plenty of time for parents to visit with their students after their scheduled performance.
- Parents should not interfere or influence the show design in any way unless prompted or the guard staff or directors. Show design is a process and must be given a chance to take its course. The show you see at the beginning of the year could be considerably different at the end of the year. The guard staff gets feedback after every performance and will make adjustments to instruction as necessary.
- The guard staff will dictate the content and flow of rehearsals. They are professionals and will make their best judgment as to what needs to be rehearsed on any given rehearsal day.

- Please respect the winter guard staff at all times. They are adults and hired professionals by the Cherokee Bluff Band Program. They have been trained by the band directors and are cleared to teach by the Hall County Schools.
- Should issues arise with a guard staff member, please feel free to email the band director at craig.cantrell@hallco.org.

Want to Volunteer?

- Parent volunteers are a huge reason why we can field a winter guard program. Parents are needed to help fill vital roles such as: Chaperoning, Car Pool Drivers, Mat and Equipment Crew, and many others. We can always use more help. If you're interested feel free to contact the Guard Staff

Contact Information

Craig Cantrell	Band Director	<u>Craig.Cantrell@hallco.org</u>
Nelly Lopez	Guard Director	<u>Nelly.lopez58816@gmail.com</u>
Sierra Reed	Guard Instructor	<u>Sjreed2001@gmail.com</u>
Amanda Mink	CBBA Treasurer	<u>Treasurer@Cherokeebluffband.com</u>