

Leon High School

Leon Band Handbook

2026–2027



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Table of Contents

Letter to Students and Parents	4
Code of Conduct	5
Class Descriptions	6
Campus Band	6
Concert Band	6
Symphonic Band	7
Jazz Bands	8
Percussion	9
Dance Techniques	9
Grading Policy	10
Workbook Assignments/Terminology Competencies	10
Playing Tests/Auxiliary Tests	10
Listening Logs/Visual Logs	10
Transfer Activities/Improvisation Assignments	11
Performances	11
Rehearsals	11
Participation	11
Private Lessons Academy	12
Extra Credit	12
Instruments	12
School Instrument Rentals	13
Equipment and Instrument Storage	13
Placement and Challenges	14
Academic Eligibility/Ineligibility	14
Ineligible Students	14
Performing Ensembles	15
Leon High School Marching Redcoats	15
Rehearsals	16
Marching Band	16
Campus, Concert, and Symphonic Bands	16
Attendance Policy	17

Unexcused Absence from Rehearsal	17
Excused Absence from Rehearsal	18
Tardy to Rehearsal or Performance	18
Absence from Performance	18
Financial Obligations	19
General Fee	19
Supplemental Fees	19
Dress Code and Uniforms	21
Marching Rehearsal	21
Marching Performances	21
Concert Attire	21
Music Library	22
Honor Bands, Festivals, and Other Activities	22
Travel and Trips	23
Band Calendar	24
Band Booster Organization	24
Important Contact Information	24
Student Leadership Descriptions	25
Shared Leadership Responsibilities	25
Band Captain	25
Drum Major	26
Brass, Woodwind, Percussion, and Auxiliary Captains	26
Section Leaders	27
Music Manager	27
Equipment Manager	28
Social Media Manager	28
2026-2027 Marching Redcoats Leadership Team	29
Band Council	29
Acronyms and Abbreviations	30

Letter to Students and Parents

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Leon High School (LHS) band program! Leon Band has worked hard to establish a level of excellence and tradition. This is a program dedicated to the success of students and their continued growth, not only as high school students but also as young adults.

It is a goal of the LHS band program for students to perform at the highest caliber socially, physically, mentally, personally, and musically. We work to cultivate not only students' musical abilities but teach students the essential life skills that are needed to be successful post-graduation.

Annually, qualified band members from Leon represent us at community events, parades, Tri-State Honors Band, Tri-State Honor Jazz Band, Festival of Winds Honor Band, Big Bend All-District Bend Honor Band, Florida Bandmasters Association (FBA) All-State Band, and FBA Solo and Ensemble, as well as concert and state music performance assessments (MPAs) and other similarly prestigious events.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide valuable information about the band program at LHS. This year, we hope to continue our tradition of excellence, in the quest for an even higher level of musical standards. The quality of the program will be determined by your individual effort and dedication to the program.

Furthermore, your commitment to the band will provide you with opportunities not available to many students.

To consistently achieve and maintain the high standard of excellence desired by this organization, members should familiarize themselves with the regulations, procedures, and traditions of Leon Band that are included in this handbook.

Please contact the Band Director if a topic not covered in the handbook should arise or if you have any questions about the handbook.

Musically Yours,

Lee Commander

Lee Commander
Director of Bands

Code of Conduct

All band students are responsible for the reading and adherence to the Leon County Schools (LCS) Code of Student Conduct, the LHS Student Rules and Regulations, and the LHS Band Handbook.

Basic expectations:

- Keep the band facility neat, orderly, and free of litter. Personal items are welcome to be left in a locker, but the floor should be free of clutter and trash.
- For security reasons, students are expected to enter using the hallway-accessible door.
- Students are expected to enter the band room and begin setting up their station to begin learning.
- There is to be no talking during rehearsal. Students with questions should raise their hands. Do not distract others with inappropriate behavior.
- Students are expected to attend *all rehearsals and performances* and be *on time*, with a positive attitude, and be prepared. Practice regularly at home (it is best to practice in short, productive sessions vs. long “cram-sessions”).
- Students are expected to keep their instrument and equipment in performance condition. Keep up with and be responsible for the music and equipment issued to you. Come to class with your instrument or sticks/mallets, music, pencil (on music stand), and all accessories needed for class.
- Any instrument or equipment not belonging to or specifically assigned to you is strictly off limits. If it is not yours, DO NOT touch it.
- Every student is given a locker to keep his or her instrument in. However, it is expected that all students will keep their lockers neat in appearance. Students are expected to keep their instruments safe by locking their lockers. Please lock your lockers to help reduce missing objects.
- All books given to students should be kept in a safe place, be kept in good condition, and returned in a workable condition for the next year.

Respect everyone and everything.

You are responsible for your own actions.

Class Descriptions

Campus Band

Campus Band is a non-auditioned ensemble class offered at LHS that is open to any student in the band who wants to learn a wind instrument or plays a wind instrument and is interested in continuing their knowledge and skills on their instrument.

Students who join the class do not need prerequisite knowledge, will learn to play and read music in an ensemble setting, and build knowledge and skills on their instrument.

All students are required to have an instrument to play in class daily. While there are some school-owned instruments (see [School Instrument Rentals](#) for more details), it is suggested that students rent or own their own instruments.

All students in this class will be required to perform in at least three concerts a year: one in the fall, one in the spring, and the Performing Arts Winter Showcase (PAWS).

Campus Band is considered a co-curricular course per state course descriptions; therefore, these students will have selected after school rehearsals required of them. Students are expected to be available for all such rehearsals.

Students who are enrolled are required to participate in Solo and Ensemble held in April. The entry fees are covered for one performance per student. Additional events are encouraged because additional participation helps strengthen musical skills; however, the additional fees are not covered through the program. These students will be expected to cover their own minimal entry fee.

Students are strongly encouraged to receive private lessons. Private lessons offer students a chance to receive individual instruction on their instrument that will only improve their performance. Even if students are only able to receive lessons every other week or once a month, it is still advised. For a list of private instructors in the area, please speak to Mr. Newson.

Concert Band

Concert Band is an auditioned ensemble class offered at LHS that is open to any student in the band who plays a wind instrument and is interested in continuing their knowledge and skills on their instrument.

Students who join the class are expected to have some background knowledge of their instrument and be willing to work toward advancing their musical knowledge.

All students are required to have an instrument to play in class daily. While there are some school-owned instruments (see [School Instrument Rentals](#) for more details), it is suggested that students rent or own their own instruments.

All students in this class will be required to perform in at least four concerts a year: one in the fall, one in the spring, and the Performing Arts Winter Showcase (PAWS). Additionally, they will perform in District 3 Concert MPA.

Concert Band is considered a co-curricular course per state course descriptions; therefore, these students will have selected after school rehearsals required of them. Students are expected to be available for all such rehearsals.

Students who are enrolled are required to participate in Solo and Ensemble held in April. The entry fees are covered for one performance per student. Additional events are encouraged because additional participation helps strengthen musical skills; however, the additional fees are not covered through the program. These students will be expected to cover their own minimal entry fee.

Students are strongly encouraged to receive private lessons. Private lessons offer students a chance to receive individual instruction on their instrument that will only improve their performance. Even if students are only able to receive lessons every other week or once a month, it is still advised. For a list of private instructors in the area, please speak to Mr. Newson.

Symphonic Band

Symphonic Band is an auditioned ensemble class offered at LHS that is open to any student in the band who plays a wind instrument and is interested in continuing their knowledge and skills on their instrument.

Students who join the class are expected to have some background knowledge of their instrument and be willing to work toward advancing their musical knowledge.

All students are required to have an instrument to play in class daily. While there are some school-owned instruments (see [School Instrument Rentals](#) for more details), it is suggested that students rent or own their own instruments.

All students in this class will be required to perform in at least four concerts a year: one in the fall, one in the spring, and PAWS. Additionally, they will perform in District 3 Concert MPA. If the band qualifies for State Concert MPA, students will also be expected to attend that performance as well.

Symphonic Band is considered a co-curricular course per state course descriptions; therefore, these students will have selected after school rehearsals required of them. Students are expected to be available for all such rehearsals.

Students who are enrolled are required to participate in Solo and Ensemble held in February. The entry fees are covered for one performance per student. Additional events are encouraged because additional participation helps strengthen musical

skills; however, the additional fees are not covered through the program. These students will be expected to cover their own minimal entry fee.

Students enrolled in Symphonic Band will additionally be required to audition for the District 3 Big Bend All-District Band.

Students are strongly encouraged to receive private lessons. Private lessons offer students a chance to receive individual instruction on their instrument that will only improve their performance. Even if students are only able to receive lessons every other week or once a month, it is still advised. For a list of private instructors in the area, please speak to Mr. Newson.

Jazz Bands

Jazz Band is a class offered at LHS that is open to any student in the band who plays an instrument and is interested in continuing their knowledge and skills on their instrument.

Students who join the class are expected to have some background knowledge of their instrument and be willing to work toward advancing their musical knowledge.

All students are required to have an instrument to play in class daily. While there are some school-owned instruments (see [School Instrument Rentals](#) for more details), it is suggested that students rent or own their own instruments.

All students in this class will be required to perform in at least four concerts a year: one in the fall, one in the spring, and PAWS. Additionally, they will perform in District 3 Jazz MPA.

Jazz Band is considered a co-curricular course per state course descriptions; therefore, these students will have selected after school rehearsals required of them. Students are expected to be available for all such rehearsals.

Students are strongly encouraged to receive private lessons. Private lessons offer students a chance to receive individual instruction on their instrument that will only improve their performance. Even if students are only able to receive lessons every other week or once a month, it is still advised. For a list of private instructors in the area, please speak to Mr. Newson.

Percussion

The Percussion class is a class offered at LHS specifically for students who wish to play or are currently playing percussion instruments.

Students enrolled in Percussion will learn to play proficiently on mallet instruments, marching equipment, auxiliary percussion, and modern percussion elements.

Students will be required to attend Solo and Ensemble in at least one percussion ensemble piece and one percussion solo piece. Pieces will be assigned by Mr. Commander and Mr. Michael Panzarino, Percussion Director.

Just as a wind musician must have their instrument, percussion students must also have their sticks for music-making to occur. Students are advised to have their own stick bag in which to keep their materials. There will be space provided in the band room for these items.

Students are strongly encouraged to receive private lessons. Private lessons offer students a chance to receive individual instruction on their instrument that will only improve their performance. Even if students are only able to receive lessons every other week or once a month, it is still advised. For a list of private instructors in the area, please speak to Mr. Panzarino.

Dance Techniques

The Dance Techniques class is a class designed specifically for students who participate in the Leonettes and the Scarlet Battalion. Students who are enrolled in this class are required to participate in the Marching Redcoats throughout the year.

Students enrolled in Dance Techniques will develop proficiency in dance techniques, dance terminology, and auxiliary equipment.

Students will be required to attend Solo and Ensemble in at least one ensemble and one solo. Students will be permitted to select their own solo music.

Students who practice their technique throughout the year are likely to develop faster and have less problems throughout the year.

Students are strongly encouraged to receive private lessons. Private lessons offer students a chance to receive individual instruction on their instrument that will only improve their performance. Even if students are only able to receive lessons every other week or once a month, it is still advised. For a list of private instructors in the area, please speak to Mr. Commander.

Grading Policy

Students will adhere to the following grading policy:

Each quarter all students will be graded based on this criteria:

- Performances: 30%
- In-class Assessments: 25%
- Transfer Activities/Listening Logs: 15%
- Rehearsals: 15%
- Class Participation: 15%

The nine (9)-weeks grade will be determined by the student's percentage:

- A = 90% and above
- B = 80–89%
- C = 70–79%
- D = 60–69%
- F = 59% and below

Workbook Assignments/Terminology Competencies

Students in the concert bands will be given a workbook of material that is covered in great detail in class. Written work may include, but are not limited to rhythmic dictation, matching, multiple choice, short response, etc.

Written tests will be given in all classes as supplemental work to help solidify learning of content.

Playing Tests/Auxiliary Tests

Students should be prepared to complete a playing test at least once per nine (9) weeks. Playing test information will be given to students with at least one (1) week of preparatory time.

Listening Logs/Visual Logs

Listening logs allow an objective means for students to be graded. These listening logs are arguably one of the most important means of grading. They offer direct insight into what students do and do not know. This allows instruction to be modified so that all students achieve a higher level of success as individuals and as a collective body.

Transfer Activities/Improvisation Assignments

Students will be challenged to link content learned in the class to other areas of learning. These activities are designed to help process learned material and improve in all areas of learning.

Improvisation is a state standard for jazz. All students in Jazz Band will be expected to improvise throughout the course of the year.

Performances

Performances are the milestones of any performing arts class. Just as with any team sport, it is imperative that all students attend all performances. Students are expected to attend ALL football games, parades, concerts, or special events. For a student to be excused from a performance, they will need to complete the *Request for Absence* form as described in the [Attendance Policy](#).

Rehearsals

For our students to perform at the highest level possible, students are expected to be present for all after school rehearsals. Infractions on dress code or tardiness will result in a deduction on the student's grade for that week.

Participation

Students are eligible to receive five (5) participation points per day for every day of class. If a student decides to talk, be disruptive, or not play, points will be deducted from their participation points for that day. If a student does not bring their instrument or is unable to play on their instrument (e.g., broken reed, etc.), participation points will be deducted from their daily participation grade. If a student's instrument is in the shop for maintenance, then an alternate assignment will be given. A total of 25 points is available per week.

Private Lessons Academy

Leon Band is thrilled to be able to offer a Private Lessons Academy for students who wish to cultivate and advance their musical abilities.

Throughout the year, professionals in the field will be available after school to work with students in small settings or one-on-one. It is our hope that students will capitalize on these opportunities to advance their music making.

Additionally, students who have their own private instructors are welcome to hold their lessons at Leon High School. Lessons must be scheduled after the conclusion of the 6 period bell, which is 1:55 p.m. Please ask Mr. Newson for additional information regarding the Private Lessons Academy.

Extra Credit

All students are expected to complete the work assigned to them during class and throughout the school year. Although band is a fun class, it is still a class, and it is expected that work will be completed with the same seriousness as other subjects. Extra credit will be allotted to students who attend musical events external to Leon Band as indicated by the director.

Instruments

Students are expected to have their instruments ready for class daily. Failure to have their instrument will result in a loss of participation points for the day.

There are school-owned instruments available for loan. Students who plan on using a school-owned instrument will be given an instrument in working condition. Students who borrow an instrument should return the instrument in the working condition in which they received it. Failure to do so might result in the student incurring additional fees.

Students are encouraged to buy or rent their own instruments to have more effective long-term progress. Available music stores for instrument rentals include Music Masters and Playground Music.

Students are responsible for their own reeds, valve oil, pencil, cork grease, neck straps, etc. It is recommended that students use Music Masters for their equipment needs.

Instrument repairs of LHS-owned instruments are performed by Playground Music. This company will come to the school and repair broken instruments. Students with personally-owned instruments must provide their own payment for instrument repairs. Many people use Music Masters for personal repairs, though both options are available. It is recommended that repairs be performed at the location of the rented instrument (e.g., if you rented your instrument through Music Masters, have Music Masters repair your instrument).

School Instrument Rentals

All school-owned instruments must be checked out at the beginning of the year by filling out an *Instrument Rental/Liability* form. Once issued, the instrument becomes the responsibility of the student for proper care, maintenance, and protection from damage or theft. If a student who is using a school-owned instrument damages the instrument, repairs for the damage are covered by the cost they put down on their rental. Any damages incurred on the instrument will be charged to the student's account.

Equipment and Instrument Storage

Every student in the band will be given a locker to store his or her instrument in the band room. Some students with similar instruments will be asked to share their lockers because of space limitations. Locks for lockers are available upon request. It is expected that students who request locks will keep them locked. No personal locks are permitted.

These lockers DO have locking capabilities on them; therefore, ANYTHING left unlocked in the band room will be left at the risk of the student. While Leon Band is considered to have some of the finest students in the school, it is simply safer to not leave items unlocked in this space.

Neither Mr. Commander, Mr. Newson, nor LHS is responsible for any lost or stolen property.

Placement and Challenges

Seating auditions for Symphonic Band will occur at the end of each school year in preparation for the upcoming school year. Students in all ensembles will consistently rotate parts, and will change seats accordingly. Therefore, no chair placement challenges will occur throughout the year.

Auditions for principal players occur during Leon Bands Auditions at the end of each academic year. These assignments are final upon the Concert Bands list being released.

Academic Eligibility/Ineligibility

LCS, FBA, and the Florida School Music Association (FSMA) set forth for eligibility in all band functions. These rules require that:

ALL STUDENTS MAINTAIN AT LEAST A 2.0 UNWEIGHTED GPA
EACH 9 WEEKS AND HAVE NO MORE THAN ONE DISCIPLINARY
REFERRAL PER SEMESTER.

Band students who fail to meet this standard must meet with Mr. Commander to determine the status of their participation with the ensemble.

Students in Leon Band are expected to live up to the high standards of professionalism and moral dignity throughout their high school career. Moreover, it is then expected that few to no meetings are held throughout the year because of academic or behavioral ineligibilities.

Ineligible Students

Students who do not meet the eligibility requirements above will be allowed to participate in rehearsals. However, academic ineligibility will result in an academic probation within Leon Band. Students on academic probation will receive an *Academic Probation* form and need to earn the ability to perform for that week from their teachers.

Students who receive excessive discipline referrals (e.g., more than one [1]) will be discussed with administration and recommended for dismissal from Leon Band.

Students who are removed from band functions will not be eligible for leadership positions in the following year.

Performing Ensembles

Leon High School Marching Redcoats

The LHS Marching Redcoats consists of all students from all three Wind Bands, Percussion, and Dance Techniques Classes. While a majority of the work for the marching band occurs during the fall, it is possible for an additional performance to occur in the spring.

Students in this ensemble must have at least a 2.0 weighted GPA each quarter and must not have more than one (1) disciplinary referral. Grades and referrals will be checked every progress report. Should a student no longer meet the requirements of the ensemble, a meeting will be held with Mr. Commander to determine the additional requirements needed to maintain activity with the ensemble.

This ensemble performs at ALL home football games, MOST away football games, up to one competition or festival, the FBA Marching Band MPA, and at least two parades (i.e., Veteran's Day and Springtime Tallahassee). Additional activities may be added as seen fit.

There is no audition to be a member of the Marching Redcoats. However, percussionists will audition for parts to play during the season. Additionally, Auxiliary members will audition for spots on the team.

Rehearsals and performances for the Marching Redcoats are as follows:

- Tuesdays: 6:00–8:30 p.m.
- Thursdays (no-game weeks): 6:00–8:30 p.m.
- Game Days (typically Fridays): 3:00–5:00 p.m. followed by football game
- Select Saturdays: Varies

Additional sectionals or rehearsals may be added as deemed necessary by the band director.

Students will be given a detailed schedule for every football game, competition, and/or assessment.

Students will be involved in Band Conditioning Week to prepare for the upcoming marching season.

Band Conditioning Week: August 14-21, 2026

On Friday (8/14), Tuesday (8/18), Thursday (8/20) and Friday (8/21), students will have food provided to them beginning at 2:30 p.m. Rehearsal will begin at 3:00 p.m.

and conclude at 7:30 p.m. Each day will count for a rehearsal grade for the nine (9)-weeks.

Rehearsals

Rehearsal expectations are still being negotiated and will be communicated to parents. These policies are expected to change throughout the year. The following is an example of a typical rehearsal schedule.

As a co-curricular class, students are expected to be present at ALL rehearsals deemed necessary by the band director. It is expected that doctor's appointments, family gatherings, and other personal requirements will not be held at these times. In an activity such as band, any and every absence affects the remaining members of the group. See [Attendance Policy](#) for additional information.

Marching Band

Marching band rehearsals are as follows:

- *Tuesdays: 6:00–8:30 p.m. on the band practice field*
- *Thursdays (no-game weeks): 6:00–8:30 p.m. on the band practice field*
- *Game Days (typically Fridays): 3:00–5:00 p.m. on the band practice field followed by football game*

Additional sectionals may be added. Sectionals will be announced one (1) week before sectional rehearsal. Every attempt will be made to schedule sectionals around pre-existing appointments.

Between the conclusion of school and beginning of practice, the band room will implement some quiet time for students to complete their work on their chromebook.

*Students are welcome to wait in the band room for rehearsal to start but, **MUST** be in the band room, band hallway, with a different teacher or on the bus ramp prior to the start of rehearsal. Students are **NOT** permitted to walk the halls or campus during that time.*

Campus, Concert, and Symphonic Bands

Depending on the ensemble, band members will be asked to participate in after-school sectionals and rehearsals on selected days. The schedule of these rehearsals can be found on the band calendar at marchingredcoats.com.

Attendance Policy

All band members are expected and required to attend all rehearsals and performances. Because band is a performance-based class, rehearsals and performances are an integral part of the curriculum and of the overall success of the program. Students must be on time and properly dressed for all band functions.

Students who are not in attendance at any rehearsal will receive a zero (0) for that assignment unless the absence is excused PRIOR to rehearsal. Students who need to miss rehearsal FOR ANY REASON MUST complete a *Request for Absence* form one week before the absence occurs. Mr. Commander will then review the form and determine if the absence will be excused or unexcused. Forms not turned in prior to the one-week deadline will automatically be marked unexcused. Exceptions will be made in situations of extreme emergency or sudden sickness. It is understood that in these situations, an email will be sent to Mr. Commander within 24 hours of the absence and that a *Request for Absence* form will be completed retroactively. Students who fail to complete the *Request for Absence* form within one (1) school day of the last absence will be marked unexcused.

The same policy will be in place for all performances, including football games, marching band competitions, parades, and Rehearse-a-Thon.

Students who are tardy to a rehearsal or an event as well as students who have a dress-code infraction will receive a deduction in their grade for that event.

Unexcused Absence from Rehearsal

Students who have an unexcused absence for the week will be sidelined for the pregame and halftime performances that week. They will be expected to attend the football game and perform in the stands.

Unacceptable reasons to miss rehearsal are:

- Birthday Events
- Saturday school
- Detention
- Family visits
- Hair appointments
- Cosmetology appointments
- Doctor's appointments (except in case of sudden sickness)
- Rides

Note: The student is responsible for working out all rides and doctor's appointments around the marching band schedule. Mr. Commander will wait until all students have been picked up on any day when students are required to be present.

Excused Absence from Rehearsal

Absences may be excused for:

- Religious ceremonies or holidays
- College visits
- Sudden sickness
- Hospitalization
- Other situation deemed appropriate by the Band Director

Note: Mr. Commander reserves the right to disapprove any excuse depending on when the absence occurs in the season.

Tardy to Rehearsal or Performance

Once a student accumulates three (3) unexcused tardies, they will be sidelined for the week they incur the third (3rd) unexcused tardy, after which time the policy restarts.

Acceptable reasons to be tardy to be rehearsal are:

- Making up a test
- Parent-teacher conference
- Anything else deemed appropriate by the Band Director

Unacceptable reasons to be tardy for rehearsal are:

- Gathering equipment
- Filling up water cart
- Talking with friends
- Using the restroom
- Detention
- Getting dressed for rehearsal

Note: There is plenty of time for students to be ready for rehearsal before it begins. It is the student's responsibility to be on the field in their attendance block set ready to stretch with equipment and dressed appropriately by the start of each rehearsal, which will begin with the second whistle given by the Drum Major.

Absence from Performance

Missing a performance of any kind (e.g., parade, football game, competition, FBA) will result in a zero (0) for the grade for that performance.

Absences may be considered excused or unexcused depending on the nature of the absence. Regardless of the nature of the absence, a *Request for Absence* form MUST be completed.

Financial Obligations

General Fee

The annual cost of running a modern-day band program is in excess of \$40,000. Because of this number, all students involved in Leon Band are expected to pay a band fee. This year, **the total due for the 2026-2027 Leon Band season is \$250.**

While this amount might seem alarming, be assured that 100 percent of the money is going back to directly influence the students. Your fee will pay for:

- Transportation
- End of the year awards
- Uniform alterations (concert shirts)
- Food for students (at select events)
- Assessment fees
- Coolers
- Bags

Options for paying fees are outlined on the [Leon Band website](#).

Supplemental Fees

Members of the Scarlet Battalion (i.e., color guard) and Leonettes will be assessed a supplemental fee of \$100 their first year on the team to purchase their uniform items. Each supplemental year, members will only pay for their items they need or have outgrown. They will pay for these items a la carte. There may also be additional fees for attendance at the required competitions.

Throughout the year, there will be some fees and expenses specific to Band. Some of these expenses are:

- **Spirit Night/Relay shirt/section items**
 - **Cost:** Approximately \$10–\$25
 - These would only be required for students participating or those who desire the product. These are not required for all members.
- **Standard supplies (e.g., reeds, oil, cork grease, sticks, etc.)**
 - **Cost:** Varies (based on item needed)
 - If asked, Mr. Commander can get instrument needs; however, he is not guaranteed to have them in stock. It is the student's responsibility to have their materials and supplies needed.

- **FBA Fees for Solo and Ensemble**
 - **Cost:** Varies (cost is set by FBA each year)
 - All students in the Percussion, Dance Techniques, and Band classes are **REQUIRED** to participate in at least one event. Leon Band will cover the cost of **ONE** event. Fees for any additional events will need to be covered by the student. Should a student lack preparation for their event prior to attending or choose not to attend, they will need to reimburse Leon Band for the fee.
- **Pictures**
 - **Cost:** Varies
 - Pictures are taken during the Spring Semester for both marching and concert seasons. Should a family wish to purchase pictures, options will be available.
- **Trips**
 - **Cost:** Varies
 - This cost would be for special field trips, food at competitions, food at football games, etc. The amount of money provided for these events is at the discretion of the family.

Additional expenses may be added.

If any student has financial issues, they should speak to Mr. Commander so that a solution can be found. A student's participation in band will never be in jeopardy because of a financial hardship. In most cases, an option is available for families who need help.

Dress Code and Uniforms

Marching Rehearsal

Due to the intense weather conditions in Florida, it is extremely necessary for all students to adhere to the following dress code for marching rehearsals. The dress code is in place as a matter of safety and precaution for students!

- No jeans
- Tennis shoes only – Flip-flops, Crocs, toe shoes, bare feet, socks, ballet slippers, etc., are NOT allowed
- No large or dangling jewelry
- No cell phones allowed on the field (these may be left on the sideline)
- No items in pockets
- Sunscreen is a must

Marching Performances

- School-issued marching uniform
- Marching shoes
- Gloves
- LONG WHITE socks – **No additional color should be visible**
- No jewelry, including earrings
- Hair must be in ponytail and be able to put in shako
- No nail polish
- Auxiliary will have uniform hair styles and make-up

Concert Attire

- School-issued black tuxedo shirt (for MPA band)
 - Must be tucked in
 - No ties
- Black PANTS of student's choice
- Black belt
- Black closed-toe shoes
- Black socks, or stockings.
 - Ankles should not be seen.
- No additional medals may be worn
- Jewelry is admissible as long as it is tasteful

Music Library

The music in the Music Library consists of music for band, small ensembles, and soloists. Band members may check out music by talking to the Band Director. The Music Library is off limits to all band members other than the Music Manager, Utility Officers, Band Captain, and Drum Majors. Each student will be issued a section folder for concert band. The students are not to share music or trade or assign parts. Each student is responsible for the care and safekeeping of their music. Please do not tear, fold, or make excessive marks to the concert band music, and remember to always use pencils on the music, never ink. Students should not take music out of the folder but rather ask the Music Manager for a copy. Students should allow 24 hours for the Music Manager to make copies or requested music.

Honor Bands, Festivals, and Other Activities

Students are encouraged to audition for honor bands and festivals. These external musical activities will further develop current playing abilities and inspire students in ways that playing within a normal musical day cannot. They allow students a chance to work with some of the most musically brilliant minds of our time and some of the best musicians throughout the state.

Some examples of honor bands and festivals are:

- *All-State Concert and Symphonic Bands (Tampa, FL)
- All-State Honor Bands (Tampa, FL)
- *Big Bend All-District Band (Leon County)
- *Big Bend All-District Jazz Band (Leon County)
- Tri-State Band and Conducting Festival (Tallahassee, FL)
- Festival of Winds (Tampa, FL)
- Florida State University (FSU) Summer Music Camps (Tallahassee, FL)
- District 3 FBA Solo and Ensemble (Leon County)
- *State FBA Solo and Ensemble (Various)

**Indicates the band or festival is audition-based*

Information about honor bands will be made available to students closer to the time of the events.

Travel and Trips

The band travels a great deal! Some special regulations are necessary for this type of activity.

1. Chaperones and band officers are to be obeyed and treated with respect.
2. Proper behavior is expected when on a school-sponsored trip. The LCS Code of Student Conduct will be observed at all times.
3. Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco products, or narcotics is forbidden. These matters will be turned over to legal authorities and/or the appropriate school administrator. This is a no tolerance policy. Students who violate this rule will be removed from the program and brought up for reassignment.
4. Complete regulation uniform should be worn when in public unless otherwise stated by the Band Director.
5. Usual bus rules apply. Horseplay, screaming, or electronic devices without headphones are not permitted.
6. Conduct of band members in public eating-places should be subdued, respectful, and courteous.
7. No public displays of affection (PDA) while on band trips or in uniform.
8. Trips very rarely include substantial amounts of provided food. Students should plan on bringing money to buy food.
9. All students must travel to and from band events on the band bus (unless otherwise noted). Any student who needs to depart from a band event with their parent or guardian should submit a request to Mr. Commander via signed, hand-written note at least one (1) week before the event. Students will only be released to the adult who has their photo identification.
10. Students are responsible for their own equipment, music, and instruments. If they do not make sure their instrument is ready to be loaded by the loading crew, it will not go. Students will receive an itinerary of activities and trips and are responsible for knowing departure times.
11. Any illness or injury should be reported to a chaperone and to the Band Director immediately, no matter how unimportant it may seem at the time.
12. Upon arriving at a destination, students should remain seated until instructed to unload by a chaperone or the Band Director.
13. Return times are always included on the trip information sheets. We make every effort to keep to the schedule. Make arrangements to have a ride waiting for you when we arrive back at school.

Band Calendar

The Band Calendar shall be the official document of all band dates and activities. Because of the diversity of ensembles that Leon Band has, not all students will be required to attend all events. Be aware that some events will change due to conflicts that arise. Mr. Commander will do his very best to make sure that all additions or changes to the calendar are made known as early as possible.

The official Band Calendar is located on the [Leon Band website](#).

Band Booster Organization

The Leon Band Booster Association is a group of band parents dedicated to furthering the success of Leon Band. Band parents work each year as a support group for the students in Leon Band. This group does many great things throughout the year to ensure that the needs of the students are met. The group helps organize fundraising activities, work concession stands, host silent auctions, and other events that raise the money needed for various functions. They also produce the chaperones needed to accompany the students to festivals, competitions, All-State, All-District, and other functions. ALL parents are encouraged to attend meetings (see the Band Calendar for dates) and to sign up for various volunteer activities or other contributions. WE NEED YOUR HELP! If you have any questions on how you can get involved please talk to our Band Booster Volunteer Coordinator, Mrs. Sonja Carter.

Important Contact Information

Mr. Commander, Director of Bands
commanderl@leonschools.net

Mr. Newson, Associate Director of Bands
newsonl@leonschools.net

Hanna Robinson, Leon Band Booster President
marchingredcoats@gmail.com

Sonja Carter, Leon Band Booster Volunteer Coordinator
leonmarchingredcoatsvolunteer@gmail.com

Student Leadership Descriptions

Shared Leadership Responsibilities

Several things are required by all members of the leadership team, regardless of title:

- Attending all weekly leadership meetings throughout the marching season
- Maintaining a positive environment during all rehearsals and football games
- Maintaining a positive image for all band students as the image of Leon Band year-round
- Acting as a musical and behavioral role model for other band students
- Assisting in cleanup of rehearsal spaces

Band Captain

The Band Captain is the top student leader in the Redcoat family. He/she must be a senior in Leon Band and must have been in the band for three (3) years prior.

He/she should always be at the forefront of positive behavior and musical accomplishments. The Band Captain shall sit as a member of the Band Council and will be responsible for:

- Serving as the official delegate for any band-related function
- Working to resolve conflicts among leadership and band members
- Being the official liaison between leadership and staff
- Supervising all members of leadership throughout the course of the year
- Adding additional support and services to any member of the leadership team who needs assistance.
- Helping maintain rehearsal etiquette on and off the field
- Holding weekly Band Council meetings throughout marching season
- Holding weekly leadership team meetings throughout the course of the marching season; other meetings may be called throughout the year as necessary
- Helping lead daily stretches
- Collecting attendance from section leaders for each rehearsal and performance during marching season
- Serving as a bus captain
- Maintaining the band Instagram with relevant information and updates, OR delegating that responsibility to another member of council
- Performing additional duties, as assigned by the Band Director
- Acting as the utmost example of a student leader, in all regards

Drum Major

The Drum Major will be a sophomore, junior, or senior in Leon Band with an outstanding musical, academic, and personal record at LHS. They will unofficially serve as the face of the Marching Redcoats, shall be a member of the Band Council, and will be responsible for:

- Conducting all elements of music during football season
- Maintaining a positive environment during all rehearsals and football games
- Maintaining a positive image for all band students as the image of Leon Band
- Assisting section leaders in musical decision and instruction for students, including musical sectionals (if asked)
- Supervising all section leaders throughout the course of the year
- Attending weekly Band Leadership AND Council meetings
- Helping lead daily stretches
- Serving as a bus captain
- Helping set up the podiums and sound system before rehearsals

Brass, Woodwind, Percussion, and Auxiliary Captains

The Brass, Woodwind, Percussion, and Auxiliary Captains shall be sophomores, juniors, or seniors in Leon Band with an outstanding sense of organization and dedication to the band. They will serve as members of the Band Council and will be responsible for:

- Helping ensure that attendance is taken at ALL practices and performances
- Distributing information to the leadership team when asked
- Helping create a bus list for football games and generate attendance lists for those events
- Helping with the distribution of lockers and codes
- Serving as the official delegate for any band-related function should the Band Captain be unable to attend
- Supervising all section leaders and equipment managers throughout the course of the year
- Helping lead daily stretches
- Attending weekly Band Leadership AND Council meetings

Section Leaders

Section Leaders shall be outstanding members of Leon Band who continue to go to great lengths to ensure the longevity of the band program on a consistent basis.

They are responsible for:

- Teaching marching techniques to section members
- Taking attendance for their respective sections and returning the attendance sheet to the Band Captain at every practice, game, and special event
- Ensuring the musical integrity of their respective sections throughout the course of the year, including concert season
- Ensuring the marching integrity of their respective sections throughout the course of the season
- Creating a healthy and safe working environment for new and returning members consistently throughout the year
- Being the first line of communication for all negative interactions within their respective sections and being willing to work with other sections leaders to resolve issues across sections
- Ensuring their respective sections are prepared for all rehearsals and performances throughout the year
- Willing to schedule sectionals where needed throughout the season
- Attending weekly Band Leadership meetings
- Serving as an assistant equipment manager, when necessary
- Communicating with section to spread information and resolve issues

If there is an assistant section leader, the head section leader delegates responsibilities as necessary.

Music Manager

The Music Manager shall be a sophomore, junior, or senior in Leon Band who exhibits outstanding music and leadership qualities. He/she shall be responsible for:

- **Generating copies of all halftime and stand tune music throughout the season**
- Organizing stand tune flip-folders for each wind player and making sure each folder has all necessary music
- Generating copies of coordinate sheets and drill charts for students, staff, and leadership throughout the course of the season
- Ensuring the organization and cleanliness of the music library at all times
- Accepting the help of other members of leadership as a means to decrease the workload
- Maintaining the Solo and Ensemble music library, and updating the catalogue when necessary

Equipment Manager

The Equipment Manager shall be a sophomore, junior, or senior in Leon Band who exhibits outstanding leadership qualities. He/she is responsible for:

- Ensuring proper care and maintenance of all equipment used throughout the year
- Coordinating appropriate set up for the start of all rehearsals (e.g., podiums, ladders, speakers, props, field markers, ice and water, etc.)
- Coordinating appropriate clean up for the end of all events, and making sure all equipment has been put in its proper place after every rehearsal and performance
- Ensuring the organization and cleanliness of the band room and practice rooms at all times
- Coordinating a loading team for all off-site performances throughout the year
- Assisting the Band Director in maintaining accurate inventory of band instruments and equipment throughout the course of the year, including concert season.
- Helping issue school-owned instruments to students and maintaining rental contracts
- Accepting the help of the other members of leadership as a means to decrease the workload

Media Manager

This position shall be an additional title to be appointed to someone who is already on the Band Council. The Social Media Manager is responsible for the Leon Band Instagram page and shall:

- Post weekly updates of upcoming rehearsals and events
- Post detailed information for upcoming events and performances
- Share pictures from previous performances and promote upcoming ones
- Use social media to perform other duties, as deemed necessary/beneficial, in a manner that represents the Leon Band online in a positive manner

2026-2027 Leon High School Marching Redcoats

Leadership Team

***Band Captain:** Oliver Ruddell

***Drum Majors:** Finley Rodgers, Taylor Ard, Xander Douty

***Woodwind Captain:** Haley Steele

***Brass Captain:** Kai Murphy

***Percussion Captain:** Evan Butler

***Auxiliary Captain:** Kyndal Wallace

***Media Manager:** Zoey Westbrook

Flute Section Leader: Owen Shellahammer, Jahlani Raven

Clarinet Section Leaders: Alexa Gonzalez

Saxophone Section Leaders: Cameron Moret, Collin Hines

High Brass Section Leaders: Nate McNamara

Assistant High Brass Section Leader: Sebastian Reyes

Trombone/Euphonium Section Leader: Malik Firley

Assistant Trombone/Euphonium Section Leader: Rithick Sasikumar

Tuba Section Leader: Zach Berrien

Percussion Section Leaders: Ryan Damm, Joey Carter

Dance Section Leader: Siara Brent

Color Guard Section Leader: Baia Terraccianno

Assistant Color Guard Section Leader: Jewel Fernandez

Music Managers: Audrey Fendle (Lead), McKenzie Studley, Aaron Robinson

Equipment Managers: Jorgina Diez (Lead), Oliver Tillery (Percussion Specialist), Eloni Barkley (Guard Specialist), Brayden Whalley, Alisea King, Haleigh-Joy Edwards, Titus Highman

Uniform Managers: Julia Oliver (Lead), Ceila Flores, Ella Talabesky-Sonkin (Guard Specialist), Jackson Doyle

*Denotes Council

Acronyms and Abbreviations

This is a list of acronyms and abbreviations used in the Leon Band Handbook and in Leon Band forms.

- FBA – Florida Bandmasters Association
- FSMA – Florida School Music Association
- GPA – Grade Point Average
- LCS – Leon County Schools
- LCSB – Leon County School Board
- LHS – Leon High School
- MPA – Music Performance Assessment
- OTC – Over-the-counter
- PAWS – Performing Arts Winter Showcase
- PDA – Public Display(s) of Affection