

# Quaker Valley High School Marching Band

## Drum Major Responsibilities

### **Description**

The position of Drum Major is a powerful student leadership position. With power and authority, there are large and important responsibilities. Therefore, Drum Majors are held to the very highest standards of musical and behavioral excellence.

The primary responsibilities of Drum Majors in this organization are as follows:

- To consistently demonstrate an example of the utmost excellence in the areas of personal responsibility, discipline, respect, integrity, work ethic, positive attitude, behavior and musicianship.
- To maintain open lines of communication with the Band Director and Captains to discuss goals (and how to achieve them) and problems (and how to fix them).
- To guide and direct Captains to ensure that expectations of responsibility, discipline, respect, integrity, work ethic, positive attitude, behavior and musicianship remain consistent throughout the Marching Band.
- To encourage and promote personal responsibility, discipline, respect, integrity, work ethic, positive attitude, behavior and musicianship among the band/guard membership.

These responsibilities are not exclusive to Marching Band season, but are year-round responsibilities. Drum Majors are expected to lead both out on the marching field and in the classroom.

### **Qualifications**

- Any current freshman, sophomore or junior Marching Band student who is in good academic and behavioral standing at Quaker Valley High School, and whose attendance record in the Marching Band is acceptable, is eligible to audition and interview for the position of Drum Major.
- The tenure for a Drum Major position will be one school year in length. Sophomore or Junior Drum Majors will not automatically retain their position from year to year — they must audition and interview for the position every year. An unsatisfactory tenure (as determined by the Band Director and Band Staff) as Drum Major will lead to the possibility of that individual not being allowed to audition/interview as a candidate for any leadership position in the future. Unsatisfactory behavior and/or performance on the part of a Drum Major at any time may result in dismissal after a performance review interview with the Band Director and/or Band Staff. If a Drum Major is dismissed, the Band Director will choose a suitable replacement, either through audition/interview or appointment.
- A student who wishes to be considered for a Drum Major position must personally approach the Band Director and Band Staff before the end of the week at band camp to state their intention to be considered for Drum Major. Declared candidates will be observed throughout the season.
- At an audition time to be determined by the Band Director, candidates need to

demonstrate the following skills:

- Demonstrate ability to set drill/read coordinate cards
- Demonstrate ability to perform and call basic commands including, but not limited to:
  - At the ready
  - Calling to/Coming to attention
  - Calling to/Coming to parade rest
  - Horns Up
  - Horns Down
  - Mark Time
  - Forward March
  - Back March
  - Halt
  - Left Glide
  - Right Glide
  - Dress Left
  - Dress Right
  - Dress Front
  - About Face
  
- Demonstrate ability to clearly conduct a steady tempo in time signatures of 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4. A musical score and recording excerpt will be given to candidates prior to the audition with further instructions. Candidates are strongly encouraged to seek conducting lessons from Mr. Neville and/or the current Drum Major.
- Answer questions about the description, qualifications and duties of a Drum Major in this organization.
- Answer questions about the rules, regulations and guidelines of this organization relative to the Band Handbook.
- Answer opinion questions about the past, present and future of the band program; former, current and future student leadership; and philosophy of leadership.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the band's history.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the marching band's role at football games

### **Specific Duties**

Drum Majors are expected to be at every Marching Band commitment including all rehearsals, performances and parades. Reasonable exceptions will always apply, but more than one absence for any reason will warrant a performance review interview with the Band Director. Student leaders who do not model the importance of attendance commitments to the membership will be ineffective in encouraging their fellow band/guard members to meet their own attendance commitments.

The Drum Major is expected to meet with the Band Director on a weekly basis to discuss goals and potential problems. This meeting is separate from any general student leadership meeting that may take place during the same week.

The Drum Major is expected to meet with the Captains on a weekly basis (at minimum) to discuss goals and potential problems and to ensure consistency from the

Band Director, to the Drum Major, to the student leadership and finally to the band/guard members.

The Drum Major is expected to be early to every commitment. In order to promote punctuality among the band members, the Drum Major is never permitted to be late. Similarly, the Drum Major is always expected to be fully prepared for any rehearsal or performance.

The Drum Major is expected to be proactive in addressing issues they know how to address. Obvious examples include posture/instrument carriage, in-step, marching technique, step-offs, quality of command response, poor rehearsal behavior, poor behavior in the stands, etc. The Drum Major is also expected to be proactive in addressing more specific issues: Examples include speaking with individual band members and/or sections about not having their music memorized, behavioral issues, work ethic issues, etc., speaking with Captains about consistent problems seen within their sections, etc. Leadership as a Drum Major means not having to wait for anyone to tell you to fix an obvious problem.

The Drum Major is expected to lead by example. He or she is to conduct themselves in the manner that they expect all band members will aspire to emulate.

The Drum Major are expected to know, abide by and communicate to their student leadership and fellow band/guard members, all of the rules, regulations and guidelines of the Marching Band.

#### AT REHEARSAL

- The Drum Major is to take a leading role in rehearsals and practice sessions. Goals for each rehearsal or practice session are set with the Band Director and the Band Director helps to guide the pace of each rehearsal, but the Drum Major is in charge of rehearsal productivity.
- The Drum Major is to convey the goals of the rehearsal and/or practice session to the other student leadership and band/guard members with the help of the Band Director and Captains.
- The Drum Major should be prepared to lead a sectional of any section in either music or marching and need to have teaching strategies to address common problems.
- The Drum Major needs to help set and correct drill when practicing field formations.

#### AT GAMES, FESTIVALS AND PARADES

The Drum Major is in charge of:

- Running the band in the football stands: calling tunes, giving commands, following the game, conducting, etc.
- Helping to enforce proper conduct in the stands
- Helping to ensure band members are punctual and efficient in their duties
- Helping to communicate directions to the band/guard
- Helping to organize band/guard members