



SPRAYBERRY
Winter Guard



Sprayberry Winter Guard Handbook

www.sprayberryband.com/winterguard

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Sprayberry 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 parents 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 Sprayberry 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 Sprayberry High School Band. All winter guard activities will be facilitated and governed by the Sprayberry Band and its Booster Organization (SBBA).

The mission of the Sprayberry Winter Guard program is to provide an opportunity for Sprayberry 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.



www.sapaonline.org



www.wgi.org

The Winter Guards

The Sprayberry Winter Guard Program fields three competitive winter guards.

The Cadet Guard:

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 designed 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 either JJ Daniell, Simpson or McClesky Middle Schools and be in good academic standing.

The JV Guard: (Inactive for 2024)

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 Sprayberry 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 both the SAPA and WGI circuits 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. These categories can include Movement, Wooden Rifle, Saber, or Flag. The Varsity students are held to the highest performance standard for the Sprayberry Guard. Students must attend Sprayberry High School and be in good academic standing.

Auditions

Winter guard auditions are held for 3-4 days at the conclusion of the marching band competition season. This time usually falls in early November. Auditions for the high school guards are open to any Sprayberry High School student that meet the extracurricular participation requirements. No prior experience is required with the exception of students wishing to make the Varsity Guard. Varsity students will need to have significant dance or equipment training to meet the standards for placement. The Cadet guard will hold a small audition to see if students are capable of the movement required to do color guard. During the audition clinics students will be taught both a dance and flag routine that must be performed during the audition process during the final day. The students will be placed in either the Varsity or JV guard based off of the results of their performance. Students not meeting the standard will not be placed in the winter guard program.

Costs/Registration:

The Sprayberry Winter Guard receives a small amount of money from the band booster organization, but this amount is not nearly enough to cover the multiple expenses faced by fielding a winter color 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 (Rifles, Sabers)● Flags/Flag Design● Props and Mat Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Uniforms● Hotel for SAPA Championships (Chattanooga)● Food for SAPA Championships● Travel Expenses for equipment transport (Fuel, Parking, etc..)
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Each student joining the winter guard program will need to complete the registration process during the designated registration period. At this time students and parents will need to complete a packet of paperwork which will include parent contact information, medical information, Cobb County Permission forms and a member contract. **This registration process is all online at www.sprayberryband.com/winterguard**

Student Fees for 2024

High School: Varsity Guard \$750

Middle School: Cadets \$450

All participants in the Winter Guard Program will need to commit to paying their fees in full. Fees can be paid at once or can be paid over a booster-determined payment schedule. **To claim your spot in the Winter Guard a deposit must be paid by the set December date.** This should be done during your student registration.

Payment method:

You may pay with a check, payable to SBBA (Sprayberry Band Booster Association), cash, or credit card online. Installment payments can be made online or placed in the black lock box located in the Band Room.

Please do not let any financial issues stop you from having your student participate in the program. Fundraising activities are made available to all 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, Lisa Bouland at treasurer@sprayberryband.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 Sprayberry High School Band Program and the Cobb 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 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 practices and performances are mandatory. We plan our practices assuming all members will be in attendance. Birthday parties, work, babysitting, pop concerts etc...are not acceptable excuses for missing practice.
- SAT and College visits must be done on free Saturdays. (see rehearsal calendar)
- Please remember if you miss a practice, 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 practice.

- 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 practices and performances.
- All member should wear black on their last practice of the week. This is to provide a dress practice format at the end of the week.
- If you are taking medication not listed on your medical form, please inform a chaperone before practice. 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 practice facility at the end of each practice.
- Please be open to constructive criticism. You must be able to separate friendship from professionalism.
- Absolutely no cell phones on during practice. 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 practice unless there is an emergency. They will be allowed to use their phone during breaks.
- The Sprayberry Band is a music organization. All music rehearsals & performances take precedence over any winter guard activity. Student musicians are expected to attend and continue to participate in their instrumental activities. **Any infractions of this rule could result in dismissal from winter guard.**

Practice & Competition Calendar & Locations

All practices and performances are included in the master calendar at www.sprayberryband.com/winterguard or www.sprayberryband.com/cadets

Some dates and locations are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to students and parents in a timely manner by lead parents or directors.

Locations:

Sprayberry High School (2525 Sandy Plains Rd)
 Mt. Paran North Church (1700 Allgood Rd)
 Daniell Middle School (2900 Scott Rd)

Competition locations are posted on the [Master Calendar](#)

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 competition 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.

(Sometimes SAPA will be delayed in getting schedule out to the performing units. In those cases the schedule will be produced as soon as possible)

A Typical Schedule for show days are as follows:

(Morning) Morning practice (High School Guards)
Carpool to Host School
Arrive at Host School (Find designated rest area or classrooms)
Cadet Guard Warmup/Performance
JV Guard Warmup/Performance

(Midday) **Retreat (Awards for morning performances)**
Cadet and JV Guard Dismissal
(Students will need to be picked up by their parent)

(Afternoon) Varsity Arrival/Warmup/Performance

Retreat (Awards for afternoon/evening performances)

(Evening) Varsity Guard Dismissal

Not all guards will perform on each show day. Please read the schedule correctly as it will mark which guards are performing on which weekend.

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 until the awards retreat is done. **Cadet Guard members will be dismissed mid-day on long show days.**

Inclement Weather:

Please be prepared for all types of winter weather conditions during the winter guard season. In the event of inclement weather the Sprayberry 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 Cobb County Public 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 or will need to make arrangements with another parent ahead of time. All drivers will need to meet at the carpool location (Sprayberry). **No student drivers allowed please.**

- On show days **ALL** performing students will need to meet at the designated carpool location.
- 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 30th-31st 2019.

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. The Sprayberry guards will then publish our own weekend schedule based off of guard performance times and award ceremonies.

Typically the Cadet guard will perform on Saturday morning. The Junior Varsity will perform around mid-day to early evening on Saturday while the Varsity guard will perform on Sunday. **The Cadet guard will be released to their parents after their awards ceremony on Saturday night. Cadet parents have the option of staying with the high school guards at their designated hotel. Booking information will be provided by the Guard Liaison.** JV and Varsity students should expect to stay overnight and return home on Sunday evening.

Championships Lodging (No overnight for 2024)

The high school guards will stay overnight in Chattanooga for the championship weekend. The hotel and lodging will be booked and arranged by the Sprayberry Boosters led by the Guard Liaison.

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 Cobb County Guidelines and student rules for overnight stay will be in effect. In addition to the Cobb County Guidelines, students and parents will need to follow an additional layer of rules and procedures set in place by the Sprayberry High School Band. These guidelines will be organized and enforced by the Head Chaperone, assisted by the lead parents and guard liaison.

If Cadet parents choose to stay overnight in the designated hotel, they will need to be present with their Cadet child as they will be released into their custody after awards on Saturday evening.

The guards will checkout of the hotel on Sunday morning before heading to the varsity guard performance at the UTC Arena.

Both high school guards will return to Sprayberry at the conclusion of awards on Sunday.



Parent Involvement:

Parent involvement and support is vital to the success of the Sprayberry Winter Guard Program. The Sprayberry 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 Sprayberry Winter Guard Program. It is of importance that this parental structure is followed.

Guard Liaison

The Guard Liaison is a Sprayberry Band Booster board position voted in by the membership. The guard liaison oversees the parental support system for the entire Sprayberry Guard Program. The Liaison will work directly with the Guard Director and Band Directors in facilitating the winter guard program. All decision making will be made on this level. The Guard Liaison's winter guard responsibilities and guidelines are as follows:

- Coordinate with the band directors and guard director in setting the structure and design of the winter guard season including: Audition/Rehearsal and Performance calendar dates, Securing rehearsal facilities, program promotion and communications.
- Oversee the proper scheduling and implementation of an introductory parent meeting and registration.
- Liaison with the Sprayberry Band Treasurer to properly manage the winter guard budget.
- Oversee all purchasing of winter guard equipment, flags, props, uniforms, and accessories in addition to any fees associated with the winter guard season.
- Produce a show day schedule on the Tuesday of performance weeks for participating guards or shortly after the SAPA schedule has been officially published.
- Communicate with lead parents to make sure there is proper parent coverage at each winter guard rehearsal.
- Communicate with lead parents to make sure the scheduling is correct and accurate for each performing winter guard on show days.
- Communicate any special needs or circumstances to lead parents so they can disseminate the information to their guards. Emails, schedule changes,
- Secure SAPA Championship Hotel and all planning associated with the weekend. Meals, Room lists, Chaperones, and schedule.
- Communicate with the equipment chair of the Sprayberry Band to organize and facilitate any large equipment needs for any of the winter guards.

Lead Parent (Guard Mom/Dad)

Due to the specific nature of each individual guard, the band directors along with the guard director and liaison will appoint a lead parent(s) to be the point of contact for each of the individual winter guards. This alleviates the need for one parent to oversee all guards as their schedules vary in rehearsal and show scheduling. These lead parents will have the following responsibilities:

- Establish a communication tree for their assigned winter guard including email and phone contact for parents. Guard Liaison and Registration will have a master list.
- Communicate with the guard liaison to make sure there is proper chaperone coverage for each rehearsal and show day.
- Make sure there are proper medical kits and student health information at all rehearsals and show days.
- Oversee uniform and accessories for each guard. Including uniform care, makeup, flip flops, and other related items.
- Coordinate with guard liaison on show days to secure proper carpool for the assigned guard
- Be present during show days for hallway/classroom prep before guard warmup and post guard performance.
- Chaperone their assigned guard during show days before and after their performances. (Decisions must be made within the framework of the produced schedule and must not interfere with guard staff instructions)
- Lead Parents will need to be in frequent contact with the Guard Director and Guard Liaison for planning so that the lead parent can execute their responsibilities appropriately.
- Lead Parents should plan to address their guards at the end of practices or on breaks in order to not interfere with instructional time. Guard communication should not interfere or conflict with staff instructions.
- Lead Parents should also use the [General Parent Guidelines](#) outside of their specific lead parent duties.

Equipment and Mat Crew

Parents serving on the equipment crew will have a bevy of responsibilities during the winter guard season. The guard director and/or guard liaison will communicate to the equipment coordinator any large equipment needs for rehearsals and performances. These items include:

- Securing mat carts for each of the winter guards
- Transport of mat carts for rehearsals and performances
- Development, build and transport of any props and associated equipment.
- Managing equipment and prop staging at shows
- Pulling the mat and props for performances

General Parent Guidelines

It is imperative for the safety of the students and the general health of the Sprayberry 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 Sprayberry Winter Guard Program is a support system only and all must operate within the set structure of the SBBA 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 warmups. 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 Sprayberry Band Program. They have been trained by the band directors and are cleared to teach by the Cobb County School District.
- Should issues arise with a guard staff member, please feel free to email the band directors at directors@sprayberryband.com

Want to volunteer?

Parent volunteers are a huge reason why we can field a large 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 Bonnie Perez at guardliaison@sprayberryband.com.

Winter Guard Contact Information

Winter Guard Program Administrators 2023		
Andy Esserwein	Band Director	directors@sprayberryband.com
Terrace Ellis	Assistant Band Director	directors@sprayberryband.com
Alaina Quiles	Guard Director	guarddirector@sprayberryband.com
Ann Daniels	Guard Liaison	guardliaison@sprayberryband.com
Shelby Bennett	Cadet Guard	shelby.bennett@cobbk12.org

Student Fees & Registration		
Ruthie Somerlot & Kara Burnison	SBBA Treasurers	treasurer@sprayberryband.com
Carlton Alford	SBBA President	president@sprayberryband.com