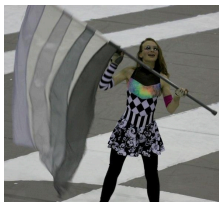


## TJHSST 2025 Winter Program Information



Welcome to the TJHSST Winter Program! We are excited to have you in our program. Both the indoor winter drum line and color guard offer students a vast array of educational and social experiences. Students will learn how to work as a team, problem solve, persevere through challenges, and understand the value/reward of hard work, all while getting the opportunity to showcase their skills as musical and visual performers on a big stage.

Winter programs began as a training program for the fall marching band, but through the decades they have defined themselves as respected competitive activities throughout the world. If you have ever seen the marching band you have pretty much seen the activities in this winter program. The only difference is that during indoor, instead of being a part of the bigger picture, the focus is entirely on the drum line or color guard. To help enhance the visual interpretation of the music, both groups employ visual movements as well as props and backdrops.

These programs offer students the opportunity to perform a more individually customized show. They will have much more personal exposure and higher individual responsibilities and demands since there are fewer people on stage with them than in the marching band. This added focus on the individual adds an extra level of excitement and personal achievement to the activity. The educational value of this is obvious; confidence and self-expression become second nature.

### Membership and Audition Policies

Membership in the winter program is entirely voluntary and includes a vast array of people and personalities. Typically every student who would like to be a member of the winter program will be accepted regardless of prior experience as a musician (or as a dancer for color guard). It is up to the discretion of the instructional staff to determine if a prospective rookie needs some basic training first before they would be reasonably ready to participate in one of these groups, however such cases are rare. Don't worry - no such decision will be made without an open dialogue between the student and the instructional staff. Veteran members of the ensemble will be automatically accepted unless there were any attendance or other membership issues in previous seasons to discuss. Auditions are mostly for part-assignment, not actual membership eligibility. Some roster limits *may* be necessary, to be determined based on how many show up to audition, but this will be determined and discussed if and when necessary.



Students are able to audition for either color guard or drum line, just make sure you communicate with the staff before beginning the auditions so they can plan accordingly if you want to try both. The goal is to complete all part-assignments by the "Commitment" day on November 21. In the past, both programs have had participants from the wind-section of band, orchestra, chorus, and theater programs as well as from the student body not otherwise involved in the fine arts.

Prospective members must make arrangements to attend the necessary audition rehearsals (Nov. 12, 14, 19 and 21) after school when we will set most/all of the rosters and role assignments. If you have other conflicts, please discuss with the instructional staff as soon as possible to make arrangements (See "Communication" section for contact info). We will offer a formal interest/info session for parents at 6:00 PM on November 12 in the band room. We are also happy to answer any questions you or your parents have via email or in person.

## Attendance Policy and Commitments

Attendance at all practices and competitions is mandatory. Excused absences include illness, family emergency, and pre-arranged conflicts communicated to the staff but instances must be kept to a minimum for the sake of the group's success. When a member has to miss practice during the week, they need to inform the instructors as soon as the issue becomes known, in advance. However, if a student were to miss several practices or have one unexcused absence, their status as a performing member would be in jeopardy and a discussion would be necessary. It is likely that any further absences from rehearsal or any single absence from competition or rehearsal (even if excused at that point) would be grounds for removal from the group, not necessarily for punitive reasons, but because it becomes impossible to keep up with production and technique development after missing too much time. Students are responsible for keeping up with their academics too – *catching up on homework is not an excused absence*. This activity is built upon team-work and it is a set-back any time there are unexpected, missing members.



This is not to say that if a student knows ahead of time that they might miss a major rehearsal or show that they will not be able to perform or be part of the team. The instructors of both groups will do what they can to accommodate the performers, but they have the discretion to decide which absence will be excused and which will not. If a student knows of recurring conflicts with rehearsal times or a conflict with a competition date, they need to notify instructors during enrollment, no later than the commitment date. Even spring-sports preseason schedules can be accommodated on occasion.

During the enrollment process, students will be asked to declare their possible conflicting interests. Every year we have members who also play softball, swim, sing in church choirs, participate in the school musical, and any of a thousand other activities who are able to make the drum line and color guard schedule work as well because they notify the instructors before the season begins and work out a plan. Even if you don't know what your schedule may be in March or April because it will be your first time trying-out for some activity, as long as you research the possible conflicts and keep your instructors informed and work out a plan in advance, accommodations can often be made. Sometimes you will be forced to choose but many times things do work out. It only becomes an issue if your commitment changes mid-season without letting your instructors know about it in advance. This requires that you be proactive in communicating with your coaches, teachers, parents, etc. to determine any and all details of the potential conflicts so that solutions may be discussed.

Regular practice time outside of rehearsal is expected, consistent within any such school program. Students must be willing to practice on a regular basis as a part of their regular homework routine. Occasionally it is appropriate for small groups to meet for extra sectional work on their own at the discretion of the section leaders. The section leaders (student leadership) are encouraged to keep these meetings somewhat relaxed and less formal than a regular rehearsal, but much work can be done at these times. This is especially important early in the season while members are trying to learn the work and music to their shows. 8th period "Open Practice" sessions are often used for this.

Withdrawal from the program whether by choice or as a result of violation of the commitment expectations may result in a show design rewrite fee. The design staff devotes a great deal of time and energy toward designing the shows in ways, which don't work without all the members participating specifically as expected. There are also several purchases that are made very early in the season for custom-fit uniforms, and props and other equipment that are designed, built, and worked into the show in ways that are entirely dependent on who and how many students are in the show. If it becomes necessary to rewrite the show or replace any such equipment or uniforms due to such circumstances, the student may be held responsible for covering the necessary costs. All normal membership fees are non-refundable.

## Costs

Student fees cover staff pay, production design, uniforms, equipment, set design, copyright licenses, competition fees, transportation, and many other costs. If an overnight trip is included, it covers that as well (for this year, color guard only). If you need assistance with making full payment, please contact Mr. Ballard ([swballard@fcps.edu](mailto:swballard@fcps.edu)) at any time.

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Fee Schedule for this year:

**\$350 due November 21** with enrollment.

**\$350 due January 17.**

**\$350 due February 14.**

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**4th fee TBD due March 14**

Drum line estimate \$150.

Color guard estimate \$300 (for Ohio trip).



*The final amounts vary based on the enrollment numbers of the group – the more students, the lower the cost. It also varies based on details of whatever overnight trip costs are included, which are not known until closer to the trip. The amounts will be different for color guard and drum line depending on membership size, schedule, destinations, and needs.*

Partial payments and payment plans are workable if necessary.

This season, color guard will be attending the WGI championships in Cincinnati and Dayton, OH on April 2-6. Drum line will not be going to Ohio this year. Color Guard will be taking one other overnight trip to Philadelphia (Sat-Sun, Mar 1-2). All other performances will be single-day events. Drum line's Hampton Roads trip this year on Mar 30 will *not* be an overnight trip this year. Joining the drum line or color guard will constitute an agreement that you are able to accommodate the financial needs and schedules involved with these events. All members **MUST** participate in all events and trips for their group.

Other incidental costs are involved – usually a little higher for color guard than drum line due to various uniform expenses. See the drum line and color guard specific sections for more details. Cost is still TBD but will not exceed \$150 for color guard – and generally around \$50 for drum line. Any items of this kind are the sort that students would get to keep for themselves following the season (marching shoes, color guard gloves, etc.)

If a student wishes to join either the drumline or the color guard but has financial concerns please contact Mr. Ballard ([swballard@fcps.edu](mailto:swballard@fcps.edu)). Funding is available to meet our needs regardless of your ability to pay. We do not want the cost of the group to prohibit any student from joining that is able to meet all of the other requirements of membership.

## Schedule

The schedule is dictated mostly by availability of rehearsal space. Rehearsals on school days will generally be 4:30pm to 7:30pm for drum line and 4:30pm to 7:00pm for color guard. Both groups will have weekend rehearsals in order to get extra time in the gyms, more so for color guard than drum line. Please allow at least 15-20 minutes for clean-up and equipment storage AFTER the scheduled end-time for each rehearsal.

Regular season shows are generally on Saturdays and much like the marching band shows, the schedule for these events will sometimes run all day long. Our schedules are not made available until our competition circuit organizers publish the performance times, something we have no control over (generally 2-3 weeks prior to each event).

This is the currently planned performance schedule:

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### **Drum Line**

2/8 – Tuscarora HS – AIA

2/22 – Woodgrove HS – AIA

3/8 – Powhatan HS – WGI Richmond Percussion Regional

3/22 – Mount Vernon HS – AIA

3/30 – Hampton Roads, VA – AIA Championships

### **Color Guard**

1/25 – South County HS – AIA (*tentative*)

2/8 – Powhatan HS – WGI Richmond Guard Regional

3/1-2 – Council Rock South HS – WGI Philadelphia Regional

3/22 – Mount Vernon HS – AIA

4/2-6 – Dayton/Cincinnati, OH – WGI World Championships  
(*overnight – perform in prelims Thursday*)

The season runs from November 12 through March 30 for the drum line and April 6 for guard, including the multi-night trip to Dayton. Enrollment in the program means commitment to this entire schedule unless other preseason decisions are made on a student-by-student basis.

[TJDL Google Calendar](#) ([Printable version](#))

[TJWG Google Calendar](#) ([Printable Version](#))

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## Parent Support Opportunities

As we've mentioned, many hands make light work, so even if you can only fit one or two small things into your schedule due to living/working too far away or incompatible schedules, etc., we'll take it! Every little bit help!

Chaperoning and "pit/equipment crew" – we will need a group of parents to accompany the groups and serve as a "pit/equipment crew" for movement of equipment for both groups at our competitions. We will need several adults on each trip to serve as both chaperones and "pit/equipment crew" as it may be needed. As many as 8 adults are needed for the Drum Line "pit/equipment" crew. At all events, we sincerely hope all the students' parents will come watch us perform and cheer loudly! Audience reactions can actually impact the scores we receive!

Drivers to shows – Drum line will use charter buses for the shows at Powhatan and Hampton Roads (*maybe* for Woodgrove and Tuscarora, TBD based on cost). For the local shows, we will make arrangements for either carpools or meeting directly at the show sites. Alternate transportation options will be made available for all shows. Color guard typically carpools to all events, including Ohio due to the prohibitive cost of bussing their small number of students.

Equipment truck driver – A 30' box truck is needed for every drum line competition. Color guard can usually function with an SUV or two, but may have some extra larger props this year. Please indicate on the enrollment form if your parent(s) are able and interested in being a driver and/or offering use of a vehicle.

Building and painting crew/sewing and uniform crew – A uniform crew of a couple people may be needed to handle fittings/alterations. Assistance may also be needed with painting/building/repairing props. Flags and uniforms often need repair as well. We occasionally need carpentry/metal work done on percussion equipment. You don't need to be an expert craftsman, just let us know what you're comfortable with and we'll go from there.

Parent coordinator for each group – These are extremely important positions and one exists for both the Color Guard and the Drum Line. These people mainly help with organizing and mobilizing parent volunteers and chaperones, and with keeping track of the students and assisting with minor first aid and other such needs. If you cannot commit for the whole season, your assistance would still be very much appreciated. Even a day here or there when you can assist the instructional staff would be great!

Other on-line resources:

TJ Band Boosters Website: <http://www.tjbands.org>

AIA Website: <http://www.atlanticindoor.org>

WGI Website: <http://www.wgi.org>

WGI CODE OF CONDUCT: <https://wgi.org/about-wgi/code-of-conduct/>

Outlines expectations for staff and volunteers active with any groups operating within AIA or WGI events, *in conjunction with* regular FCPS rules and regulations. Also provides additional avenues for students (or anyone else) to report issues or concerns if necessary. Training and accountability are very high as these organizations take student safety extremely seriously, as do we.

All TJ winter color guard and drum line staff who regularly work with the students are “[SafeSport](#)” trained and certified, and officially badged employees of FCPS.

