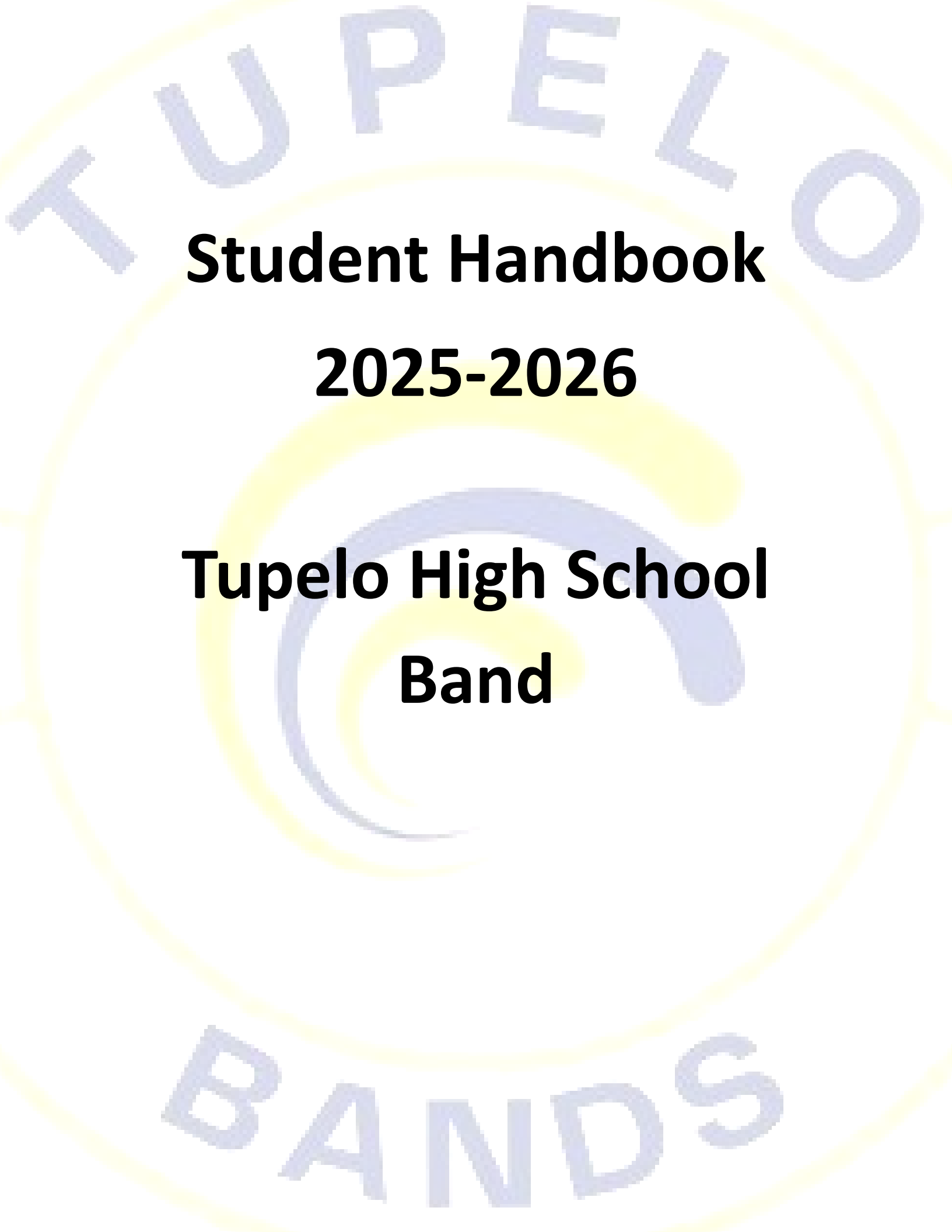




Student Handbook

2025-2026

Tupelo High School Band

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Tupelo Bands
4125 Golden Wave Drive
Tupelo, MS 38801
662.841.8971

PURPOSE

- To educate interested students in music education.
- To represent our school with pride and dignity through exceptional performance.
- To strive to achieve perfection in all we undertake.
- To promote citizenship among our members.
- To be more together than we can be by ourselves.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide a convenient reference for students and parents who have questions concerning any aspect of the band program at Tupelo High School. While we have made an honest effort to include and explain every possible facet of the program, we reserve the right to unilaterally modify or add to the items contained herein.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the cooperation and support of the Tupelo Public School District administration and express our thanks for their continued and unwavering support of our band program.

The Tupelo Public School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age or any legally-protected classification in its programs or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding District non-discrimination policies: Director of Human Resources, Scott Williams (sewilliams@tupeloschools.com).

BAND STAFF

Dustin Thrasher

dthrasher@tupeloschools.com

Christopher Knox

clknox@tupeloschools.com

Kelli Wallace

knwallace@tupeloschools.com

Raven Thompson

rgthompson1@tupeloschools.com

Emily Hercules

edhercules@tupeloschools.com

PERFORMING ENSEMBLES

The THS band encompasses various performing ensembles. This includes but is not restricted to, the marching band, concert bands, jazz band, pep band, indoor guard, winds, and percussion. All performing ensemble participation will involve an audition with pre-determined and communicated standards. The various ensembles perform during their respective “season,” which for our purposes will be referred to as “marching” and “concert” seasons.

Enrollment in the THS band does not ensure students’ continued participation in the performing ensembles. Band is a “co-curricular” class and activity. The band is governed by both the State Department of Education and the Mississippi High School Activities Association. If a student does not fulfill their commitments and duties to the performing ensembles, as stated elsewhere in this Handbook, they may remain in “band class”, but will no longer perform or travel with the performing band, or they may be removed from the band altogether.

REHEARSALS

Every student will have a regular band period within the school schedule. THS band rehearsals begin each year with summer rehearsals and the THS summer band camp. Band camp is held during the summer, shortly before the beginning of the school year. It involves morning and afternoon practices, generally from 8 AM to 5 PM. Additionally, there will also be scheduled pre-camp rehearsals. During the school year, there will be after-school rehearsals as well. Band students will receive a list of all performances and rehearsals for each semester at the beginning of that semester to avoid conflicts. Requirements for these rehearsals will be referred to in this Handbook.

Students that miss a rehearsal immediately preceding a performance, will not be allowed to perform at that performance. For example, a student that misses Friday afternoon band class, will not perform Friday night without a properly documented excuse.

MARCHING SEASON

This season begins with the Tupelo band camp and ends at the close of the fall semester.

To participate as a member of the performing ensemble during marching season, students must adhere to the following:

- 1). Students must complete an audition with a minimum proficiency and will then be placed in the marching band. This will include a demonstration of marching, movement, and musical minimum proficiency. The student’s effort, tardiness, attendance, and participation during the spring semester will also be considered when deciding a student’s participation status. It would be inappropriate for students to have placement in the marching band when they have not fulfilled their commitments properly during the previous semester.
- 2). Attendance, punctuality, and preparedness for rehearsals are some of the most important aspects of a band. Therefore, consistency in these areas is necessary to participate in the

performing band. Five occurrences of tardiness for any reason will result in the student's removal from the competitive show. This refers to rehearsal time before, during, or after school. Two unexcused absences will result in the student's removal from the competitive marching show. Students must submit proper documentation for excused absences within 2 business days of the absence.

- 3). Attendance at the THS Band Camp is MANDATORY unless the absence has prior director approval. Communication on any absences ahead of time is crucial. Excusable absences include but are not limited to, sickness (with a doctor's note), family death, or other unavoidable instances. Students must submit proper documentation for excused absences within 2 business days of the absence. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, work, voluntary appointments, etc. Please adjust your schedule to accommodate rehearsal times.
- 4). Students may run laps, do push-ups, or other physical activity upon being tardy, regardless of whether it is excused or unexcused at the discretion of the directors. This is to make up for the focus and conditioning missed at the beginning of rehearsal.
- 5). Improper equipment or attire will be addressed like tardiness. Marching barefoot or without proper shoes, mouthpieces, reeds, etc. will not be tolerated. Instruments must be in good working condition. Please communicate any needs or issues to a band director.
- 6). Students will meet all deadlines for memorization of music, guard work, marching fundamentals, and drill placement. Failure in this will result in the student's removal from the competitive show.
- 7). Students will be asked to learn and perform uniform step style, posture, equipment work (color guard), and music fundamentals. Continual demonstration of an unwillingness to put forth effort in this area will result in a student's removal from the competitive show.
- 8). The band uniform, costume, and accessories will always be worn appropriately, as outlined in the guidelines in this book, always. Failure to comply will result in a one-week removal from performance. Continued failure in this area will result in the student's removal from the band competitive show.
- 9). Students will not engage in public displays of affection either in or out of uniform when participating in any event or rehearsal associated with the band.
- 10). Students are expected to be back on time to perform after halftime at all football games. Failure to do so will result in losing 3rd quarter privileges and eventually performance removal.
- 11). The band practices to perform. Every single student affects the performance ability of every other student. Therefore, failure to attend a performance is considered a severe issue. One unexcused absence from a performance will result in that student's removal from the band program. An unexcused tardy to a performance will result in the student losing 3rd Quarter

privileges. Repeated performance tardies will result in that student being removed from the competitive show.

12). Students must respond daily to instruction from ALL band directors and student leaders. A positive and appropriate response to these instructions is essential for the efficiency, as well as the learning climate, of the band. If a student believes that he/she is encountering something inappropriate, he/she must go to a band director to resolve the problem. If needed, the band director will involve the proper administrators in the issue. Under NO circumstances shall a student become argumentative with an adult (band director/chaperone/adjunct staff member) or a student leader. One such instance will result in the student's removal from the competitive show.

13). **SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE:** Today social media can be a positive or a negative occurrence. Band members should not post anything in any format about the band or any band members, band staff, or adjunct staff members which can even remotely be construed as negative! (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, texts, etc.) This will not be tolerated! Any violation of this policy will result in the student's removal from the band program. NO online 'groups' will be formed with a name or membership that indicates an association with the Tupelo High School Band without the expressed consent of the band director.

CONCERT SEASON – To participate as a member of the performing ensemble during Concert Season, students must adhere to the following:

- 1). Students must complete an audition with a minimum proficiency and will then be placed in a performing ensemble. Students who do not meet the minimum standard will be placed in a non-performing technique ensemble.
- 2). Just as with Marching Season, being on time for rehearsals with the proper equipment is essential. Three unexcused tardies or five tardies for any reason will result in removal from the performing ensemble. Two unexcused absences will result in removal from the performing ensemble.
- 3). Improper equipment will be addressed in the same manner as tardies.
- 4). Students will meet all deadlines for music pass-off or will not be allowed to perform. The music grade (addressed elsewhere in this Handbook) will also be affected.
- 5). The band uniform and accessories will be worn appropriately. Failure to comply will result in the student not being allowed to perform. Continual failure in this area will result in removal from the performing group. Hair should be combed and styled appropriately for Concert Season. Any distracting accessories, as decided by the director, will not be allowed when in uniform during Concert Season. When not performing in uniform, concert dress will be dictated by the director.

6). As with Marching Season, each student's attendance at a performance is vital. One unexcused absence from a performance will result in his/her removal from the performing group. Students must submit proper documentation for excused absences within 2 business days of the absence.

7). Response and attitude are also paramount during Concert Season. The students are expected to respond to instruction positively. They must show a willingness to correct any problem addressed, whether musical or behavioral, to the best of their ability. If the student perceives a problem with how he/she is being addressed, he/she should inform a band director. The band director will then involve the administration if needed. Becoming argumentative in class is not an option. One instance of this case may result in removal from the performing group.

8) Band is considered a year-long commitment (fall and spring semesters). If there are extenuating circumstances that prohibit enrollment in a particular semester, please communicate and conflicts with the Director of Bands.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

1). Adhere to guidelines for rehearsal and performance attendance as stated in the Marching and Concert Season portions of this Handbook.

2). At all times students will be expected to act in such a way that would make their parents, school, and themselves proud.

3). Each student is responsible for hearing and seeing all announcements. Announcements will be communicated in a multitude of formats: verbal, written, and digital. Do not rely on someone else. Failure to look and listen is not an excuse.

4). Students should arrange personal jobs, extra functions, and all appointments without conflicting with rehearsals or performances. Appointments scheduled during rehearsal or performance time must be cleared in advance by the director. It is the student's responsibility to keep parents, bosses, etc. informed to avoid conflicts.

5). All students will travel to performances with the band unless cleared through the band director before the performance. They may ride back with their parent or guardian if checked out with a director or chaperone after the performance. Students will only be released to parents face-to-face. Notes, text messages, or phone calls will NOT be accepted to allow students to ride with someone else. This is a liability, and the safety of our students is our number one priority.

6). Smoking, alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, fighting, theft, argumentative behavior, or vulgar language will not be tolerated in the band. Both school discipline procedures as well as those stated under marching and concert season guidelines will be followed in these instances. The use of alcohol or illegal substances will result in the immediate removal from the band program. This is considered ZERO TOLERANCE!

- 7). Students are expected to follow all instructions given to them by any of their directors, adjunct staff, or student leaders with a good attitude. A good attitude is determined at the discretion of the Band Director.
- 8). All forms (Handbook, medical release, etc.) must be turned in on time.
- 9). Take pride in your band hall! It is everyone's responsibility to keep our facility clean.
- 10). There will be no cell phone use of any kind (texting, talking, email, etc.) during rehearsals or performances. This includes taking pictures or videos unless approved by the director.
- 11). As a "group performance activity," looking uniform is extremely important. Students should have natural hair colors during the competitive marching season. For the competitive show costume, ladies will need to have their hair in a bun. This must be achievable by the first competition. Gentlemen will need to look neat. Any long hair will need to be placed in a bun.

MUSIC, EQUIPMENT, & UNIFORMS

- 1). Each student is responsible for the welfare of any equipment, music, uniforms, etc. issued to them. Any that are lost or damaged must be replaced or paid for by the student. Those students using a school-owned instrument (tuba, percussion, marching baritones, French horns, etc.) are responsible for the upkeep of that instrument. If it is damaged due to lack of care or misuse, the student must pay for any part of the repair.
- 2). The students are to leave their music and equipment in the area assigned to them and that equipment. Instruments (cases) are to be marked clearly with the student's name. Students are to play ONLY their instrument.
- 3). It is to the student's benefit that they own a recommended top or mid-line instrument by the time they reach 9th grade. This is not required. It is only required that they own an instrument of good quality that will match the brands of instruments that we recommend for pitch and tone quality.
- 4). The band provides the uniform for all high school band members. The students will purchase their own "personal" parts of the uniform. (Band shoes, gloves, black socks) The band shoes must be as the director dictates and will not be covered in the band fee (Color guard members will be responsible for additional "personal" uniform parts and will be informed by their director.)
- 5). Band uniforms will be kept in the uniform room. They will be checked out before performances and checked back in afterward by a student leader.
- 6). Students wearing a standard band uniform will wear their "band t-shirt" and "gym shorts" under the uniform. During cold weather "long johns" may be worn. Jeans, sweatpants, shirts with collars, or bulky clothes are NOT appropriate to wear under the uniform. Hair that hangs below the band hat must be tucked up under the hat. Colorful headgear of ANY kind (scarves, barrettes, ribbons, etc.) may not be worn. Jewelry is not to be worn with the uniform. Unless specified by

the director, your uniform is to be ALWAYS complete. Please refer to #8 under “Marching Season” guidelines.

7). Students are expected to participate in fundraisers to assist in raising the funds necessary for the band program to operate. All students are expected to sell at least one ad for the Region I Marching Festival program.

GRADING SYSTEM

The students in the Tupelo Band will receive grades that are averaged together. They are Music Playing Grade, Citizenship Grade, and Rehearsal/Performance Grade.

1). MUSIC PLAYING – This is derived from the student’s performance and progress on their instrument (or guard equipment) for each 9 weeks. It will include music pass-off, playing lines, group evaluation, etc.

2). CITIZENSHIP – This grade reflects a student’s non-music performance during the term. Responsibility and dependability in carrying out assignments such as having certain equipment, being in the correct place on time, effort, etc.

3). REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE – Consistent preparation and focus during performances and rehearsals as well as an obvious effort to do your very best is required for this portion of the grade. Poor effort in band rehearsals affects everyone, not just the individual student.

COLOR GUARD

Any band student may audition to become a member of the Tupelo Color Guard, subject to director approval. They are required to attend all “mini camps” held after school before the formal audition date and be responsible upon selection for shoes, gloves, body suit, and any other uniform requirements decided by the director. Once selected, they must attend all Tupelo color guard camps and band camps. The color guard is a part of the Tupelo Band, not a separate entity, and therefore must adhere to all rules stated in this Handbook.

Band students may participate in any other school sports, activities, etc. These other school functions will not preclude membership in any of the performing ensembles. However, participation in other sports or activities may preclude membership in the color guard due to the physical and time demands. This is at the discretion of the Director.

Guard captains will have a separate audition requirement and may only audition with the director’s approval. This approval will be based on each student’s record of responsiveness, attendance, leadership, effort, and communication. Once selected, Captains will be responsible for the preparation of equipment, teaching routines, and other duties deemed necessary by the director.

INDOOR SEASON

Membership in any Indoor Season Ensemble (winter guard, indoor percussion, etc.) is open to any student who passes the audition and is an active member in good standing of the Tupelo Band (not just the marching band). Color Guard students must participate in fall and spring semesters (instrumentalists must participate in concert season; non-instrumentalists must participate in winter guard and fall guard) to be considered in good standing. Fees (in addition to the band fees mentioned later in this Handbook) will be set and communicated by the directors of those groups at the proper time.

DRUM MAJOR

The position of Drum Major is open to any high school band student in grades 10-12 who is in good standing with the Tupelo Band. Previous conduct, leadership abilities, etc., will be considered in the audition. A panel of judges will select the Drum Major based on a formal audition and the above-stated criteria. Those interested in auditioning for Drum Major must have the director's approval for the audition. Upon selection, the Drum Major will be responsible for attending a "director-approved" Drum Major Camp. The Drum Major's uniform style and design is the director's choice.

FEES

Band Fees will be as follows:

\$250 for Winds and Percussion

\$500 for Color Guard

A Deposit of \$50 (Winds and Percussion) and \$100 (Color Guard) will be due in the Spring. Fees will be paid periodically during the fall semester.

July 15: \$50 Color Guard and Band Fee Due

August 15: \$50 Color Guard and Band fee due

September 15: \$100 Band Fee Due and \$150 Color Guard fee due

October 15: \$150 Color Guard fee due

Failure to pay band fees on time may result in the student not receiving certain required items for the marching show. Please communicate any payment issues you may have with a band director so arrangements can be made.

SENIORS

Seniors are expected to participate in band all eligible semesters. This keeps them in good standing with the band program, which is necessary for scholarship opportunities. Seniors who fail to participate in band all eligible semesters will lose their ability to receive a senior gift, receive their senior banners, and receive any band awards at the end of the year.

Parent and Student Agreement

2025-2026

We, the undersigned, have read and agree to adhere to the guidelines and policies outlined in the Tupelo High School Band Student Handbook. We understand that if these rules and policies are not followed, disciplinary action will be taken. Disciplinary action can include; but is not limited to, push-ups/laps, loss of third-quarter privileges, removal from the competitive marching show, and removal from the band program. We understand that it is up to the band director's discretion as to the disciplinary action taken and that policies within this handbook can be modified at the discretion of the Director of Bands.

Please refer to the attached calendar for all performance and rehearsal dates before signing this Agreement to ensure you understand the time, rehearsal, and performance commitment required of the Tupelo High School Band.

PRINT STUDENT NAME HERE: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name, printed

Student Signature

Date