A.W. Spence Band Department

Beginner Band Handbook

2025-2026



A.W. Spence Talented/Gifted Academy
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This band handbook has been compiled for the members and parents of the A.W. Spence Beginner Band. The purpose of this handbook is to provide information regarding the various activities, policies, procedures and expectations of the A.W. Spence Band program.

All band members and parents are to read the entire handbook carefully to gain a clear understanding of the expectations set for the A.W. Spence Band program. Every band member is expected to know the policies and procedures that have been set forth to ensure the success of the band program.

A signed Student Agreement Form should be completed, signed and returned by ***Friday, August 22, 2025***

A.W. Spence Middle School Band Philosophy

The goal for each student in the band program is to gain a well-rounded musical experience through education, performance and culture. It is the A.W. Spence Middle School Band Program's belief that all students are capable of learning music and have the ability to achieve greatness when given the opportunity through quality instruction.

It is also important to build unity so that the students will be able to form positive relationships, which in result will help prepare them to live and work in a culturally diverse society. It is the desire of the band program to instill in students the necessary tools that will help the students become successful in music education and be productive citizens through discipline, pride, dedication and responsibility.

Beginner Band

Beginner Band is for individuals that are first year band members of the A.W. Spence Band Department. Beginner band members are separated into individual classes to match their instrument. For example, all flutes will meet together each day. This is the case for each individual instrument or similar group of instruments. This is done in order to ensure as much individual attention to detail is given to these students as they begin to learn a new musical instrument.

Beginning Band students will be required to attend after school rehearsals in order to prepare for our Winter/Spring Concerts and Festivals

Materials Needed: As soon as possible **(Beginner Band Students)**

- Pencils (only allowed in class)
- 1" black binder
- 5 tab dividers (1 set)

Each Beginner Band member is expected to meet all of the following expectations:

- ❖ Attend all band classes, rehearsals and sectionals that are required
- ❖ Come to rehearsal focused, prepared and ready to play daily
- ❖ Show **exemplary respect** for all staff and students at all times
- ❖ Follow the director's instructions the first time given
- ❖ To maintain a 70 or higher in every class each reporting period
- ❖ Always represent the A.W.Spence program in a positive manner
- ❖ To always strive to be at your best both musically, academically and behaviorally

Failure to follow instructions with a positive attitude will result in parental contact, followed by appropriate disciplinary procedures.

1st infraction: Student warning
2nd infraction: Student/Teacher Conference
3rd infraction: Parent communication
4th infraction: Parent conference
5th infraction: Removal from Varsity Band (possible removal from band program entirely)

Band Fees

Each student will be assessed a **NON-REFUNDABLE Band Activity/Instrument Usage Fee of $30.00**
An instrument usage fee is required for all Dallas Independent School District Band Students. The fees will be placed in the band activity fund to help purchase necessary items in order to ensure that the band has a successful year. *The due date for the $30.00 payment is**: Friday, September 12, 2025.*** Individuals with financial hardships will have `the opportunity to arrange payment installments.

Fundraisers
Fundraisers initiated by the band program will be allocated for the sole purpose to assist students in need or band department needs.

***Important notice*:** Monies raised through fundraising and concerts are never refunded to the student. They will remain in the Student Activity Account for future usage.

Academic Eligibility
As mandated by the Texas UIL, any grade below 70 on a six-week report card will deny any student the right to a competitive performance for a three or six weeks grading period. Grades are very important to the overall academic standing and ability of a student to participate in most events on campus. Please help by periodically checking your child's grades in the Parent Portal.

Grading Procedure for each Grade Report

- Participation/Class work/Homework (50% of final grade for the reporting period)
- Test/Performances (40% of final grade for the reporting period)
- Nine Weeks Test Grade (10% of final grade for the reporting period)

Sectionals/Rehearsals: There will be times when it is necessary to have full band rehearsals after school. A detailed sectional schedule will be sent home to all parents and/or uploaded to the band program social media.

Band Performance Dates: All Performances are worth ***2 test grades***. Band members are expected to perform. Band is a team effort. The band can only be successful with everyone being responsible to their fellow bandmates. Attendance is required for the ENTIRE CONCERT, not just an individual student's performance.

Any student that fails to perform with their bandmates without an excused absence will receive 2 test grades of zero. Excused absences are considered family emergencies and personal illness. Band members with an excused absence will have the opportunity to make up their grades with a major project.

Performance dates are given plenty in advance to allow parents to make arrangements for their child to attend the required performance.

Required Performance Dress Code:

Formal Dress: All black (tops, bottoms, socks, shoes, dresses) no shorts, jeans or tennis shoes

Informal Dress: Band shirt, black pants or blue jeans and tennis shoes

- Any student with financial hardship may **always** ask for assistance with performance attire. Students are also able to donate for those who are less than fortunate

Suggestions, Ideas and Concerns

Please contact the band director at any time via phone, e-mail and/or band social media with any concerns or suggestions that you might have. Suggestions will be listened to, considered, and discussed. Ideas are welcomed that will improve the band and the musical educational experience of the students.

Please direct concerns to the band director. If you feel unsatisfied with the results, feel free to pursue the issue with the A.W. Spence Administration. To immediately go to the AWS Administration and/or school district with minor concerns (that could easily be corrected on the school level with the director) could lead to the AWS Band developing an unnecessary negative reputation with the community and leaders of the Dallas Independent School District.

A.W. Spence Beginner Band

2025 - 2026 School Year

BEGINNER BAND STUDENT AGREEMENT

I,_____ upon signing this document, acknowledge that I understand and will abide by the rules, guidelines and obligations contained in this A.W. Spence Sub/Non-Varsity Band Handbook. It is also understood that Varsity Band is the elite ensemble of the E.B. Comstock Middle School Band and is a privilege to be a part of.

I have been selected and have accepted by my own freewill to participate in this band course and will accept the full responsibility of the tasks to be performed.

During my membership in Sub/Non-Varsity Band, I will follow the classroom rules and procedures in their entirety, including the times when we are outside the classroom at performances. I will maintain a 70 or above average in all of my classes.

As a member of the A.W. Spence Band Department, I realize that I am in this group on a probationary basis. If I do not hold up all requirements set forth (including my character both in and out of school), I may not be invited to be a part of Varsity Band the following semester. If necessary, the student may be dismissed from the entire band program. These decisions are at the director's discretion.

Upon signing this agreement, I will accept the benefits and consequences of my actions. If I feel that I cannot or will not abide by all of the rules, requirements or guidelines mentioned, I will refuse to sign and request another elective from the counselor and be removed from this band ensemble.

Student Name_____ Contact Phone_____

Student Signature_____ Date _____

I have read the Sub/Non- Varsity Band Handbook in its entirety and understand that Sub/Non-Varsity Band is a privilege.All expectations and requirements are to be followed for my child to remain a member of Sub/Non-Varsity Band.

I understand that my child will be either transferred to another band ensemble or be removed from the A.W. Spence Band program entirely if my child refuses to abide by all the rules, requirements and guidelines mentioned.

By giving my signature below, I fully comply with the responsibilities of my child and the consequences therein.

Parent/Guardian Signature_____ Date _____

Contact Phone_____