



ThunderRidge High School

Marching Band Handbook

2026

Brandon Graese

Director of Bands



Letter from the Director

Congratulations! You are a part of one of the finest groups at ThunderRidge High School! The TRHS Marching Band is a progressing program striving for excellence. Our students develop a tremendous work ethic in order to continue pushing this program forward. Each year, we have taken giant steps forward as a band and plan to continue that trend this year.

The ThunderRidge Marching Band is solely an after-school activity. The Marching Band has demonstrated excellence in performance both on and off the marching field. The band plays at school events, football games, and other events as they show up. This year, the Marching Band will focus on developing students as musicians through primarily entertainment focused performances.

Within the ThunderRidge Marching Band, it will never be about the “score” or the outcome of any performance but about how we strive to be better with each repetition and improve our show each week. The goal is to ***pursue perfection and perform with ENJOYMENT.*** To do that, each student will need dedication, teamwork, and perseverance. The more we explore, define and refine, the more satisfying and enjoyable our performances become.

As a member of the ThunderRidge Marching Band, your student will be part of the most visible organization in the school. The members of the band represent what it means to be a student at TRHS to not just the school, but the community.

This handbook is designed to help you get started with the Marching Band at TR. However, there are so many incredible experiences that you will have as a member of the TRHS Marching Hand that can't be put into words. Students, it is impossible to describe the feeling you will get standing on the field at your first performance, hitting your dot at practice, or hearing the applause of people who appreciate your performance. Families, watching your student(s) experience all of these things can't be explained either. Hopefully, this information will simply make it a little easier to get through the initial stages of the 2026 Marching Band Season.

Sincerely,

Mr. Graese

Director of Instrumental Music



Requirements for Participation

Class Enrollment

All musicians (not including Color Guard) must be enrolled in a music ensemble class in order to participate in Marching Band. This commitment to the program must be kept for the entire year.

Member in GOOD STANDING

All Marching Band members (including Color Guard) must be students in good:

1. Academic standing - According to the TRHS policy, those who have more than one "F" (students must be passing 5 classes) are considered academically ineligible to perform with the Marching Band. This is the same eligibility rule as athletics.
2. Behavioral standing - such behavior that does not uphold the ideals of the program will be grounds for dismissal from the Marching Band.
3. Financial Standing - all marchers must be current with their financial obligations. See "Financial Side" for details about band fees.

Paperwork

All members must have the following paperwork turned in before a performance spot is issued. Paperwork can be turned into Mr. Graese or the Mail Box just inside the band room door. A copy can be found at the link below or a hard copy from Mr. Graese.

[MB Forms.pdf](#)

Please complete each of the required forms:

1. Commitment contract
2. DCSD Permission Form/Medical Form
3. DCSD Transportation Consent

Physical Fitness

Marching band is a physical activity. The ability to regulate your breathing while playing an instrument is a difficult task. The addition of constant, focused movement compounds this difficulty, especially in any sort of heat. Please eat healthy and get active as you prepare for the season.



Equipment

All equipment and Instruments must be in proper working condition. This includes having a supply of good reeds. Instruments and flags must always be stored properly. Percussion and pit performers are responsible for their own mallets, drumsticks, and bags.

School-issue instruments:

The school provides some instruments for those whose concert instrument is not part of the marching band or the instrument is a larger instrument, namely percussion, guard and larger brass/woodwinds. Students using school instruments will be responsible for sticks, mallets, slide grease, valve oil etc.

Students who do not have an instrument will be able to rent one from the school for \$30 per semester.

Instrument Care

Whether you own your own instrument or you are using a school-issued instrument, it must always be maintained in top playing condition at all times. Periodically check for those loose screws, corks, pads, springs etc. If repairs are needed you can take your instrument to one of the local repair shops to get fixed. DO NOT play instruments that are not yours without permission.

The security of personal and school-owned instruments is the direct responsibility of the person playing the instrument. Wind instruments are stored in the storage closet or lockers. Students with lockers must provide their own lock. Lockers need to remain locked at ALL TIMES. If an instrument is lost/stolen, it is the responsibility of the family to replace the instrument as outlined in the instrument rental agreement.

Color Guard

Color guard will be provided with flags, poles, props and uniforms. Students will need to provide shoes, gloves and accessories when needed.



Attendance Policy

Conscientious rehearsal attendance is mandatory to the success of any instrumental music program. When we put drill on the field and work to develop our field show, it is essential that all band members are present for the entirety of all rehearsals. Regular attendance at rehearsals, combined with a solid ability to play all music and march drill will ensure the student a permanent position in the show. We need all members present in order to properly clean forms. If one individual is missing from a set, our ability to clean forms is reduced substantially.

1. Attendance is mandatory at all rehearsals and performance events.

- a. In the case a student is deemed academically ineligible, they will be allowed to rehearse, but not perform with the group.
- b. Students who are absent from too many rehearsals in a given period of time may be asked to perform from the sideline for their safety and the safety of other students.

2. Excused absences should be approved in advance.

- a) Illness
- b) Death in family
- c) An important religious observance
- d) Other RARE circumstances - Mr. Graese will determine each circumstance on a case by case basis.

During the school year, there are no practices/football games on Mondays, or Wednesdays. These are the best days for scheduling appointments (dentist, doctor, orthodontist, private lessons)

Personal conflicts such as jobs, homework, tutoring etc. are not excused.

1. In the event of a student wishing to receive an excused absence, the student must submit the request in writing to the director at least 24 hours in advance of the absence or it will be counted as unexcused. **X**
2. In the event that a student must be absent due to an unforeseen emergency such as illness, the student must email Mr. Graese as well as their section leader to let them know of the situation.
3. Students that participate in fall sports, activities and clubs must communicate with Mr. Graese about schedules. Flexibility is possible as long as your coach is also willing to work with you to split time and you must ALWAYS know your show.



The Financial Side

The Marching Band at ThunderRidge is primarily funded by student fees. The fee covers such things as transportation, uniform rental, equipment, food, show shirts, music, and drill.

Marching Band Fee

For the marching band season, there is a fee for all members. We build a budget for the season and try to keep fees as low as possible each season. ThunderRidge still has one of the lowest fees in the area and we can continue that trend with successful fundraising.

2026 Fees

- \$400 in total to be paid in separate installments through MySchoolBucks.
 - \$100 Participation Fee and \$300 Curriculum & Enrichment Fee
- \$35 for Marching Shoes (Required for all woodwind, brass, and percussion members) [ordered & paid through this form](#)

Payment is to be made as follows:

#1	August 1st	\$100 Participation fee (non-refundable deposit) \$100 of the \$300 Curriculum & Enrichment Fee
#2	September 1st	\$100 of the \$300 Curriculum & Enrichment Fee
#3	October 1st	\$100 of the \$300 Curriculum & Enrichment Fee

The money will be used throughout the season to pay for equipment, music, drill, staff, and transportation. Some items need to be paid for immediately such as music so that is the reason for a non-refundable deposit. Please pay band fees on time to ensure your student's participation and our success.



Other items to be purchased by the band members

All new students will need to purchase our marching shoe for \$35. We may have used shoes available for students as well for \$12. We will collect shoe sizes and money for the shoe order before/during camp. Veterans who have shoes that are too small will need to order shoes as well. Old shoes can be traded into the used pile for a discount on a new pair.

Other items to be purchased by the Color Guard

All guard members will be responsible for their shoes and gloves; however, these orders will all be submitted at band camp. Some show uniforms will require other items, students will be informed each season if anything extra is needed. Color guard members will wear BLACK T-SHIRTS at rehearsal.

Fundraising

Each student family is asked to participate as fully as possible to ensure we can continue funding the program. Active participation in fundraising helps us replace and upgrade old equipment as well as helps with day-to-day operations.

ThunderRidge Band offers a number of different opportunities for your child and family to help raise money to offset the cost of running the marching band program. Some fundraising activities go towards the general band fund; some can go towards offsetting as student's individual fees/costs. The student account can be used to pay for travel costs, instrument rentals and other fees. There will be opportunities to fundraise throughout the year.

We are always looking for new and different ways to raise these funds for Marching Band. If you would like to help with fundraising or if you have an idea, please consider joining the TRHS Band Wagon.

- **King Soopers Cards:** Ongoing fundraiser where 5% of you groceries and gas purchases come back to the school. Contact Mr. Graese for details.
- **Support Fund:** Support fund is a combination of a donation campaign and fudge sales fundraiser. We did great on this fundraiser last year are continuing it this year.



Schedule

Please visit [our digital calendar](#) and add all dates to your personal/family calendar.

After-School Rehearsals

All Members: Tuesdays/Thursdays - 4:00pm - 7:00pm

Football Games

The scheduled games can be found on the digital calendar on the band website. We play at all home games including playoffs. For most games, student call time will be 30 minutes prior to kickoff at Halftime Help Stadium (Formerly Shea Stadium). All students are required to find their own transportation to and from games. Busses will not be provided.

Other Events

The Marching Band is a very important group within the ThunderRidge Community. We will perform at multiple community parades throughout the season and for the student body on several occasions including the Homecoming Parade, Field Day, PowderPuff Football, and several assemblies.

Basketball Band

We form a subset of musicians in the 2nd semester to perform at basketball games. Information will be sent out about this in January.

PLEASE CHECK THE BAND CALENDAR FREQUENTLY AND ADD DATES TO YOUR OWN CALENDAR. IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE STUDENTS AT ALL EVENTS

[BAND CALENDAR](#)



Marching Band Uniforms

In 2015, we got new Marching Band uniforms for the first time since 1996. These uniforms were obtained through fundraising and help from our principal at the time. We are incredibly grateful for the uniforms we have thanks to this effort and we need to make them last.

Proper Wear of the Uniform

To ensure uniformity, parents and section leaders will help check out uniforms to students to make sure they are fit and the button hems are placed properly. Students must adhere to all instructions, to include but not limited to, the uniform and hair care. The director and staff reserve the right to postpone the performance of a student with a uniform in poor performance condition. **Band members will be financially responsible for replacing any part of any uniform that is lost, rendered unserviceable, or destroyed through personal neglect or improper cleaning.**

The uniform identifies an individual as a member of our ensemble, representing our band, school, and community. Students are responsible for having a clean, neat uniform for every performance.

When in public, we are either fully in or fully out of uniform unless instructed by a director. The uniform is to be worn with PRIDE at all times.

Color Guard uniforms are different every year and are designed to fit that year's specific theme.

Under the Uniform

Students must wear gym shorts (thermals if cold) under pants to facilitate quick, modest changes. No jeans, zippers, cargo pants, big buttons or belts under the uniform. Under the jackets students will wear the show shirt provided (add more layers if cold). Students must also wear LONG BLACK SOCKS and their marching shoes for every performance.



Uniform Storage/Care/Maintenance

Uniforms are kept at school throughout the season in a garment bag. Students will check out their uniforms before each performance and check it back in at the end of the event. After each event, the students are responsible for neatly folding their pants on the crease and hanging the pants and jacket on the hanger. Shoes must be stored at home.

Note: Cleaning procedures and instructions will be provided during uniform checkout.

Uniform Replacement Costs

Our uniforms are EXPENSIVE. This is why it is very important to take good care of them. Students are responsible for any damage or loss of uniform pieces. Below are the costs of each piece of the uniform. Please keep track of all pieces and take good care of them.

Jacket - \$185.00

Shako - \$40.00

Plume - \$20.00

Black Bibs - \$60.00

Gauntlets - \$46.00

Hip Drop - \$40.00

Garment Bag - \$15.00

TRHS BandWagon

No high school program can succeed without an active and highly energized group of parents behind it. The TRHS BandWagon is YOU, the parent. The BandWagon provides support to directors to help make the marching band program the best possible experience for the students.



What is there for parents to do?

There are many ways that you can help with the marching band program. Following is a list of a few of the opportunities and more opportunities will be sent out as the season progresses. It takes many individuals to successfully run such a large program and we could use EVERYONE'S help.

We will hold several meetings throughout the year. The best way to stay "in the know" is to sign-up on the Band Website to be a member of the Band Wagon. You will receive additional emails about updates and what help is needed from parents throughout the season.

You know you're a band parent when...

You can't pick out your child anymore, because they all look alike!

You have a pair of long black socks with you all the time just in case you get a call or text.

You find yourself humming the marching band show at work.

You know what a dot book, drillmaster, and shako is.

You no longer speak of your child as your daughter/son, but as "freshman trumpet," "sophomore guard" or "junior sax."

Volunteer Opportunities

Equipment Crew - Help transport equipment to events & move equipment on and off the field

Event Food - Help feed the band at events

Fundraising - Any ideas are welcome! Please be open to helping with the projects!

BE A FAN! - This is the most important job for all parents! Show up to competitions, events and football games and cheer loud for all the hard work the kids put in.