



THE HOUSTON HIGH SCHOOL BAND AND COLOR GUARD HANDBOOK

The Houston High School Band has a long, rich tradition of musical excellence and has been recognized as one of the best in the nation for the past three decades. The Houston Band consistently has the most students selected for regional and state honors of any band program in the region. In addition to the many students earning scholarships to perform beyond high school, former members of our program have gone on to internationally recognized careers in music related fields.

Our members have the opportunity to participate in different ensembles that perform a variety of musical styles. Whether it's outdoors with the marching band or in concert with the wind ensemble, through working in an ensemble with the jazz band or through individual excellence auditioning for honor bands our program offers the unique ability for each student to participate in the musical element they enjoy most.

It is important to note that membership in the Houston High School Band is a privilege and will be treated as such by every member of the program. In the following handbook we have provided information and laid out a groundwork for rules and expectations to ensure our success and the growth of each member involved. Each student and guardian will acknowledge receipt of the hand book and acceptance of program rules and expectations by signing and returning the compact at the end of the document.

COURSES

Varsity Band

This co-curricular course is required for all students who play wind instruments and meets daily during school hours as well as after school rehearsals and performances. In the fall this group works on all aspects of our competitive marching band performances and will perform at all home football games and selected marching band contests. Students in this group will also audition and be placed into one of three concert ensembles. These ensembles will perform at the winter and spring concerts as well as the Tennessee State Concert Adjudication in March. Students in this course are also required to participate in the All West Regional Honor Band auditions, and possibly the West Tennessee Solo and Ensemble event. All events are listed on the band calendar maintained on the Houston Band website.

Varsity Percussion

These co-curricular courses are required for all students who play percussion instruments and meets daily during school hours as well as after school rehearsals and performances. Students are placed into either *Mallet Percussion* or *Battery Percussion* based on their marching band instrumentation. In the fall this group works on all aspects of our competitive marching band performances and will perform at all home football games and selected marching band contests. Students in this group will also be placed into one of three concert ensembles. These ensembles will perform at the winter and

spring concerts as well as the Tennessee State Concert Adjudication in March. Students in this course are also required to participate in the All West Regional Honor Band auditions, and possibly the West Tennessee Solo and Ensemble event. Students in this course will also perform as members of a concert percussion ensemble. This ensemble will perform at concerts as well as contests throughout the second semester. All events are listed on the band calendar maintained on the Houston Band website.

Color Guard

This co-curricular course is required for all students who are member of the marching band color guard and meets daily during school hours as well as having scheduled after school rehearsals and performances. In the fall this group works on all aspects of our competitive marching band performances and will perform at all home football games and selected marching band contests. At the conclusion of the marching band season color guard students will audition and be placed in one of two Winter Guards. The winter guards will rehearse and perform at contests throughout the second semester.

Jazz Ensemble

Jazz Ensemble is a performance based course intended serve as an introduction to the rich history of American jazz music. Through ensemble rehearsal, individual practice, and a variety of performance opportunities, the student will gain an understanding and appreciation for this great art form. Emphasis will be placed on not just performance technique, but also rudimentary improvisational skills, musicianship, and a sense of personal accountability. Students in this course are also required to participate in the All West Regional Honor Band auditions. The Jazz Ensemble will perform throughout the school year.

Music Theory & Harmony

Students will gain academic proficiency in reading and writing music notation, scales and intervals, basic harmony, basic melody, and form. Successful completion of the course will provide an understanding of melody, harmony, rhythm, and form, thereby equipping the students to better understand existing music and to compose music using the principles of music theory as a guide. This course will provide the students foundations in music theory in preparation for Advanced Placement Music Theory.

AP Music Theory

AP Music Theory is intended to prepare students for the annual AP Music Theory Exam and will cover the content of a college freshman theory course. It includes written and aural music theory as well as sight singing and basic music composition. In this course students will become fluent in vocal and instrumental music is construction – primarily music written in the Common Practice Period (c. 1600-c. 1900), as well as material from other style periods.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Each member of The Houston Band will participate fully in each ensemble as assigned by the director. All members are expected to be present and timely, dressed appropriately, with all required equipment for every event. Members will also work to maintain an attitude conducive to learning and will follow the instructions of the band staff. Failure to follow these instructions will result in disciplinary action, administrative referral, and possible removal from the band program.

All members are expected to maintain good standing with the Houston Band Boosters organization. Staying current on dues as well as participating in volunteer activities are necessary aspects of maintaining our success. All events are scheduled with the intention heightening the experience of all students involved. Individual accommodations can be made for any member that has a need. Please contact a member of the Band Booster Board to set up a plan to meet this requirement.

Band members will follow the GMSD policies for student dress at all band functions. Where appropriate, the director may issue guidelines for event specific dress (i.e. band camp, pajama concert, etc.). This will be clearly communicated to members and will be at the discretion of the director.

Hazing and bullying of any kind is prohibited. Any students found to be violation of GMSD policies on hazing or bullying will be referred to the administration for disciplinary action. Students witnessing such occurrences are to report them immediately to the directors. Failure to report occurrences of hazing and bullying may result in disciplinary action for students observing such behavior.

All members of The Houston Band Program are expected to maintain the highest standard of conduct at all times. Members of this program should work to ensure that the public perception of our program is that of the most respected organizations in our community. Students found failing to maintain proper behavior in public may be prevented from appearing with the band, and possibly removed from the program.

COMMUNICATION

The Houston High School Band Program will rely on email messaging, as its sole source of official communication. Please be sure to keep your email address updated with the Band Director, and check the provided email account frequently for important information.

The Houston Band will maintain a social media presence on Facebook and Instagram, but use these outlets for publicity and community engagement only. Parents and guardians are asked to address questions and concerns with the directors through the email addresses published in the faculty listing on the Houston High School website.

ATTENDANCE

The calendar published on The Houston Band Website serves to inform students and parents of all events required of each member throughout the year. All events listed are mandatory and will be graded unless otherwise noted. Failure to plan events (family trips, doctor and dental appointments, work schedules, tutoring/lessons, etc) around the provided schedule will have a negative impact on student grades and could result in their removal from the program. Transportation to and from school for these events is the responsibility of the member. Lack of transportation will not warrant an excused absence. The Houston Band relies on each and every student member for its success. Student growth and success is impossible without consistent attendance and full participation. Absence and tardiness not only harm the individual student's growth, but also the learning of those around them.

Emergencies occur, and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. To obtain an excused absence from a rehearsal, an email from the parent or guardian is required as soon as possible and no less than 1 week in advance of the event. Excused absences will require an alternative assignment to make up the missed grade created by the absence. Unexcused absences cannot be made up and will result in a grade of 0 for that event. By their very nature, absences from performances CANNOT be made up and will result in a lowering of the student's grade.

BAND BOOSTER DUES

Band Booster Dues in the amount of \$725.00 are required for all band and color guard students. This amount is required to maintain the quality of experience for each member of the program. Money collected from dues provides for music, equipment, transportation, uniform maintenance and upkeep, program design, and additional instruction among other costs associated with running a large band program. A budget is created by the directors and approved by the Band Booster Board prior to every school year. Payments can be made by mail, PayPal, or in the Mr. Taylor's office in the band room. A payment coupon is available on The Houston Band website. If you would like mail your payment please use **cash/check/money order/cashier check option** and forward that payment made payable to ***The Houston Band*** to:

HHS Band Boosters
P.O. Box 38233
Germantown, TN 38183

Use your credit card to make a payment which includes a processing fee from PayPal of 2.9% plus \$.30 per transaction. These processing fees are deducted from the amount the band will receive from PayPal when you use your card so we have added them to the amount paid to receive our required net amount. The band makes no profit on the use of your credit card. This is different from the cash price listed above. If you have difficulty in making a payment using PayPal please contact the Directors.

Houston High School Band and Color Guard Performance Contract

We have read the preceding handbook and understand the requirements for student members of The Houston Band.

By signing we signify that _____ (print student's full name) is:

- Committed to fulfilling ALL rehearsal, performance, and grading requirements. We realize that missed rehearsals and performances will result in the lowering of their grade and possible removal from the program. Performances are required and cannot be made up.
- We understand that all official communication from the band is through email, and it is our responsibility to keep an accurate email address on file with the band directors.
- We agree to maintaining good standing in the Band Booster Organization and will make all necessary arrangements for dues and volunteerism.
- We understand the expectations of membership and will ensure that failure to comply will have adverse effects on academic grades and continued participation.

Parent/

Guardian _____ date _____

Student _____ date _____