



BAND HANDBOOK

2024 - 2025



Congratulations on your membership in the University High School Band.

The University Band is a comprehensive musical arts program that develops students as musicians, performers, and leaders. We believe in the importance of each student's personal dedication to excellence in every endeavor, in the concert hall, on the performance field, and in the classroom. Being part of this organization is a commitment to putting in the time, effort, and energy to achieve greatness in whatever you do. Congratulations on being a part of this group! More information can be found by visiting us online at www.UHSband.com.

Ensembles

The following ensembles and courses are available to our students.

Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band

All brass and woodwind players must be enrolled in one of these classes. Membership in the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band is by audition only. The Concert Band is open to all students.

Percussion Ensemble (Advanced, Intermediate, Introductory)

All percussionists must be enrolled in one of these classes. Membership in the Advanced and Intermediate classes is by audition only. The Introductory Percussion class is open to all students.

Big Band, Jazz Ensemble

Two levels of jazz study are offered. Big Band is by audition only; Jazz Ensemble is open to all students. These are secondary courses; any student in one of these classes should also be enrolled in a concert or percussion class.

Color Guard, Winter Guard, Eurhythmics

The color guard is a unique program incorporating music, dance, and special equipment. The color guard performs as part of the marching band. In the spring, the winter guard performs independently with the FFCC and WGI circuits. Students also have the opportunity to perform solos and in small ensembles. All guard members should be enrolled in a dance class during the day.

Marching Band

The marching band is comprised of all students in the Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, Percussion Ensembles, and Color Guard. It is a policy of Orange County Public



Schools that all students enrolled in any high school band course participate in marching band.¹ Students must maintain a GPA of at least 2.0 to participate. Exemptions for medical or religious reasons may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Blue Steel

Our steel drum ensemble is open to any student already enrolled in a Performing Arts class.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Music

A special class is offered for student musicians who are part of the IB magnet program. This is a Group 6 Higher Level (HL) course, taken after school junior and senior year. To ensure continued participation in the performing arts, IB students should sign up for this class as sophomores and take their Group 4 course at Standard Level (SL.)

Performing Arts Magnet

The University Performing Arts Magnet allows students to take an in-depth study of music history and theory while participating more actively in the various ensembles offered at our school. Application to the magnet is open to freshmen and sophomores.

Auditions

There is no audition for general membership in the University Band. Any student enrolled at University High School may register for and participate in a band class, as long as a commitment is made to fulfill all requirements.

Auditions are required for our advanced ensembles:

- Wind Ensemble
- Symphonic Band
- Big Band
- Advanced Percussion
- Intermediate Percussion
- Performing Arts Magnet

Audition requirements and études are posted at www.UHSband.com.

¹ OCPS Marching Band Review Committee Report (2003)



Attendance Policy

All students must be enrolled in a concert ensemble, percussion, or color guard class. Band courses in Orange County are “co-curricular,” not extracurricular. As such, all after school band events, including rehearsals and performances, are considered part of the class and will be reflected in the class grade.

The Florida Department of Education course description for band classes includes the following statement: “This course generally requires students to participate in extra rehearsals and performances beyond the school day.” In addition, OCPs course descriptions for band state the following: “As a cocurricular performance-oriented activity, attendance is required for rehearsals and performances beyond regular school hours.”

All rehearsals and performances are mandatory. Our schedule is announced far enough in advance to avoid most conflicts. Parents, please make every effort to schedule regular appointments and foreseeable activities around the band’s schedule whenever possible. For seniors, this includes events taking place after the last day of classes but before graduation.

Students are responsible for arriving at each rehearsal and performance on time and prepared (properly dressed, instrument and equipment ready, music in hand, etc.) Parents are urged to ensure that their children take this responsibility seriously and build a habit of punctuality and preparation.

Students must leave campus no later than half an hour (30 minutes) after the end of a scheduled rehearsal or the ensemble’s return from an event. Parents, please pick up your child promptly or make arrangements for him or her to get a ride whenever you are unable to do so.

If you must miss a rehearsal or performance, you must notify the band directors by sending an email with the date and valid reason to both band directors and your student leaders.

Unexcused absences may be reflected in the student’s grade. Legitimate reasons for absence of course sometimes arise; if this is the case, please contact the band directors as soon as possible.

A student with an unexcused absence will lose performance eligibility at the band’s next event. If this is a full performance, the student is still required to attend the event, but will be sidelined during the performance. If the next event is a pep band, the student may not attend. Students with excessive unexcused absences may be removed from the ensemble at the director’s discretion.



Weekly Schedule

Although there is seldom such a thing as a “typical week,” generally, the fall schedule looks something like this:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Full Rehearsal (3:00 - 8:00 PM)		Full Rehearsal (3:00 - 8:00 PM)	Football Game 4:00 PM (Away) 5:00 PM (Home) Games usually end around 10:30 PM.	Competition (see calendar)

After Thanksgiving Break, “typical weeks” are even rarer, but in general, you can expect something along these lines:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Jazz Ensemble (2:30 - 4:00 PM)	Big Band (2:30 - 4:00 PM) Winter Guard (5:00 - 8:00 PM)	Symphonic Band (1:30 - 3:30 PM)	Wind Ensemble (2:30 - 4:00 PM) Winter Guard (5:00 - 8:00 PM)		Competition (see calendar)

Financial Responsibilities

Orange County Public Schools provides only modest financial support for music education. To maintain a vibrant and successful program, each member must contribute financially. Fundraising events are scheduled throughout the year to help each family offset these costs. Although they have gone up slightly this year, our band assessments are the lowest among groups with comparable levels of activity and success, and we work hard to make our program accessible for everyone. Students are charged no more than necessary for the operation of our program, and the majority of our budget comes from other sources such as running concessions and hosting events.

No student will be denied arts education because of financial hardship; however, it is expected that steps are being taken to fulfill financial obligations. Families seeking special arrangements should contact the band director.

Instruments and Equipment

Students are required to own or rent an acceptably functioning instrument. Students are also required to maintain, at their own expense, this instrument in working order. Students are also



required to obtain any necessary accessories such as reeds, valve oil, mouthpieces, mutes, etc. With basic care, instruments are designed to last, and these expenses should be minimal.

Students are encouraged to rent or purchase their own instrument whenever circumstances allow; however, as this is not always practical, the school does own many lesson common instruments, and a few common ones, which are available for rental.

Any student renting a school instrument must complete the OCPS Instrument Check-Out Form for that instrument. This form is available at www.UHSband.com/members/forms. You may not take a school instrument off campus if this form has not been filled out and turned in.

Students who use school-owned instruments will be assessed a fee of \$50 each semester to cover instrument acquisition and maintenance.

Annual Assessments

Each year, the University Band has an operational budget of over \$100,000, almost entirely fundraised by our members and supporters. Each member of the program contributes to help cover these costs and maintain an active program. Band Assessments are as follows:

Marching Band Assessments

These apply to everyone in marching band and cover uniforms, props, drill, instructional assistants, etc.

Deposit	\$100	Due May 31
Fall Assessment 1	\$100	Due August 1
Fall Assessment 2	\$100	Due September 1
Fall Assessment 3	\$100	Due October 1

Transportation Assessment

If events require the band to take charter buses, the cost of the buses will be distributed among the membership. Charter buses are required if OCPS buses are not able to make the trip; generally this includes events that take place during school drop off/pick up times or overnight.

Spring Assessment

This is for everyone enrolled in a band class *except* members of the Winter Guard. It covers music, clinicians, registration fees, FBA and FMEA assessments, and other spring expenses.

Spring Assessment	\$50	Due February 1
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Equipment Maintenance Assessment

This applies to students using school-owned (including percussion) and covers acquisition and repairs.

Equipment Maintenance	\$50	Due September 1
Equipment Maintenance	\$50	Due February 1

Fall Guard Assessment

This applies to all color guard members who perform with the marching band. It helps to cover custom uniforms, gloves, shoes, flags, and equipment.

Fall Guard Assessment	\$50	Due July 15
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Uniform Accessories

All members who need marching shoes, gloves, and socks will need to purchase this package.

Uniform Accessories	\$50	Due August 1
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Concert Attire

All members of the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band will need to acquire a tuxedo or dress for concerts and performances. We use the same attire every year, so it is a one-time purchase for all four years and can be used well beyond high school.

Payments

Payments can be made online via SchoolPay. A direct link is available on the parents page of the band website. Alternatively, if you would like to make a donation for the same amount to the Foundation for OCPS, either online or by check, your band assessments will be waived.

Band Account

Every student has an individual ledger to help you track obligations and payments. This serves as your receipt and is available at www.UHSband.com on the Members Page.



Parents

The support of our network of parent and alumni volunteers is absolutely necessary to the success of our band program.

ADDitions Volunteer Status

All adults who like to volunteer at University High School must first register as an “ADDitions” volunteer at ocps.samaritan.com AND sign up for the UHS Band Volunteer System at www.UHSband.com/volunteers.

Your ADDitions status expires every year on July 1 and must be renewed. Each year, you’ll need to sign up for both the generic University High School volunteer opportunity as well as the one specifically for band.

Once your ADDitions status is confirmed, you will be able to view and sign up for events on the band website.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings will take place several times throughout the year. These meetings are mandatory as they allow everyone to stay well informed about their children’s activities, as well as keeping everyone abreast of all the opportunities to help out. A link to attend virtually will be posted on the band website.

Band Parent Board

The Band Parent Board is a core team of parents who support the band throughout the school year. This requires a sustained, though not overwhelming, commitment of time and is a great way to stay involved in your children’s lives. The Parent Board helps with coordinating events, fundraising, and other needs. It consists of the following positions:

- Chaperone Coordinator
- Concessions Coordinator
- Uniform Coordinator
- Logistics Coordinator
- Guard Coordinator
- Percussion Coordinator
- Hospitality Coordinator
- Health & Safety Coordinator
- Fundraising Coordinator
- Treasurer



Other positions are created on an ad hoc basis. All Parent Board meetings are open to anyone who is willing and able to volunteer their time, effort, and expertise to support our band program's endeavors.

The Band Website

Most questions can be answered with a quick stop at our band's website, www.UHSband.com. Here follows a quick overview of some of the website's features.

Home Page

The home page is your first stop for announcements and upcoming events. Check back here regularly (it makes a beautiful home page for your browser) for updates. It also contains links to a list of the band's recent accomplishments ("Accolades"), our student leadership page, information about our instructional staff, alumni page, and the band's YouTube channel.

Ensembles

This drop-down menu contains links to pages describing the ensembles and courses offered by the University Band.

Parents

The Parents' page contains information about volunteering, including the ADDitions Volunteer Management System and the UHS Band Parent Survey. Under "Forms," you can find copies of required health forms, agreements, and handbooks. Using the "Band Fees" tab, you can quickly check your account status by entering your OCPS student number. A link to pay band fees online is available by clicking "Online Payments." All our newsletters are archived here, and you can access information about our band parent board.

The parent board portal link allows our various parent coordinators to do things like take attendance or manage the concessions stand menu.

Members

The Members' page is for current students, and can be accessed by clicking "Log In" and using your OCPS student number as the username. The password defaults to "iloveband" until you change it. On the Members' page, students will find announcements and important information, as well as links to keep their profile up to date. Please make sure the band has accurate information, especially your email address, graduation year, and instrument. You can view your band account and attendance records, and use the "View/Update Documents" button to upload any required forms. Show music and drill can be accessed and downloaded from this page, as well.



The “Class Pages” button will take you to a list of courses, where you can access special resources and announcements particular to each class.

Finally, to change your password, use the “Change Password” button. It is important to create a unique password to prevent unauthorized access to your account.

Expectations, Tradition, and Philosophy

Our band has a hard-earned reputation as one of the premier music education programs in the State of Florida. Students are expected to behave with professionalism, dignity, and humility at all times as representatives of our program.

“Committing to Greatness Every Day”

Being a member of the University Band is a commitment that goes far beyond musical performance. Excellence and integrity are expected from our members at all times: in class, at school, at home, wherever they are. Members of our band are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and to take initiative to improve themselves continually as musicians, students, and persons. As a University Band member, your character is more important than your performance. Always act with the dignity, virtue, and morality that will represent our program in the best possible way.

“You’ll Never Walk Alone”

We strive to make our band a safe and positive environment for all students. Members are expected to foster a welcoming, encouraging, and accepting attitude. All band members should consider themselves part of the program’s mission to raise up their peers to the highest level of personal and artistic standards.

Staff Information

Jon Brown

Band Director

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Band Office Phone

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Jeff Willis

Band Director

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Band Website

www.UHSband.com



Agreement

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the terms of the UHS Band Handbook.

 Band Director	 Band Director	 Student
 Parent	 Parent	 Student ID Number