



Jefferson High School Dragon Band

4401 W Cypress Street | Tampa, FL 33607

Sean Harlan, Director of Bands and Orchestra

(813) 872-5241, ext. 271 | sean.harlan@hcps.net

www.jhsmusicprogram.com

MARCHING BAND - GUIDE FOR NEW PARENTS INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Jefferson High School Band Family!

This guide was created by parents who, not long ago, were brand-new to the band world themselves. We spent much of that first year navigating practices, pickups, performances, and competitions—often feeling confused, overwhelmed, or just plain lost. Our hope is that this guide will help make your transition from “new” band parent to “veteran” a smoother and more enjoyable experience.

For both students and parents, the jump from middle school band to high school band—especially with the addition of marching band—is a big one. The expectations are higher, but so are the rewards. Watching your student grow, achieve, and perform with pride is one of the most fulfilling experiences you’ll have as a band parent.

The Jefferson High School Marching Band is supported by a dedicated parent-run organization: the **Jefferson High School Band Boosters (JHSBB)**. This group exists solely through the efforts of volunteers like you, working together to ensure our students have a meaningful, memorable, and successful band experience. We encourage all parents to get involved—your time and talents make a huge difference, and your student will benefit greatly from your support.

Band participation does include some required fees, which are detailed in the **JHS Band Handbook**. These fees help cover essential costs such as band camp, uniforms, transportation, staff, equipment, and more.

Wind and percussion students also participate in **concert ensembles** during the school year. These run concurrently with marching band, but after-school concert rehearsals begin only *after the marching season ends*.

Band Booster meetings are typically held on the first or second Monday of each month, starting in September. Meetings take place at **5:30 p.m. in the band room** and generally last 30–45 minutes. Any schedule changes will be posted on the **TJHS Music Program webpage**. We encourage you to attend, learn more about the booster program, and get involved—you are truly welcome here!

BAND CAMP - ONSITE

Band Camp takes place in late July and early August, typically a couple of weeks before the school year begins. Percussion and Color Guard students usually meet 4–6 times over the summer, with all dates and times announced before the end of the school year. These rehearsals are essential, as they mark the beginning of learning music and drill for the upcoming marching band show. While the daily schedule may vary, students and staff work incredibly hard during this time to lay the foundation for a successful season.

Band Camp is physically demanding—students should be prepared to sweat and stay active throughout the day. It's an experience many describe as something they “love to hate,” but it's also where some of the best memories are made. Proper attire is important: lightweight t-shirts, athletic shorts, comfortable sneakers, a hat, and plenty of sunscreen are essential. Since we're in Florida, heat and sun exposure are inevitable. Students must bring a large, refillable water bottle—water is available throughout the day, and staying hydrated is crucial. Encourage your student to drink water before, during, and after rehearsal.

At the end of camp, we celebrate with a **“Show-and-Tell” performance** for families. It's an exciting opportunity to see how much progress the students have made in just two weeks. Following the performance, we'll hold a **parent meeting**, where you'll get to meet other families, the band staff, and members of the Booster organization. You'll also be able to complete and notarize any required paperwork for the school year.

One of the greatest benefits of band camp is the sense of belonging it creates. When your student walks into their first day of high school, they won't be doing it alone—they'll already be part of a respected, close-knit group with friends from every grade level. Our band students look out for each other, especially the new members, making that transition into high school much easier and more welcoming.

MARCHING BAND SEASON, FOOTBALL GAMES, FESTIVALS AND UNIFORMS

Marching Band Season Overview

The marching band season officially begins at the end of band camp and continues into the fall semester. Weekly after-school rehearsals typically take place on **Tuesdays or Thursdays from 4:30–7:30 p.m.** Mr. Harlan will provide a detailed schedule, which is also available on the **band calendar**. Be sure to check in with your student regularly to stay informed.

The band performs their halftime show at **all varsity football games**—usually on Friday evenings, with the occasional Thursday game. In addition to the halftime performance, students play “stand tunes” during the game from a dedicated section in the stands. Many band parents choose to sit nearby, creating a great community atmosphere and offering a chance to watch your student perform up close.

Throughout the fall, the marching band also participates in several **marching festivals and competitions**, both locally and out of town. For each event, students must have a signed **permission slip** in order to board the bus. This form is included in the paperwork completed at the end of band camp. Your presence at performances and competitions makes a huge difference—students love seeing familiar faces and hearing cheers from the crowd. It's an exciting way to support their hard work and dedication.

Uniforms & Performance Attire

Each marching band student is issued a **uniform jacket, pants, and gauntlets**, which are **on loan** from the school. Students are required to **purchase their own shako (hat), gloves (not required for percussion), and marching shoes** through the band boosters. Additionally, students must provide their own **long black socks (at least mid-calf length)**.

Uniforms are distributed on labeled hangers before each event and must be returned properly hung to the **uniform room** afterward. All students are expected to treat their uniforms with care. Uniforms and gauntlets are periodically dry-cleaned by the program. No part of the uniform should be removed without permission from Mr. Harlan.

Students are also issued a **JHS Bands t-shirt**, which must be worn every **Friday during marching season**, and underneath the uniform at all performances. Students must wear appropriate shorts under the uniform—**no denim is allowed**.

Performance Expectations

Preparedness is key! For every performance or event, students are expected to arrive with all required items, including:

- Instrument and music (if applicable)
- Clean marching shoes
- Shako (hat), gloves (if required), and gauntlets
- Long black socks (mid-calf or higher)
- JHS Bands t-shirt and approved shorts

Failure to bring these items may prevent a student from participating and will negatively affect their grade.

HELP US HELP THE STUDENTS - MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHTER WORK!

Parental Involvement & Volunteer Opportunities

Throughout the school year—and especially during marching season—our band program relies heavily on the support of parent volunteers to keep everything running smoothly. As your student becomes more involved in high school band, volunteering is a wonderful way for you to stay connected, meet their friends, and support the program behind the scenes.

Marching band doesn't happen without a strong community of parent helpers. Students quickly realize just how much they depend on the adults around them—and we hope you'll consider being a part of that support system.

The **JHSBB** will be seeking volunteers for a wide variety of roles, including:

- **Uniform Support:** Assist with fittings, alterations, and post-performance collection and inspection.
- **Room Organization:** Help clean and organize the uniform and equipment rooms.
- **Home Game Operations:** Assist with collecting parking fees or working concessions.
- **Parent & Student Assistance:** Guide new or lost families and students on game days and event days.
- **Hydration Team:** Pack and distribute water bottles during games and competitions.
- **Equipment Crew:** Load and unload instruments and equipment to/from the field and track.
- **Stadium Prep:** Wipe down bleachers and rope off the band seating section (we protect those uniform pants!).
- **Uniform Distribution:** Help hand out uniforms to section leaders before performances.
- **Pre-Performance Emergencies:** Assist students with last-minute needs (zippers, gauntlets, band-aids, earrings, or even rogue nail polish!).
- **Field/Band Formation:** Help organize students for marching to the field or loading buses.
- **Travel Prep:** Ensure supply bags and medical forms are on buses and help with roll call.
- **Truck Driver:** Drive the band's instrument truck to and from events.
- **Field Crew:** Help move drum major podiums, props, and large instruments on and off the field.
- **Chaperoning:** Supervise events, assist in the stands, distribute water, and manage third-quarter concessions.
- **Creative Support:** Help plan and offer ideas for events such as Senior Night, the Band Banquet, and more.
- **Special Talents:** Have a skill or resource you can offer? We'd love to hear about it!

SENIOR NIGHT AND ANNUAL BAND BANQUET

Senior Night – The JHS Band Program would like to honor our senior students and their parents prior to the game. Students are escorted onto the field by their parents or significant other family members to be greeted and acknowledged by the principal and band director. Try to be there for Senior Night to see the presentation.

Band Banquet – At the end of the year, the members of the JHS Instrumental Music Program will celebrate our successful year with students, family and faculty for an end-of-year banquet. It is a theme-appropriate party experience including dinner, videos, and award presentations.

FUNDRAISING

Supporting the JHS Bands Through Fundraising

To help sustain and grow the Jefferson High School Bands program, we host several fundraising events throughout the year. **Your participation—whether through time, donations, or ideas—is vital** to our continued success.

We're fortunate to have an incredible staff working alongside Mr. Harlan to support and guide our students. Maintaining this high-quality team requires consistent funding, and that's where fundraising plays a crucial role.

Whether you can contribute by taking part in fundraisers, sharing creative new ideas, or helping us connect with community sponsors, every effort counts. Together, we can ensure the JHS Band program continues to thrive!

Tips for a Successful Band Experience

Mr. Harlan, the staff, and the booster organization want this to be a positive experience for all the students and their families. Together, we can make this an unforgettable and enriching year for your student and the entire JHS Band Family! Here are some helpful hints (learned from our own experiences):

Encourage Responsibility

Hold your child accountable for coming to rehearsal prepared. Forgetting an item once is usually all it takes—they quickly learn to be organized and resourceful!

Emphasize Punctuality

One of the guiding mottos of the JHS Instrumental Music Program is:

“To be early is to be on time, and to be on time is to be late.”

Students are expected to arrive **at least 15 minutes before** scheduled practice or call times, fully ready to rehearse when practice begins.

Arrive Early for Pick-Up

Please plan to arrive a few minutes early when picking up your student. Staff members cannot leave until all students have been picked up—this is both a safety concern and a courtesy to staff who also have families to get home to.

Be Patient with Timing

While rehearsals are scheduled to end at specific times, they occasionally run a few minutes over. If this happens, it's usually for a good reason—thanks for your patience and understanding.

Stay Informed

Ask your student for the weekly schedule—but also double-check the **band calendar** on TJHSMusicProgram.com (or your band's official site) for updates and last-minute changes.

Connect with Other Parents

Band is a community—get to know fellow parents at rehearsals, games, competitions, or fundraisers. Networking is the best way to find carpools, stay informed, and learn helpful “band parent” tips.

Be Loud, Be Proud!

The students LOVE having a cheering section! Whether it's a football game or competition, your support in the stands makes a big difference.

Stay Organized

We recommend keeping all small uniform items—**socks, shoes, gloves, etc.**—in a dedicated bag. Personalized band bags (embroidered with your student's name) are available through our online store—link is on the website!

Don't Be Afraid to Ask

Have questions? Ask a veteran band parent or a JHS Band Booster board member—we've all been new at this, and we're happy to help!

Keep Instruments Performance-Ready

Make sure your student has all the necessary supplies to keep their instrument in top shape: reeds, mouthpieces, valve oil, slide grease, mallets, etc. Coming to rehearsal unprepared can impact their performance **and their grade**.

CHAPERONE GUIDELINES

The Role of Parent Chaperones

Parent chaperones play a vital role in the success of band activities. Your involvement not only helps events run smoothly, but also shows your student that you support their musical journey. At all times, both parents and students should be treated with the highest level of **respect and courtesy**.

Chaperones are expected to uphold and support the values and expectations set forth by the band director. As part of their role, chaperones will travel with the band on buses and remain with the group for the entirety of each event. By volunteering, you are accepting the important responsibility of serving as a “parent away from home” and will be asked to assist with specific duties throughout the trip.

Timeliness is essential. For the safety and well-being of all students, the following policies apply to all chaperones:

- **No consumption of alcohol** before or during any band activity or trip
- **No smoking** during band events
- **Full adherence** to all rules and procedures outlined by the director and staff

These guidelines are in place to ensure a safe, respectful, and positive environment for everyone involved. Your dedication and support are deeply appreciated!

Chaperone Responsibilities and Expectations

- The bus leader is responsible for retrieving the attendance and medical form binders from the director’s office before departure. Roll will be taken before leaving both the home location and the event site.
- All chaperones are expected to help ensure that JHS Band and Colorguard rules are followed at all times. Basic guidelines can be found in the JHS Band Handbook. Additional procedures or updates will be provided by the Volunteer Coordinator as needed.
- During performances or third-quarter breaks, some chaperones will remain in the stands to supervise the seating area, while others will assist with equipment and logistics.
- Only Mr. Harlan may grant individual permission for students to leave the seating area. The band will remain seated until Mr. Harlan or the drum major(s) give instructions to move. Students may use the restroom only during third-quarter break.
- After the band leaves the stands at the end of the game, please check the area for any trash or belongings. Place all waste in garbage bags and ensure nothing is left behind.
- For safety reasons, all bus windows must be closed upon departure from the stadium and should remain closed until the bus is several blocks away.
- Once the students have exited the bus at the end of the trip, check to make sure no items have been left behind.
- If a student is uncooperative or shows disrespect, report the situation to Mr. Harlan immediately. Chaperones are there to guide and support; discipline will be handled by Mr. Harlan or the Color Guard staff.

- If a student appears to be ill to the extent that parental contact is necessary, inform Mr. Harlan right away. He will be responsible for contacting the student's parents and managing the situation.
- Please note: children who are not members of the band must pay for admission to games and band events.
- Winter Guard parents may be asked to volunteer their time and use their vehicles to assist with carpooling students to spring competitions.
- Chaperones and parent volunteers should always maintain a professional demeanor. If you have any concerns regarding a staff member, please bring them directly to Mr. Harlan.
- Make sure the program has your updated email address to receive all important communications from Mr. Harlan.
- Lastly, please do not interrupt rehearsals or instructional time. Allow Mr. Harlan and the staff to focus on teaching and working with the students.

COLORGUARD AND WINTERGUARD

The **Jefferson High School Color Guard** brings dynamic visual impact to the Dragon Marching Band through expressive performances using dance, flag, rifle, and sabre. Each member is a dedicated and skilled performer, selected through an audition process. The Color Guard is an integral part of the program, performing at all Jefferson football games, pep rallies, parades, concerts, and Solo & Ensemble events, enhancing the band's presence with energy and artistry.

Beyond the fall marching season, the Color Guard continues its excellence through **Winter Guard**, competing in the **Florida Federation of Colorguards Circuit**. Each season, the team works tirelessly to design and present competitive shows that reflect their passion and commitment to performance excellence.

CONCLUSION

We hope you find this guide helpful. If you ever feel uncertain or need assistance, don't hesitate to reach out to a "veteran" parent—they're always happy to help. Our primary goal is to ensure every student has a rewarding and positive experience as part of the Jefferson High School Band and Color Guard programs.

As mentioned earlier, we are a parent-run organization, and we look forward to getting to know each and every family. Every student and their parents play an important role in making our band programs a welcoming and vibrant community.

ONCE AGAIN WELCOME TO THE JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL FAMILY!