

**TUSCARORA HIGH SCHOOL
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
HANDBOOK**

*Achieve Musical Excellence through Persistence,
Passion and Pride!*

JOHN D. KAROS, DIRECTOR

Greetings!

Welcome to the Tuscarora High School Marching Band! I am thrilled that you have chosen to be a member in our organization. This year will be an exciting year for us. THS band has a tradition of excellence that I would like to continue and take to the next level. I want to assure that I am committed to making this a quality program, not just in this year, but for many years to come.

I have high expectations of the students who participate in the ensembles. I encourage students not only to succeed in their musical ability, but I also emphasize academics, leadership and responsibility. There is a large commitment that is involved in a musical ensemble and we will all have to work together to achieve our goals to ensure excellence.

The primary emphasis of our fall program is Marching Band. We will perform across the tri state area for thousands of people. I would strongly encourage all concert band members to consider this ensemble. It teaches many important skills that you will find applicable to the real world, plus many colleges are impressed with students that can maintain a high GPA and be a member of an organization like this.

In the spring our primary emphasis will be the concert band, percussion ensemble, jazz ensemble and orchestra. These ensembles require a great level of commitment due to the level of music put in front of students. These ensembles routinely play literature at level IV, V and VI which incorporates intermediate and advance high school level as well as some college level literature. I would encourage all students to participate year round in our superior level ensembles and pursue outside playing opportunities such as private lessons and other community ensembles.

I look forward to carrying on the tradition of excellence that has been established at Tuscarora High School. I am committed to providing you with all the tools you will need to be successful this year, in and outside the classroom. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me! I'm looking forward to our continued success at Tuscarora.

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STUDENT HANDBOOK

A STATEMENT OF POLICY

In order to assist band members and parents in understanding areas of responsibility, a statement of band policy is herein set forth. Becoming familiar with this policy will enable each individual to make the most of this great opportunity to be a member of the THS band program, becoming a better person and a better musician.

I firmly believe that the student should improve through regular practice. I feel that when the student has lost the will to improve him/herself or make a better contribution to the band, he is wasting the time and efforts of his / her fellow members and the community by continuing in this program. The HAPPIEST student is the one who is improving through regular habits of practice and daily progress. He / she must not only know right from wrong, but must be able to stand for principles. He / she must develop a high sense of purpose toward which he /she is willing to work. RESPONSIBILITY and GOALS are the focus behind any level of achievement within this program. I intend to conduct myself in a manner that will facilitate all students in learning and bettering themselves.

Foreword

The purpose of this handbook is to provide valuable information about the band program. To consistently achieve and maintain the high standard of excellence desired by this organization, members should familiarize themselves with the regulations, procedures, and traditions of the band. It is hoped that some of the questions always prevalent with a band will be answered in this handbook. If a problem or question not covered in this handbook should arise, the director should be consulted for an explanation.

Marching Band

The marching band is a musical unit organized during the fall for the duration of the football and Tournament of Bands season. Membership requires total dedication and maximum effort and involvement in all aspects of marching, playing and performance.

The marching band provides entertainment for home football games and occasional out of town games. It performs annually before thousands of spectators at various band festivals, contests, parades, and pep rallies.

The marching band rehearses Monday through Friday during the scheduled period and two additional out of school typically Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Rehearsals will be scheduled on Saturday mornings when we have a performance. Attendance at sectionals will be mandatory so that personal attention and evaluation can be given to each individual.

Auxiliary Units

A. GUARD (Band Front)

The guard is a unit comprised of a flag and rifle line. The guard has two extra rehearsals per week scheduled at the same time as the full marching band. The guard instructors may schedule additional practices with advance notice and attendance will be required. The guard will also rehearse on Saturday morning when we have a performance. Attendance is mandatory at all rehearsals.

B. HONOR GUARD

This unit will accompany the band in all parades and home football games. This unit also will participate in the annual county showcase of bands. The honor guard will be comprised of students participating as alternates or who may be academically ineligible.

Concert Band

The concert band is comprised of all members enrolled in the band program at Tuscarora High School. Chair placement occurs at the end of each marching season. Students may challenge for a higher seating. The concert band repertoire consists of quality original works for band and the best in orchestral transcriptions. The band attends the county music festival held annually and the state music festival upon qualifying. In addition, the THS concert band will perform two concerts a semester and host a concert of out feeder programs involving the local

elementary and middle schools. The concert band rehearses Monday through Friday during the scheduled period. Students will also be required to attend sectionals so personal attention and evaluation can be given to each individual. Additional full band rehearsals will be minimal, as most work is accomplished during the school day.

Jazz Ensemble

The Jazz Ensemble is an integral part of the overall band program. A serious effort is made to promote the growth and performance of jazz and related styles of music. Jazz requires certain numbers in its instrumentation. Membership for the ensemble is determined by auditions held by the Director of Bands in the spring of the year prior. One of the highlights for the ensemble is participation in several jazz festivals. The group will rehearse after school in the spring semester.

Pep Band

The pep band is an extracurricular ensemble and is composed of students who audition for the ensemble or are asked to perform by the director. The band plays for home basketball games to be determined by the director. This ensemble requires attendance at all rehearsals and performances. Students who do not meet this obligation will be removed from the ensemble.

Indoor Guard/ Percussion

When Interest permits we will attempt to form an indoor color guard along with an indoor percussion ensemble. Membership will be open to any interested music student. If the need for auditions arises they will take place at the beginning of December. Both ensembles will be extracurricular and meet after school and on most Saturdays. This year Tuscarora and Brunswick High Schools will be combining in an effort to reduce cost and be able to provide two high level ensembles that compete in the Keystone Indoor Drill Association. The ensembles will perform at area high schools on weekends from January to April. Please look for signups in the band room in late November. Participation is open to all students that are **academically eligible** and that have **participated in one ensemble class during the current school year**. Example- Marching Band, Concert Band, Percussion Ensemble, Orchestra.

Uniforms

The band department provides a uniform for every band member. The Uniform Committee consisting of members of the Instrumental Music Boosters, issues uniforms at the beginning of each semester. Payment amount will be made to the Tuscarora High School Instrumental Music Boosters. This fee covers all cleaning, handling, and alterations of the uniform. Damage to the uniform because of negligence will be paid by the student/parent/guardian. Payment of uniform accessories (i.e. marching shoes and gloves) will be expected at the time the uniform is picked up or as designated by the director.

Uniform Care Policies

The Student and their Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be required to read, understand, and sign a uniform contract before wearing the uniform. The student and their parents must comply with the following rules:

- 1) Keep the uniform in garment bag for storage and travel. **DO NOT** place shoes or a damp/wet uniform in garment bag! Let it dry first, keeping it out of direct sunlight so it will not fade.
- 2) **YOU WILL NOT** alter or change appearance of the uniform in any way. Only sleeves/trouser legs may be lengthened /shortened as needed by folding fabric up. Cutting any part of the uniform is **PROHIBITED!** If cutting is necessary, prior approval of the Band Director is required.
- 3) **YOU** will not abuse the hat by laying top down on any surface (i.e. grass, concrete, wood, etc.). Place the bottom down to rest on snout of hat.
- 4) **YOU** will take proper care of plume (to be used with hat) while in your care. **YOU WILL NOT** play with the feathers, throw it, etc. while in your care. It will be returned with uniform at the end of each performance in as good as the condition it was received in.
- 5) If for any reason the band uniform is damaged or destroyed while in your possession you will be responsible for the replacement pieces at the current cost.
- 6) **YOU** will return your uniform to the uniform room after each performance.

Uniform Inspection

A formal inspection will be conducted by the director and student leaders prior to every performance. Band members are expected to wear uniforms properly at all times. When the uniform is worn, a band member's personal appearance is to be impeccable. Band members will be expected to observe the following points to present a neat personal appearance:

- 1) Shoes should be shined.
- 2) Gloves should be clean and white. Finger holes cut out for woodwinds should not be ragged or frayed.
- 3) Hair should be properly groomed. Long hair must be worn up under the hat (shako) during marching performances. Hair should not touch the coat collar.
- 4) Girls (or guys) may not wear heavy make-up.
- 5) All buttons should be buttoned.
- 6) Suspenders should be adjusted properly so the pants length is correct.
- 7) Pants bottoms should be worn no higher or lower than about two inches from the ground.
- 8) Never wear an incomplete uniform in public.
- 9) Sunglasses, watches, rings, earrings (nose rings, or rings from any visible body part) and other accessories may not be worn.

WARNING!!: If there is one thing that upsets me more than anything else it is the disrespectful use of a band uniform. The uniform should be worn with **PRIDE!** It represents you, your family, your school, your band, your community, and me! If you show disrespect by not having all uniform parts or especially by wearing a dirty or wrinkled uniform you will not perform with the band. The director will call your parents and you will be asked to leave and be placed on band probation. I hope that you have read and understand, and agree with me on this. I will make **NO** exceptions!

Band Officers

DRUM MAJOR

This person is selected through an audition for the position by several judges and the director. The Drum Major must display strong leadership and multi-functional qualities and have knowledge of conducting music and teaching drill and marching fundamentals. He / she is in charge of the band at all marching functions and is responsible only to the director and staff. Appearance and confidence are important.

ASSISTANT DRUM MAJOR *(may not be used every year)*

This individual is selected through an audition for the position by several judges, and the director. He / she assists the drum major in conducting and rehearsal duties and takes charge in the absence of the DRUM MAJOR.

MARCHING CAPTAINS /SECTION LEADERS

These people assist in teaching and rehearsing all marching band shows. They must have a thorough knowledge of marching fundamentals, drill teaching techniques and rehearsal methods. Captains must display a high level of musicianship and have the ability to lead their section while maintaining a positive rapport. They work under the supervision of the director and should check daily to see that they are prepared for each rehearsal. In addition, they are responsible for running music section rehearsals when needed, checking off music and aiding sections for inspections before each performance.

Grading

All band members are expected to take band for credit. I DO NOT GIVE GRADES! The student earns all grades. Students who are willing to attend and participate will earn favorable grades. Each student will receive a syllabus for each ensemble at the beginning of each semester. There will be written homework, class work, and performance tasks that will be graded. The grade specifics will be provided on the class syllabus. Below is an explanation of my grading policy. The course syllabus provided at the beginning of the semester will describe the percentage portion of the grade (i.e. Rehearsal Participation 40%). Each ensemble covers three basic areas:

Rehearsal Participation

- If the student displays preparedness, cooperation, and participation, they will receive full credit.
- Any rehearsal outside of the school day is considered an extension of the band class and all school rules and expectations apply.
- To participate, one must be at rehearsal. Each unexcused absence will be 5 point deduction from the weekly class work grade.
- If a legal absence is expected, I must have a note signed by a parent 48 hours prior.
- Attendance for rehearsal is mandatory. Lateness will result in a grade deduction.

Tests (Playing & Written)

- All written tests will be announced with fair time for preparation.
- It is the students responsibility to make up any missed test.
- It is highly advisable that you keep and review ALL materials and handouts distributed by the director throughout the year. All information will be used on exams. It is not the director's responsibility to provide the student with extra copies before each exam!
- Each test will be graded with a percentage mark. All tests will then be averaged.
- On any written test, a student receiving a failing grade may retake the test provided arrangements are made within two (2) weeks of receiving the results of the failing exam. After this time period, tests may not be retaken.
- “Spot Checks” are on the spot playing tests that may not be retaken. Students are given warnings in advance if a spot check may occur.

PERFORMANCES

A performance is the result of the ensemble's preparation; therefore, attendance at a performance is mandatory. If you miss a performance, you will bring down the quality of our band. **YOU ARE IMPORTANT!!** Each unexcused absence from a performance can result in a 10 pt. overall grade reduction and may require the student to write a research paper on a topic of the director's choosing. I do understand that there are extreme situations when a student absolutely must miss a performance and they may be excused provided they complete and alternate activity or project. **(Family vacations, and employment schedules are not an acceptable reason to miss a performance)**

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

You are now a member of an organization in which every person is extremely important. It is paramount to the well-being of this organization that you attend all events - rehearsals and performances. Students should be on time for all band functions. Never plan on showing up for rehearsal at the starting time. You should plan on showing up at least 15 minutes early. Unexcused absences will NOT be tolerated by any member of this band. Any member who is slacking becomes the weak link that drags down the quality of this group. I urge you to encourage each other to be at all events so that we can have the best possible ensembles at Tuscarora High School.

A. Excused Absence from Rehearsal

Except in cases of extreme emergency or illness, band members will not be automatically excused from rehearsals. In case of illness, students are asked to call the section leader or drum major prior to the start of rehearsal. A letter stating the reason why the absence was necessary is due within two days of the absence. If a student is involved in a school sport they will be excused only if they have provided me with a schedule of practices and games well in advance. Students will need to make up any missed work to be excused. The director will provide ample time to make up work.

The director will review appointments or personal conflicts. These requests are to be in writing signed by a parent or guardian, and submitted at least one week prior to the intended absence. **Please realize these are requests and not excuses!** Accumulated absences will ultimately result in a student being placed on band probation and can result in the students not being permitted to perform.

B. Unexcused Absence from Rehearsal

Any student receiving an unexcused absence from rehearsal will have his / her grade adjusted accordingly. Absences especially the week of a performance will place the student on alternate status and prohibit that student from participating but will be required to attend the performance.

C. Tardy to Rehearsal

Attendance is taken at the beginning of all rehearsals. A student will have his / her grade lowered if tardy. Every tardy during the school day over two per marking period will result in after school detention.

D. Absence from Performance

A performance is the result of the ensemble's preparation therefore; attendance at a performance is mandatory. Every person is equally important in a performance. Only in cases of extreme emergency, extraordinary circumstance, or personal illnesses will a person be excused from a performance. The director must approve excused absences. Any absence not brought to the director's attention for approval prior to the performance will be considered unexcused. Unexcused absences will be given a substitute paper on a topic decided by the director, which will be a minimum of five pages and will be due no more than two weeks from the date of the original performance. To be excused the student must also complete an alternate project or activity deemed appropriate by the Director of Bands.

E. Special Rehearsals

If there is a "spur - of - the - moment" rehearsal, any member who cannot attend because of a prior commitment will not be penalized as long as the director is notified verbally and by a note signed by a parent or guardian at least one week in advance. (Or as soon as possible in the very rare occasion when the practice is scheduled within the week.)

BAND PROBATION

If a student is constantly acting in a way that will pull down the level of our group they will be placed on band probation. While on band probation a student will function only as an alternate and will not be eligible to perform but must still attend in any trip or other special events. Being deemed academically ineligible will also result in being put on band probation.

Band activity participation is a privilege to the members who are able to take the responsibility required to take part in such events. If a student is not doing his /her part, they will lose the privilege of performing. They must attend in uniform, but not participate in the ensemble during performance. Events that can lead to

band probation are excessive absences or tardiness, negative attitude, skipping rehearsals, or disrespect to staff or other band members.

REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES, RULES AND POLICIES

For any organization to run effectively it must have a set of rules and procedures in which all participants agree to follow. Therefore, I have created such a set of rules and procedures for all activities in which the band will participate. All members are to follow these rules. I am willing to explain my rationale for the following sets of rules and procedures. These rules, procedures, and policies are not restrictions; they provide a means of running a more efficient program.

A. REHEARSAL RULES AND PROCEDURES

WHEN THE DIRECTOR STEPS ON THE PODIUM ALL TALKING AND ACTIVITIES CEASE!

- 1) Respect the rights and property of yourself and others.
- 2) Be in your seat ready to play within two minutes of the beginning of rehearsal.
- 3) Every Band member will bring instruments, music, pencil, and any other proper equipment to every rehearsal or performance.
- 4) There is to be no talking or disturbance during rehearsals. Subdued talking is permitted with the director's permission or when the director leaves the podium. Talking should cease when the director stands on the podium or in the absence of the podium in the position that the podium would normally occupy.
- 5) Gum chewing or eating of any kind is not permitted during any rehearsal or performance.
- 6) Posture is of utmost importance. Students should avoid crossed legs or ankles and slumping when seated in chairs.
- 7) Play only when asked to do so. When the director is not working with you, sit quietly and silently practice your music.
- 8) The bulletin board or chalkboard should be read when entering the rehearsal room. Music will be placed in the proper order according to the instructions on the chalkboard.
- 9) Music folders, instruments, and equipment will be kept in their proper storage places when not in use. Music and folders should not be left on the music stand and cases will not be left on the floor.

10) Books and personal belongings should not be left in the band room or in the instrument storage area after rehearsal. All trash should be thrown in the waste container.

11) Loud talking, shouting, profanity, or horseplay is not allowed in the band department.

12) Students will remain seated until released. Students will not ask to leave the room for any reason, unless an emergency occurs.

13) Personal phone calls, are not permitted except calls made to parents after rehearsals or performance.

14) All band members will also follow all rules stated in the TUSCARORA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT INFORMATION GUIDE.

15) Smoking (or any activity legally reserved for adults only) is banned during any band activity and violation of this rule will result in immediate dismissal from band and referral to the school administration. Frederick County Board of Education Policy bans smoking from all Maryland schools (Parents included).

16) Any Student on band probation or whose performance does not meet the necessary standards of quality will be prohibited from performing. However, they will be required to travel with the band, and dress in uniform.

B. Rules and Regulations for Music Department Travel

1. Students may go on the trip with permission from the music department and Administration of THS. If a student is suspended or is academically ineligible over the trip dates, (s)he will not be allowed to attend the trip.

2. Students are representing THS and Frederick County Public Schools in public and are expected to have proper behavior and attitude at all times.

3. Chaperones must be treated with respect and courtesy. If a chaperone asks a student to do something, it carries the same weight as if Mr. Karos were to make the request.

4. The following infractions will send a student home. Parents and administration will be immediately notified and THS and Frederick County Public Schools policies will go into effect.

a. Extreme disrespect to Mr. Karos, any chaperone, or any adult encountered.

b. Being in possession **OR** use of alcohol, tobacco products or illegal drugs.

c. Students not in their assigned rooms at curfew times.

d. Any student who enters the hotel room of a student of the opposite sex.

e. Any student who leaves their room between curfew and breakfast the next morning. (Chaperones will do room checks at curfew and Mr. Karos and company will be prowling the halls after curfew!)

5. All students will participate in all scheduled activities and performances. No one will be allowed to stay in the hotel during the day when the group is gone.

6. No students will be allowed to go anywhere alone. Always use the buddy system and inform your chaperones where you will be and what you will be doing. You may also want to swap cell phone numbers.
7. Do not give out any information about yourself to strangers.
8. All medical forms must be signed and notarized for students to participate in the trip.
9. Parents must turn in a copy –a photo copy- of medical insurance cards and medical information.
10. Students and parents must sign the contract at the end of this packet and turn it in this EVENING in order for the student to attend.
11. Students are asked to bring along a photo ID- a driver's license or school ID is fine.
12. Time schedules must be strictly adhered to. DO NOT BE LATE for activities. You will hold up the entire group. Always be 10 minutes early for deadlines OR you will be incarcerated with a chaperone.
13. Use common sense for safety at all times.

BUS BEHAVIOR

1. Stay seated on the bus at all times unless using the rest rooms. If an adult repeatedly asks a student to be seated, the student will have their seat changed to be next to the chaperone.
2. Keep your noise volume reasonable- remember the adults decide if it is reasonable or not. Music volumes need to be kept down for those who may wish to rest.
3. Students are welcome to bring movie videos on the trip. Please give them to Mr. Karos the week before the trip for preview. Only PG and G rated movies please. Put your name on the videos, or Mr. Karos will be adding to his collection.
4. You can bring food and drinks for the trip. Please kindly clean up after yourself, trash bags will be provided.
5. You will be expected to leave the bus CLEANER than you found it. Now one will be dismissed until Mr. Karos does a bus check in the evening.

HOTEL BEHAVIOR

1. No running in the hallways. No loud talking or music in the hallways **EITHER**.
2. Volume on televisions or radios in the hotel room needs to be reasonable.
3. Use towels provided by the front desk personnel for all water activities, and yes you must shower
4. Be considerate of other guests who maybe sleeping
5. Be careful of young children around the pool. FOLLOW POOL RULES.

6. Phone service in your hotel room will be cut off. If you need to make a long distance call, you need to use a calling card number and use a phone in the lobby. Students wishing to bring cell phones on the trip may do so with parental permission.
7. Gaming system and pay-per-view channels will also be turned off. Any room expenses will be the responsibility of all members in the room.
8. In the event any complaints are received about an individual or our group, management will warn us. A second complaint will result in management asking us to leave the premises. We will be billed for any other guests leaving on account of our disturbances. We will also be billed for any vandalism or stolen property.
9. Do not leave money or other valuables in your room. A hotel safe may be provided. Keep your door locked at all times, keep your key with you. You will not all receive keys for the room. You must communicate and share the keys as necessary. Even if you are going down the hall to a friend's room, lock your door if there is no one in the room.
10. Do not give out your room number to strangers.
11. Learn where the closest exit door is located in case of emergency.
12. In case of fire, do not use the elevators. Go down the staircase and gather by the charter buses.

WHAT TO BRING

1. Complete uniform in the bag. Check to be sure you have the sash on the uniform.
2. Your black socks and shoes.
3. Your instrument with all accessories.
4. Money- you will need food for meals not provided by our meal plan. A little emergency money is also a good idea. Keep track of your money at all times. Unfortunately, students have been robbed in the past; take no chances.

*** You are responsible for all that you bring on the trip- money, Ipods, Cameras etc. Keep track of your suitcases, backpacks, clothing and valuables at all times. **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE** for your possessions.

- No whining! The chaperones and Mr. Karos are there to help you, please talk to us if you have any problems.
- We may have a group picture taken after our performance. You will not be required to buy it but you are required to be in it. No money will be collected at the time of the picture. You will fill out a form and it will be mailed to you. The pictures make nice souvenir of the trip.

Acknowledgment and Agreement to Hand Book Rules

I have read the entire Tuscarora High School Band Book and agree to follow all the rules and procedures presented in it. I understand that if I fail to meet any of the expectations presented in this book I face band suspension, grade reduction, or the possible dismissal from this ensemble.

Student Name (please print CLEARLY)

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date