

Thomas Dale High School

Band Handbook

2008 - 2009



Band Directors

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Statement of Purpose

The Band Program at Thomas Dale High School, as a part of the Performing Arts Department and the Specialty Center for the Visual and Performing Arts, has a two-fold purpose. The first is to instill the values of self-discipline, pride, work, social interaction, individual responsibility, sportsmanship, civic spirit, and selflessness that will remain with the students long after the high school band experience ends. The second is to teach a lifelong appreciation of music and musical values in order to make students intelligent consumers of music in the future.

The Thomas Dale Band Program will strive to motivate all students to achieve the highest level of performance possible, both individually and in groups. The Thomas Dale Bands will endeavor to provide the Chester community and Chesterfield County with an organization of which it can be justifiably proud.

Mission Statement of the Marching Knights

A Thomas Dale Marching Knight will at all times:

- Treat all people with respect...
- Take Pride in everything done...
- Maintain a positive attitude...
- Act maturely...
- Strive to attain confidence and self-satisfaction while constantly improving the band's standard of excellence.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE THOMAS DALE HIGH SCHOOL BAND PROGRAM

Marching Knights

The Marching Knights are the largest ensemble in the band program. The Marching Knights perform at all home football games, most away football games, band competitions, and local parades. Membership is open to all students enrolled in a band class at Thomas Dale. Color Guard membership is open to all Thomas Dale students and is by audition only.

The Marching Knights practice for two weeks during the month of August and after school from 2:15 – 4:45 during the football season. After-school practices are on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday in September, Monday and Thursday in October, and on Thursday in November through the end of football season.

Wind Ensemble (PA319)

The Wind Ensemble is the most challenging concert ensemble in the Thomas Dale Band program. It performs grade level V – VI music. The Wind Ensemble is a smaller group and membership is limited to a fixed instrumentation. **Membership is by audition only. Members of the class are required to be members of the Marching Knights and to audition for All-District Band.**

Symphonic Band (PA313)

The Symphonic Band is open to all students in the band program. The Symphonic Band has a larger fixed instrumentation than the Wind Ensemble. It performs grade level IV – V music that is composed with larger ensembles in mind. Membership is by audition only. Membership in the Marching Knights is strongly encouraged, but not required.

Concert Band (PA315)

The Concert Band is open to all students in the band program. It performs grade level III – IV music. This is the entry level ensemble for most of the students in the Thomas Dale Band. This class teaches advanced band skills that are needed in a high school band. Membership is limited to students with prior experience on their band instrument. Membership in the Marching Knights is strongly encouraged, but not required.

Jazz Ensemble (PA315)

The Jazz Ensemble is open to all students in the band program. Membership is by audition only. The Jazz Ensemble is a small and tightly fixed instrumentation. The class teaches jazz performance styles, improvisation, and jazz theory and history. Membership in the Marching Knights is strongly encouraged, but not required.

REHEARSALS AND PRACTICES

Practice Times (Marching Knights)

Practices will be on **Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from the beginning of the school year** through the end of **September**. **October** practices will be on **Monday and Thursday**. **November** practices will be on **Thursday**. Practices times begin at **2:15** and end at **4:45**. Our motto is to ***“Practice smarter, not longer.”*** Students are expected to be in the band room ready for practice with all necessary clothing and equipment before practice begins. **“To Be Early Is To Be On Time.”**

Except under unusual circumstances, **students are not to make up work for other classes during practice time**. Students should attempt to schedule make up work on Tuesday when possible. If it becomes necessary to miss a portion of practice for make up work, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the directors **prior to the beginning of practice** and to bring a note from the teacher involved when they arrive.

Students and parents are asked to have transportation arranged for the end of practice. The band room will remain open for 15 minutes after practice ends for students that need to make telephone calls. Students enrolled in the Specialty Center will be able to meet the out-of-district activity bus at 5:00.

Extra Practices and Extended Hours (Marching Knights)

Extra practices and overtime practices for the marching band will be kept to a minimum. Students and parents have commitments and schedules to keep, too. Should extra practices become necessary, students will be given at least 48 hours notice.

Combined Rehearsals (Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, Concert Band, Jazz Band)

The band program at Thomas Dale is structured so that each ensemble is a facet of the overall program. After-school rehearsals to combine the various groups and classes are necessary to maintain the excellence of performance expected at Thomas Dale. Rehearsals will be scheduled far in advance to provide students and parents time to arrange transportation and other commitments.

Chesterfield County Schools policy states that after-school rehearsals and performances are considered co-curricular and therefore become part of the student's grade. Absences and tardies are accepted and excused for the same reasons as during the regular school day. Excused absences may be made up through assignments given by the directors. Work and lack of transportation are not acceptable excuses. Students experiencing conflicts with other school activities are expected to communicate with the directors as soon as the conflict is known.

Chesterfield County Schools gives the following as reasons for excused absences:

- Personal illness or illness of immediate family member
- Medical appointments
- School activities or events as cleared by the directors in advance.
- Attendance of religious service.
- Other extenuating circumstances as determined by the Directors

Communication is the key. Communicate conflicts with the directors as soon as they are known. When circumstances make prior communication impossible, students are expected to bring written excuses to the directors at the first opportunity.

Rehearsal Procedures

- Arrive early enough to be ready for rehearsal
- Snacks, drinks, and changing of clothes are to be done before practice begins.
- **Students are not to leave school grounds before practice.**
- (Marching Knights) Students must wear tennis shoes. No sandals, high heels, or flip-flops.
- Talking must end when practice begins. Talking creates confusion and wastes time.
- Band members may not leave the practice area without permission at any time.
- Band members are expected to put away all equipment at the end of practice.
- Band members cannot access other areas of the school after practice. Books and other homework materials should be obtained before practice begins.

Failure to follow the above procedures may result in suspension from performance or removal from the group.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at rehearsals, practices, and performances is a basic expectation of band membership. Chesterfield County Public Schools considers attendance at after school events (such as rehearsals and concerts) an extension of the class and is therefore subject to grading. The Marching Knights have a regular afternoon practice schedule where the show is perfected. Without a commitment to regular attendance, no musical organization can hope to achieve its potential.

The procedures for excusing only the most necessary of absences are listed in the **Rehearsals and Practices** section of this handbook. The penalties for unexcused absences from rehearsals, practices, and performances are listed below.

MARCHING KNIGHTS

- 1st unexcused absence from practice – **Lose next 3rd quarter privilege**
- 2nd unexcused absence from practice – **Suspension from next game performance, but member *MUST* attend game in uniform.**
- 3rd unexcused absence from practice – **dismissal from group**

Excused absences have the same effect on performance as unexcused. If a member has sufficient excused absences as to negatively impact the performance of the band, they may be held out of performances until they have caught up to the level of the rest of the band.

CONCERT ENSEMBLES

- 1ST unexcused absence from practice – **lowering of grade**
- 2nd unexcused absence from practice – **lowering of grade and removal from next performance. Student will receive an assignment to make up the performance grade.**
- **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES FROM PERFORMANCES WILL RESULT IN A LOWERED GRADE AND NO MAKE UP WILL BE GIVEN.**

CONCERT DRESS REQUIREMENTS

Students in the Wind Ensemble, Symphonic Band, and Concert Band are expected to be uniform and professional in appearance. Students failing to wear the proper dress may not be permitted to perform, thus affecting their grade. The following are the dress expectations for the men and women.

WIND ENSEMBLE

MEN

- Tuxedo-style shirt (either standard or wing collar)
- Black bow-tie
- Black dress pants
- Black socks
- Black dress shoes (not athletic shoes)

LADIES

- White long-sleeved blouse
- Black “tea length” skirt so that the knees are covered when sitting. (Some instruments, such as bass clarinet, require the player to sit in a less than flattering position. Black slacks are acceptable substitutes.)
- Black or “nude” color hose.
- Jewelry is to be small and unobtrusive.

Symphonic Band and Concert Band

MEN

- White button-down shirt (either standard or wing collar)
- Black bow-tie
- Black dress pants
- Black socks
- Black dress shoes (not athletic shoes)

LADIES

- White long-sleeved blouse
- Black “tea length” skirt so that the knees are covered when sitting. (Some instruments, such as bass clarinet, require the player to sit in a less than flattering position. Black slacks are acceptable substitutes.)
- Black or “nude” color hose.
- Jewelry is to be small and unobtrusive.

It is not the intention of the Thomas Dale Band to unduly burden families with the cost of concert outfits. When possible, we recommend less expensive department stores for clothes and shoes. If a family finds this to be a financial hardship, they should contact the directors as soon as possible.

NO CHILD WILL BE DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE A PART OF THE THOMAS DALE BAND BASED ON FINANCIAL STATUS.

MARCHING UNIFORMS

Marching uniforms are very expensive and are purchased largely through the hard work and dedication of the Band Boosters. Our current uniforms cost approximately \$450 per unit. It is very important that we take good care of them. They represent our band and our school.

Care and Responsibilities

- Band uniforms will be dry cleaned periodically by the Band Boosters.
- Uniforms are to be properly returned to the uniform room after performances.
- Uniforms are to be hung neatly on hangers to avoid wrinkling.
- Inform the Uniform Committee of missing buttons or loose hems.
- Always wear the band t-shirt under the jacket.
- If jackets need to be removed while in the stands or during warm-ups, they are to be neatly folded inside out to keep the outside clean.
- Do not sit on grass, ground, concrete, or other surfaces that can stain the uniform.
- Colas, ketchup, mustard and the like are difficult stains to remove. Take care when eating in uniform
- **Only Thomas Dale caps may be worn in the stands while in uniform. No other head covering is permitted.**

EACH BAND STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DAMAGE TO THE UNIFORM NOT ATTRIBUTABLE TO NORMAL WEAR. STUDENTS AND FAMILIES WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY ADDITIONAL CLEANING COSTS INCURRED. IF A UNIFORM PART CANNOT BE CLEANED OR REPAIRED, THE STUDENT AND FAMILY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE REPLACEMENT PART AT CURRENT MARKET VALUE.

FOOTBALL GAME PROCEDURES

All Marching Knights are expected to report to the Band Room at the announced call time (generally 6:00 for home games and 5:30 for away games). Report times are announced each week. Members are expected to travel to and from the games on the band busses. No other students are permitted to travel on the band bus.

Any members wishing to leave a game early may only be released to their parent or guardian. Parents must present themselves to the directors before they pick up their students. **Under no circumstances may a band member leave with another student or adult other than their parents.**

While at games:

- Band members report to the uniform room to get their uniform and shako
- Once the band is lined up for entry to the stadium, there is to be no talking in ranks until the band is dismissed.
- Band members are required to have their flip folders in the stands.
- Band members sit in the together in the stands with their assigned section.
- Seating is by section and/or squad. **Non-Members are not to sit with the band.**
- Instruments are to be played in an organized manner as directed by the band directors or drum majors.
- Water will be provided in the stands. No other food or drink is permitted in the stands except during the third quarter.
- Band members are to wear the complete uniform (except for the shako) in the stands. Pant straps are to be worn on the shoulders, and the coat should be closed with at least two snaps. In cases of warm weather, the directors will make the decision to remove and fold the coats.
- Trips to the restroom are allowed by director permission. At some locations, it is advisable to go in pairs.
- Students are permitted the privilege of visiting the concession stand during the third quarter. Students are to be in the stands when the game clock shows :00. **Those who are late may lose their third quarter privilege for the next game.**
- Band members are not to leave the immediate stadium within the bleachers, rest rooms, and concession areas without permission.

GENERAL RULES FOR TRIPS

As representatives of Thomas Dale High School and Chesterfield County, all band members are expected to exhibit only the highest standards of behavior.

As public school students on a school sponsored trip, alcoholic beverages, their “look-alikes”, cigarettes, tobacco products, and all illegal substances are strictly prohibited. Students may at no time possess, consume, or under the influence of any prohibited substance. Penalties will be severe and range from removal from the group to appropriate school and legal actions.

Remember...

ALL SCHOOL RULES APPLY WHILE ON TRIPS!

While on trips, students **must** adhere to the instructions of the directors, staff, and chaperones. Chaperones are the representatives of the administration and are to be respected as such. Students are to respectfully comply with the instructions of the directors and chaperones. If a concern arises regarding the interpretation of rules or actions taken by chaperones, students are to inform the directors at the first opportunity. At no time are students to be disrespectful or defiant towards the directors or chaperones.

Curfews on overnight trips will be announced and must be strictly obeyed.

Immature behaviors reflect poorly on the band and will not be tolerated.

Public displays of affection as defined by school rules are inappropriate and reflect poorly on the individuals involved as well as the group.

Students are to ride their assigned buses. Bus changes will **ONLY** be made by the directors.

Be helpful to one another.

Proper diet and rest are important to good performance and a fun trip. Get plenty of both.

If a student becomes ill or injured, **see a chaperone as soon as possible.**

BUS RULES

Travel rules are made for the safety of everyone involved and to ensure that everyone enjoys the trips. Remember to think about the "other guy" first.

- Students are to remain seated on school busses at all times. Charter busses allow a little more freedom of movement, but students should remain seated except when necessary.
- Students will ride on the assigned busses. Students may not change busses during a trip.
- All trash belongs in the bags provided. We are responsible for the condition of the busses when we are finished.
- All music playing devices must have earphones.
- Students are not to yell, make hand gestures, or throw anything out of the windows. **Students are expected to display proper behavior that represents our school at all times.**
- Couples are reminded that public displays of affection are not appropriate for this situation. Infractions of this rule could result in separation of the individuals involved for the duration of the trip.
- Band Members are to follow the instructions of the band directors, chaperones, and bus drivers at all times.

HOTEL RULES

Band members will stay in hotels on the occasion of long overnight trips. This situation calls for special procedures and rules.

- Students may enjoy the public areas of the hotel grounds, such as the lobby or pool. Students may not leave the hotel grounds without chaperones at any time.
- The Thomas Dale Band will have specific areas assigned to it. Band members are not to be in other band's areas at any time. This to protect our members from accusations of any kind.
- Curfews will be announced and are to be strictly enforced. Students are only to be in their assigned rooms after curfew.
- Room-to-room telephone calls may not be made after curfew.
- Playing of instruments in the rooms is not permitted. Television volume is to be soft enough that it cannot be heard in the hallway through a closed door. Remember that we are not the only guests in the hotel.
- No "souvenirs" are to be taken from the rooms.
- Pay-per-view television is not permitted. Any expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the students in that room.
- Always be courteous and thoughtful of others.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Dues are a necessary part of band membership. Every effort has been made to keep costs to a minimum. Fundraisers are offered to families who wish to earn money to pay for these costs.

Membership dues are paid to two sources:

- **Thomas Dale Band Boosters**
- **Thomas Dale High School**

The following is payable to **Thomas Dale Band Boosters**:

- **Marching Knights.....\$175**
(optional: applies only to members of the Marching Knights.
Covers basic uniform use and maintenance, competition season transportation, music purchase, and miscellaneous costs specific to operating the Marching Knights. Payment schedules are announced in advance)

The following is payable to **Thomas Dale High School**:

- **Uniform Fee (Marching Knights members only).....\$30**
(This is the standard fee assessed by Chesterfield County for the maintenance of the county-owned marching uniform)
- **Band Dues.....\$10**
(This fee is assessed by Chesterfield County for each music class in which a student enrolls. This helps cover the cost of music purchases)

Costs for Spring Trips or other special trips are separate from other assessments. The amount is based on tour cost, charter transportation cost, meals, entertainment, and other miscellaneous costs specific to the trip. This amount is divided by the number of participating students to find the trip cost. **Students and families opting to participate in these activities are responsible for the deposits and subsequent payment deadlines. DEPOSITS ARE NOT REFUNDABLE. Refunds after certain hard deadlines may not be possible, regardless of the student's participation in the trip.** This is because the Thomas Dale Band is responsible to various tour companies based on the number of individuals in the contract. Our costs are then fixed. **Students that are removed from the trip due to behavior are not eligible for any refund of trip monies.**

Fundraisers are optional and are offered to students and families to help with the band's costs and to earn money for individual student use. Once a percentage of the profit is announced, the amount earned by students is kept in an individualized account to track the amount each has earned. Fundraising profits can be used for band related activities such as trips.

MARCHING KNIGHTS OFFICERS

Drum Major(s)

Drum Majors are the assistant directors of the band. They are selected in the spring of each year for the following year. Candidates must have at least one year of prior experience in the Marching Knights and be a member in good standing of the brass, woodwind, or percussion sections at the time of the tryout. Duties will include conducting the band during performance, assisting the teaching of drill, maintaining discipline, and wide variety of activities that assist the group. Returning drum majors must re-audition each year. Students selected as drum majors are expected to attend leadership camp that summer and band camp in August.

Section Leaders

Section leaders are selected by the band directors. Students interested in becoming section leaders must apply in writing before the announced deadline in the spring. Duties include taking attendance, conducting musical sectionals, helping to maintain good rehearsal discipline, and inspecting instruments and flip folders. Some section leaders also have Rank Captain responsibilities. Students selected as section leaders are expected to attend band camp in August.

Rank Captains

Rank Captains are selected by the band directors. Students interested in becoming rank captains must apply in writing before the announced deadline in the spring. Duties include teaching and correcting marching technique in their section. They will also help teach and correct drill as instructed by the band directors. Students selected as rank captains are expected to attend band camp in August.

Librarians

Band librarians are responsible for keeping and maintaining the marching band music for the season. They will copy and distribute music to the band as instructed by the band directors.

Uniform Officers

Uniform officers assist the Band Boosters with the distribution and maintenance of the marching band uniforms. They are expected to arrive before the announced call times in order to prepare to distribute uniforms. They are also expected to stay until uniforms are returned and hung properly.

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

MARCHING KNIGHTS

Members of the Marching Knights are eligible to receive a Thomas Dale Letter for their participation. Awards are presented at the Annual Band Banquet. All first-year members in good standing will receive the letter. For each additional year of participation, the member will receive:

Musicians: 2nd year – lyre pin
3rd year – knight pin
4th year – plaque

Flag Squad: 2nd year – crossed flag pin
3rd year – knight pin
4th year – plaque

Members will also receive a bar pin for each year of service.

Additional awards:

- Rookie of the Year
- Hornline MVP
- Drumline MVP
- Best Marcher
- Most Valuable Guard Member
- Most Dedicated
- Most Spirited
- Most Improved
- Outstanding Flag Squad Member

Drum Majors will receive a special pin.

To be eligible for awards, members must fulfill these requirements:

- Members must have participated in all performances with the exception of excused absences. (see **Attendance**.) Students entering mid-season must remain in good standing for the remainder of the season.
- Members may not have been suspended from performance.
- All outstanding debts to the Band Boosters must be cleared prior to the Band Banquet. It is the responsibility of the student to know the status of their account.

CONCERT ENSEMBLES

Members of the Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Wind Ensemble are eligible for the following awards:

- **Outstanding Freshman Band Member**
- **Most Improved Freshman Band Member**
- **Outstanding Sophomore Band Member**
- **Most Improved Sophomore Band Member**
- **Outstanding Junior Band Member**
- **Most Improved Junior Band Member**

SENIOR AWARDS

Senior members of the Thomas Dale Band are eligible for the following awards:

- **John Philip Sousa Award** - awarded to the student that exhibits the qualities of musicianship, loyalty, and service to the Thomas Dale Band throughout their high school career.
- **Louis Armstrong Jazz Award** - awarded to the student that exhibits the greatest dedication, talent, interest in jazz, and service to the Jazz Band.
- **Musicianship Award** - awarded to students that have exhibited a high degree of talent and skill in the area of musicianship during their career with the Thomas Dale Band.
- **Merit Award** - awarded to students that have consistently given their time and talents to the Thomas Dale Band throughout their career.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Thomas Dale Band Boosters award scholarships to seniors. The amount varies based on available funds. Those seniors wishing to be considered must apply prior to an announced deadline. Selection of recipients is made by the scholarship committee by a blind screening process. Scholarships are announced at the Annual Spring Concert.

BAND BOOSTER ORGANIZATION

The Thomas Dale Band Boosters is a non-profit organization for parents of students in the Thomas Dale Band program. The Boosters are an auxiliary organization of Thomas Dale High School that exists to assist the Band Directors with the needs of the band program. Their duties included raising and maintaining funds for general needs, uniforms, and equipment. They also help by chaperoning trips, transporting equipment, maintaining the uniform inventory, and communicating with the members of the Band Boosters.

Membership is open to all parents of students enrolled in the Thomas Dale Band program.

Meetings are generally on the first Thursday of each month during the school year. The meetings begin at 7:00 and are usually done around 8:00.

The Thomas Dale Band Boosters are a hard-working but fun loving group of adults that enjoy working together for the benefit of their children and the band program. All parents of band students are welcome to become members. Whatever your skills or time commitments, there is always something you can do to help. It is a very rewarding and fun way to be involved in your child's education.

Executive Board 2008-2009

Sherry Williams - President
Tommy Poarch - Vice President
Penny Crampton - Treasurer
Jenelle Traylor - Secretary