

Cuthbertson High School Band Handbook

2026-2027



Todd Ebert, Director of Bands CHS
Katie Ebert, Director of Bands CMS
Samantha Liddle, Associate Director of Bands

Dear Band Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Cuthbertson High School Band! It is with excitement that we begin a school year full of music making. We strive to acquire the highest standards of performance and stage presence and with your cooperation, commitment, and hard work we will begin a tradition of excellence.

This handbook is designed to answer any questions you or your parents may have concerning the band program at Cuthbertson High School. The band program includes some of the most talented and dedicated high school musicians around, and we are excited about the upcoming year. Please review the information carefully, then, fill out and sign our acknowledgement form that indicates both the student and a parent have read, understand, and agree to the conditions outlined in this handbook.

Students, as with all things in life, you will only get out of band what you put into band. Band is not a spectator sport, so put forth every effort, every day, and see how proud you will be of yourself and your band. Let's make this year truly superior! Remember, only you can take this band to the highest level. Maintaining a good attitude and committing yourself to acquiring good musical knowledge and skills is the way to be successful. Continue to do these things and you will have PRIDE in being part of a superior musical ensemble!

To our parents, I want to thank you specifically for supporting this wonderful endeavor for your child. I know that it takes extra time to bring your children to rehearsals, make sure they transport their instrument back and forth and just be a cheerleader at home when studying an instrument becomes "not as much fun" as it sounded at the first of the year. Thank you so much for all of the extra things you do to help your child and our school. I hope that each one of you has a positive experience in the band this year. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us; the quickest way being through email. You can usually expect a reply within 24 hours. Also, please be sure to visit our new website to receive important information. Updates will be added weekly, so check our site frequently!

Band Website: <http://cuthbertsonbands.org>

We look forward to a great year of music making!

Musically yours,

Todd Ebert

Todd Ebert
Director of Bands, CHS
Todd.ebert@ucps.k12.nc.us

Katie Ebert

Katie Ebert
Director of Bands, CMS
Katie.ebert@ucps.k12.nc.us

Samantha Liddle

Samantha Liddle
Associate Director of Bands
Samantha.liddle@ucps.k12.nc.us

I. PHILOSOPHY

Our band program offers a positive approach to learning music. We promote a basic understanding and appreciation for music, and provide the necessary skills to allow students to participate in a variety of instrumental ensembles. Moreover, the student's musical experiences will prepare and motivate them to successfully continue participating in music programs at all levels.

The band program is open to all students with consideration given to grade level, instrumentation, playing ability, and attitude. Band is a course that requires a lot of self-discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and hard work on the part of its members. With these values band students can truly experience success in their development as a musician. Band also teaches many important life skills such as leadership, dedication, motivation, and pride. *Remember students, the more you put into band, the more you will get out of band!*

In order to have a successful band program, all students and parents need to familiarize themselves with the policies and responsibilities to the band program. Parental support is the key to success in any band organization.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION FOR BAND CLASSES

Band classes meet everyday for 1 class period and work to strengthen individual, ensemble, and full band musical skills. These classes are part of a curriculum designed for band students to develop an appreciation of music, performance, and a lifelong participation of musical activities.

All students are expected to participate in the Winter and Spring Concerts. Other performance opportunities will be scheduled as they arise. Select students may be eligible to participate in multiple performing ensembles.

Instructional Goals

1. TONE – demonstrate characteristic tone quality and blending the tone into the ensemble
2. INTONATION – play in tune with the ensemble
3. TECHNIQUE – use different articulation styles precisely; expand the comfortable playing range on the instrument; expand rhythmical concepts
4. BALANCE & BLEND – within the ensemble and sections
5. INTERPRETATION – use expression, phrasing, style, and tempo correctly
6. MUSICAL EFFECT – artistry and fluency of the composition

AESTHETIC OUTCOMES are skills and knowledge that foster an appreciation and understanding of music as art. This is achieved through the study of the elements and basic principals of music as revealed in the music performed. These skills are cognitive and remain with the individual beyond participation in the band program.

- Musical Elements
- Historical Perspective
- Creative Activities
- Evaluative Skills

The student should:

- Develop a characteristic tone on their instrument. “Characteristic” means that the instrument sounds like it is supposed to sound.

- Develop knowledge and understanding of time signatures, key signatures, rhythms, and other musical notation needed to perform music.
- Develop individual and ensemble performance skills.
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the parts, mechanics, care, and cleaning of the instrument.
- Demonstrate a sense of personal discipline, pride, and group cooperation instilled by participation in the instrumental music program

All students will learn a sense of personal discipline, pride, and group cooperation instilled by participation in the instrumental music program.

Concert Band

The concert band class meets during the school day. Bands will perform several concerts each year and participate in the NCMEA District Festival. The band may participate in off campus performances at various events as approved by the school administration and the band directors.

III. Marching Band

The marching band performs at various activities throughout the year, including all football games, parades and other community events, as well as pep rallies. Students who are interested in dance may choose to audition for the Color Guard. Membership in the Marching Band is available for high school band members, interested 8th grade band students, and on a tryout basis for non-members (guard).

The marching band season begins at the beginning of August, before school starts with band camp, a mandatory activity. *Band members are expected to coordinate schedules so there are no conflicts with band camp.* Students will represent their school and community at events both throughout North Carolina and outside the state.

Student leadership positions will be based upon individual students' performance and ensemble needs.

Attendance Policy

A calendar is posted with a listing of all after school rehearsals on the band website. Students are expected to be present for all rehearsals listed. The band director will work with all school activities including teachers, coaches, and directors of other activities to give each student every opportunity to be part of other groups. Non-school sponsored activities, teams, and organizations must not conflict with the practice/performance schedule of the band. Unlike other classes where students may succeed or fail independent of others, the band's success relies on the participation of all its members.

It is expected that the band member and the family will make every effort to avoid or solve conflicts before requesting to be absent. The band director and other staff members understand that student's time is valuable, and we take pride in the fact that we use time wisely and begin/end rehearsals as promptly as possible. Students and parents are asked to give the band program the same consideration and cooperation. Students with jobs should realize that work is NOT an excused absence and should present their employers with the band schedule as soon as possible. Any conflicts should be discussed with the band director as early as possible to be considered excused. Students need to be picked up no later than 30 minutes after the rehearsal ends.

Marching band students are permitted one excused rehearsal absence without penalty. However, students that miss the Thursday rehearsal preceding a Friday football game will not be permitted to march the half-time show due to changes that may have occurred at rehearsal. Students who miss an excessive number of rehearsals will have decreased performance opportunities, which may in turn affect the opportunities of the entire band.

Check your calendars! Routine doctor and dentist appointments are not considered excused and therefore should not be scheduled during your rehearsal time.

Football Games and Other Marching Performances

- Know the schedule and be on time (early).
- Do not arrive at the beginning of practice. Be ready to practice at the beginning of practice. We will practice before each game.
- Know what the uniform is for each performance. Come dressed, unless otherwise directed. We will inspect your uniform.
- In the case of inclement weather, practice will be held indoors. **Practices are never canceled because of weather!**
- Band members are responsible for all the band equipment; their own and others. Make a special effort to help the battery and pit percussion during marching band season.
- During football performances, the band may earn the privilege of a break during the third quarter. In order to keep this privilege, the entire band must return to their seats in order to perform at the end of the third quarter. Failure to do so may result in individuals, or the band, forfeiting this privilege.
- NO visitors are permitted in the stands, not even parents.
- When other schools march at our field, make them feel like the greatest band in the world.
- Always be ready to play. Short notice is given during football games. Be alert and remember that you are a performer, not a spectator.
- Do not eat or drink anything in the stands.
- Stay with a group of band members when not performing.
- Always follow the uniform dress code designated by the directors before, during, and after the game. Remember you are a visual element of the ensemble.

Marching Rehearsal Survival Guide

Before a Rehearsal

- **Take care of your personal needs.** Eat, drink, put on sunscreen, and go to the bathroom. This is not to say we won't let you use the bathroom, but we won't make a habit of letting you leave rehearsal.
- **Know the schedule.** Plan to be early, and to stay the entire time. Know when the next rehearsal is.
- **Resolve conflicts.** Do not tell an instructor that you can't make tonight's practice. That is to be done at least a week in advance, in writing. Rehearsal absences will be excused on an individual student basis.
- **Prepare.** Know your music and drill. Bring everything you'll need: uniform, dot book, water, lyre, flip folder, and music. Memorize show music and school songs.
- **Dress appropriately.** Know the forecast and prepare. Wear comfortable athletic shoes with socks. Never wear flip flops. Bring a hat and shades if it is sunny.

During a Rehearsal

- **Be where you are supposed to be, BEFORE you are supposed to be there.**
- **Listen.** Music must exist against a backdrop of silence. You will be given time to socialize. Otherwise, extra chatting will not be tolerated.
- **Give your enthusiasm and your effort.** Do your part to make it a great rehearsal; one which is productive and fun. Make the band better today!
- **Execute to the best of your ability.** You will perform the way you practice. Get your toes up higher each time. Run it back as fast as you can. Play your best.
- **Self-evaluate.** Don't wait for someone else to tell you. You can fix it, too. Be demanding of yourself and strive to do it better next time.
- **Do what you're told.** The staff and student leaders are working hard to create a superior performance. What we're telling you to do is solely towards that goal. Whether or not you agree is not relevant. Insubordination will not be

tolerated. If you have a problem with someone in command, we would appreciate if you do the mature thing: suck it up for now and deal with it after rehearsal is over. Bring all personal conflicts to the attention of the director.

- **Do what everyone else is doing.** This is a group activity. If we are all singing, sing. If we are counting, count. Look around; there are role models everywhere.

After a Rehearsal

- **Announcements.** Every rehearsal ends with important info being dispensed. Listen carefully. The sooner you let the staff finish announcements, the sooner we can all go home.
- **Clean up.** It is EVERY band member's responsibility to make sure the practice field and the band room is clear of equipment and trash. Help others. Don't be the person overheard saying, "That's not mine," or "I didn't do it." That equates to saying "I'm not a member of this band."

Prepare for the next rehearsal based on what you learned in this one

Cell Phones

Cell phones must be turned OFF and kept out of sight during all band rehearsals and activities, including athletic events and marching band competitions. Students are permitted to carry and use cell phones during any band trips, and to use cell phones to contact parents for pick-up when the band returns to campus. Any cell phone that is seen or heard during a band activity will be confiscated by the band director and will only be returned to the parents.

What You Can Expect From Your Participation in Band

- **Hard Fun.** We enjoy the process of creating a top-notch performance.
- **Musical Literacy.** You will leave the program with understanding and appreciation of music that will last a lifetime.
- **Quality Instruction.** Your director and your staff are well trained and experienced in their fields. Just say the word if you need assistance in any area and we will be glad to help you.
- **You Will Make a Contribution.** In life, you can be a contributor or a consumer. Music is a gift, and a performance is not a performance until you give it to someone. Through band, we contribute to our school, community, and society. As a musician, never forget what you can give is unique and important.
- **You Will Be Organized.** Band members are on time, accountable, and reliable. This is simply because band doesn't work any other way.
- **You Will Make Lifelong Friends.** Your lasting memories of band will be more about whom you made music with, rather than the music you made.
- **You Will Learn More Than Music.** Don't be surprised to see yourself gaining in confidence, listening skills, self-discipline, compassion, self-esteem, self-discipline, work ethic, concentration, leadership, patience, and teamwork. Past band members mention these things and more when asked the most important things they learned in band.
- **A Challenge.** Music has a way of finding the level you think you are at, and then pushing you past what you think you can do. Work within our system, trust your instructors, and you will be amazed at what you (and your band) can achieve!

What the Band Program Expects from You

- **A Quality Effort.** This entails being on time (early), being prepared with needed instruments, equipment, uniform, and music (all in excellent condition), and being prepared to make your unique contribution to the band (that means practicing).
- **Communication.** If you can't make something, let us know in advance. If you have an emergency, call. If you have a question, raise your hand. If you need help, let someone know. You owe this to the organization that is depending on you.

- **A Quality Attitude.** Band is what you make it. You will enjoy your experience much more if *you choose to do so*. It's not anyone's job to make you happy, to make you a good player, or to entertain you. It's all up to you – Attitude is Everything!

IV. INSTRUMENT AND EQUIPMENT NEEDS

Students are expected to provide their own band instruments except those playing low brass and low reed instruments that are too expensive for many players to own. If the instrument is in the repair shop, the student needs to bring in a note signed by a parent, with an estimate of how long it will take to repair the instrument. Students who do not have a note or an instrument will receive a deduction from the daily participation grade.

Unless otherwise notified, each student will need to purchase or rent an instrument from a local music store. There are some modifications to the standard rental equipment, so please check the list below and request that your music company make these changes. Any deviations should be discussed with the director.

Clarinet players should play on a Vandoren B45 or a Hite Premiere mouthpiece and a Bonade ligature
Saxophone players should play on a Selmer C* mouthpiece
Both Clarinet and Saxophone players should use only **Vandoren** reeds
Trumpet players should play a Bach 5C or 3C
Trombone and Euphonium players should use a Back 6 ½ AL mouthpiece

Instrument Storage

Personal instruments are to be taken home from school every day and are not to be left at school overnight. At the end of the day they must be picked up.

All cases must be clearly labeled with the student's name on the outside. No instruments may be left over the holidays (Thanksgiving/Winter and Spring Breaks) in the band room.

School Owned Instruments

Certain instruments will be supplied to students to give the band a well-balanced instrumentation. It is the duty of each student playing a school instrument to take best possible care of it. The school supplies school owned instruments to players under the following conditions:

1. The student has completed a mouthpiece evaluation and has exhibited the aptitude to play the instrument.
2. The selected instrument is available. Priority will be given to students based on experience.
3. The student/parent/guardian must sign a form of responsibility for the proper care of the instrument during the school year.
4. Students are expected to purchase a mouthpiece and the appropriate supplies for their instrument that they will use. These can be purchased at the local music store. See the director for the exact type needed.
5. NEW – There is a \$50 charge per year to use a school owned instrument. This helps offset the cost of cleaning the instrument for the student to use and helps keep the instrument in playable condition.

Percussion

1. Students will be selected by audition for the percussion section. Auditions will be based on ability on the current instrument, behavior, and natural talent.
2. Percussion students will need to own the following items: bell kit, practice pad, snare sticks (Vic Firth 2B), and a pair of rubber xylophone mallets (Mike Balter blue or green medium to hard strength). Students will need to bring only

the mallets and snare sticks to class each day. These items should be marked with the student's name and can be rented or purchased through our local music store.

3. Percussionists are responsible for knowing how to play their individual part and the mallet part for every piece.
4. Students are responsible for taking care of the school owned equipment. Students who do not take care of the instruments may be removed from the section.
5. Behavior is a must for this section! Students should be looking over music and not talking during class time.

Supplies

Most supplies for instruments can be purchased here at the school store during homeroom for your convenience. Some of these items include: reeds, method books, cork grease, slide oil, valve oil, cleaning kits, swabs, and pencils. A list will be posted of all available supplies and their cost after the start of school.

Instrument Specific Supplies

These items are made specifically for each instrument and are needed to help keep them in good working order and to prevent expensive damage to the instrument. Item checks may be held at any time and will be graded.

Flute – Polishing cloth, tuning rod
Oboe/Bassoon – 2 working reeds, cork grease
All Clarinets/Saxophones – 3 working reeds, cork grease, reed guard (recommended)
French Horn – Rotor Oil, Slide grease
Trumpet/Baritone/Tuba – Valve Oil/Slide Grease
Trombone – Slide Oil, Spray Bottle
Percussionists – Snare Sticks (2B) and hard rubber xylophone mallets (see brand)

V. CONDUCT

Membership in the Cuthbertson High School Band is an honor. Along with this honor come expectations and responsibilities. Our reputation and successes will be the result of much hard work and dedication. Students are expected to exhibit proper conduct at all times. The band is not about individuals, there is no "I" in band. Respect yourself and each other. Never insult another band student's integrity. Remember that the actions of individuals will reflect on the entire band. Always put yourself and the band into a position where a positive image is presented.

NOTE: The Cuthbertson High School Code of Conduct will be in effect at all band-related functions. Please familiarize yourself with the Student Code of Conduct as well as the rules that relate to the band.

Duties of the Band Member

- 1) **Be on time for all practices and performances.** At least five minutes early is "on-time", and "on-time" is LATE!
- 2) Arrive at all practices with the correct supplies and a positive attitude.
- 3) Make a real effort to improve on your instrument daily, including practicing your instrument at least 150 minutes per week
- 4) Be responsible for your actions, and assume the consequences, positive or negative.
- 5) Have proper respect for those in authority, including using polite manners.
- 6) Follow all class and school rules both on and off school property.
- 7) Show respect and courtesy to directors, teachers, substitutes, instructors, parents, and fellow students at all times.

- 8) Respect all school-owned property including: band instruments, sheet music, method books, stands, chairs, percussion instruments, equipment, etc.
- 9) Only touch what belongs to **YOU**.
- 10) Be responsible and not have **GUM**, food, or drinks in the band room.

VI. DISCIPLINE POLICY

All successful band students possess a degree of personal discipline. This element is essential to a strong band program and is a must for every individual. Examples of personal discipline include:

1. **Prepared for class**
2. **Responsibility**
3. **Individual practice**
4. **Dedication**
5. **Effort**

Behavior Policy

We believe that all students can behave appropriately. **Students are expected to do so at all times. No student has the right to interfere with the teaching or learning of other students in the ensemble.** Due to our large class sizes and expensive instruments, good behavior is a must to participate in band.

Rules

1. Students will sit in assigned seat and not get up without permission.
2. Talking is not permitted when the director is on the podium.
3. Students will not play instruments out of turn.
4. Students will not eat, drink, or chew **gum** in the band room.
5. Students will show respect to adults, other students, band property (instruments, drums, chairs, stands, etc...)

Consequences

The following procedures will be followed for inappropriate behavior (not necessarily in this order):

1. Warning (verbal or via clear eye contact)
2. Work assignment (writing assignments, band room duties)
 3. Detention (morning or after school) and parent contacted (by phone/in person)
 4. Office referral (for a severe offense, immediate office referral)
 5. Removal from the band program

Daily Procedures

1. Students will enter the room on time in a quiet, orderly manner and quickly get their instrument and music and sit down in the assigned seat.
2. Students should check the board and put music in the order listed.
3. Students are ready to learn when the director steps on the podium. No questions will be answered at this time.
4. Students will stay seated during class and pay attention at all times.
5. Students will not play instruments out of turn.
6. There is **NO** talking while rehearsal is in progress.
7. No **GUM**, food, or drink is allowed in the band room.
8. Students may only touch or play **THEIR OWN** instrument.
9. Students must use proper posture and instrument positions while playing.
10. Students will not disturb the learning of others in the room

Warm-Up

Be reasonable in your individual warm up; this is NOT the time to see how high, loud, or fast you can play. Instead, it is important to do each of the following on a daily basis:

- Long Tones/Lip Slurs
- District Band Scales
- Daily Assignments

VII. GRADING POLICY

This policy will affect all band members regardless of grade level. Grades will be based on the elements listed below and given the following weights:

70% Co-Curricular/Enrichment Ensemble Performance Attendance (Concerts, performances, etc.). Playing Assessments may be a portion of this grade.

30% Participation (daily grade)

Appropriate participation is defined as follows:

1. Each student should have the following items in class every day:
 - a sharpened pencil
 - your instrument (sticks or mallets for percussionists)
 - your music and folder
 - at least three working reeds (clarinets and saxophones)
 - at least two working reeds and a water canister (double reeds)
2. Student uses proper posture and instrument positions.
3. Student is attentive towards the authorized person in front of the band and exhibits good conduct.
4. Student is making an effort to perform the music that has been assigned.
5. Student is listening to instructions and not preventing other students from learning.

From time to time during the school year, you will have an unannounced materials check. If you have all the items listed above, you will receive a grade of “A.” Your grade will be lowered one letter for each item you are missing. The easiest way to make sure you receive a “free A” is to have everything that you need at all times.

Band room care & maintenance - *Take care of our band room; it's the only one we have!*

If it's not yours, Leave it alone – No students may play any school-owned instrument, including all percussion instruments, unless assigned to that instrument.

If you use it, Take care of it – All instruments, chairs, stands, accessories, etc. should be treated with care. Do not lean on stands or chair legs, mistreat equipment, or use it in a manner for which it is not intended.

If you take it out, Put it away – instruments, sticks, percussion accessories, must be put away at the end of class/

If you move it, Put it back – This is self-explanatory!

Practice tips & Ideas

Here is a model of one good way to structure your practice time.

1. Warm-up (5-10 Minutes)
 - Everyone - Start slow, work on breathing and a good sound.
 - Brass – Long tones, lip slurs, scales
 - Woodwinds – Long tones, finger exercises, scalesPercussion – stretch hands, arms, wrists. Bounces, single strokes, rudiments, scales on mallets.
2. Technical Practice (10 Minutes)

- Practice with a metronome at all speeds
- Start slow and gradually work up speed
- Range Studies
- Technical arts of band music and solos
- Practice specific trouble spots, go slow enough not to allow any mistakes

3. Performance (10 Minutes)

- Play as if you are performing in public.
- No stopping, count all rests, no going back, no excuses
- Remember problem spots to practice later

4. Sight read/Browse fun music (5-10 Minutes)

- Search and play new music from Smartmusic
- Get a book of tunes you know and have fun reading and playing
- Feel free to borrow books from friends

Good Ideas

- Play with friends (duets are great!)
- Perform for friends, family, the dog, or whoever will listen
- Take it one measure at a time
- Take it as slow as you need to
- Always think about what you are doing
- Listen to and record your sound

Remember why you practice...

To become a better performer...

And to have more fun as a musician!

Performance Attendance

All performances are considered mandatory participation. It is impossible to have a truly successful performance unless each member is in attendance. Therefore, we always give advance notice for performances so all members can arrange their calendars accordingly. Please do not schedule appointments or make out-of-town trips when a performance is scheduled! The only excused absences will be: **1.) Personal illness with a doctor's note, 2.) family crisis, 3.) pre-arranged absence with the director at least one week in advance.** If a student is absent from a band performance for any reason, a written note from a parent must be produced to the director the next day. Any absence without a note from home will be considered unexcused and no credit will be given.

Performance Criteria (grade for each performance)

- Student is on time for performance warm-up
- Student has instrument and appropriate materials
- Student is wearing appropriate performance clothing
- Students displays good behavior during the performance
- Student is attentive and contributing to a good performance
- Individual part performed at a high level of proficiency

Performance Dress Requirements

Concert Dress – Black dressy shirt, black pants, dressy shoes

Please have your attire ready several weeks before your performance. Don't wait until the last minute!

The Four A's of Concert Attendance

Attend – Showing support is huge. Be sure to be seated on time!

Allow – A concert is like live television. Anything could happen whether it was scripted or not. Your patience is appreciated.

Appreciate – You are witnessing and experiencing the fruits of our labors. We hope you enjoy the progress!

Applaud – It is our custom to applaud. It's how large groups can say thank you as a whole.

Playing tests/Item Checks/Instrument Inspections

Students will be given a series of playing tests during the year. Tests may or may not be announced previously. Any music that the band is working on may be used for a playing test. Students are encouraged to know their parts and practice them at home. Written exams on music theory material studied in class may be given. Instrument inspections will be conducted at the discretion of the director and be graded on a standardized handout. Instruments must be in good playing condition to receive credit. Every instrument has necessary items that keep the instrument in good working condition and prevent expensive damage. Students who do not have the items listed below for their instrument have a much greater chance of damaging their instrument and their grade.

Playing test rubric

These are the grading criteria that will be followed for playing tests.

	A	B	C	F
Notes	Played all notes correctly, no fumbling, no missed accidentals, appropriate articulations.	Played most notes correctly, very little fumbling, mostly appropriate articulations	Played some notes correctly, some fumbling, some missed key signatures, some appropriate articulations	Played few notes correctly, considerable fumbling, missed most of the accidentals, and ignored articulations
Rhythm/Tempo	Played all rhythms accurately, at appropriate tempo, with a steady beat	Played most rhythms accurately, at appropriate tempo, with a somewhat steady beat	Played some rhythms accurately, inappropriate tempo, with an unsteady beat	Played few rhythms correctly, no discernable tempo or beat
Tone	Beautiful, focused tone, good breath support all the time	Good, mostly focused tone, good breath support most of the time	Weak, somewhat focused tone, inconsistent breath support	Poor, unfocused tone, little or no breath support
Dynamics and Style	Played all dynamics and style markings correctly	Played most of the dynamics and style markings	Played some of the dynamics and style markings	Played few dynamics and style markings

VIII. TRAVEL

The Cuthbertson Band Program is a very active program that provides opportunities for students to travel off-campus for performances. These performances can include festivals, clinic bands, recruitment, and other scheduled performances. Students will be notified in advance when a trip has been scheduled. **All band trips are school sponsored and students will follow all Cuthbertson High School Guidelines.**

Inappropriate behavior will be handled by the director in the manner outlined by Cuthbertson High School and the Union County School Board of Education, and if deemed necessary by the band director, the student will be sent home at the parent's expense.

Opportunities such as District Honor Band, All-State, All-County, and Clinic Bands are open by audition only. Students are strongly encouraged to audition, as this will improve their playing abilities and confidence. Students will be given materials and dates in advance of the audition and are encouraged to see the director for extra help. No student is permitted to audition outside the band without performing the material for the director first. Extra credit may be given for participation at the discretion of the director.

- All students will be given a permission form, which must be filled out, signed by a parent, and returned to the director.
- All students must ride designated buses. (A student may return from an event with his/her parents or relative, provided they have submitted the transportation release form **prior** to leaving for the event, and with approval from the director).
- All bus safety rules will be observed
- Buses are to be treated with care and trash will be picked up before any student is dismissed.

IX. MUSIC

1. Music is considered the band textbook and will be issued once to students. Your grade could be affected if the loss hinders your rehearsal or performance. Music is to be kept only in designated band folders supplied by the director. Lost folders will need to be replaced by the student.
2. It is the student's responsibility to come to class or practice "owning" their parts. Only when students can perform their parts at a proficient level will they be allowed to participate fully in performances. This is the only way to ensure a successful band performance. Time will be given in class to ask questions about parts of the music students do not understand. When a piece of music has been passed out, it is the student's responsibility to find these parts within the first two weeks and practice them at home.
3. It is also the student's responsibility for marking changes in the music, in pencil only, the first time they are given. Music should not be folded or crinkled.



X. BAND AWARDS

1. Band Letter – Given upon completion of the 3rd year of the Cuthbertson High School Band Program. Students must be in attendance for 95% of all marching and concert band events.
2. Senior Award - Seniors will be awarded at the completion of their 4th year of the band.

XI. INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Band Parent Meetings

The regular meetings of the Cuthbertson Band Boosters will be held in the Cuthbertson High School Band room at 7 P.M. quarterly. During these meetings, we volunteer for committees and projects, discuss upcoming activities, share the good news about the program, and receive important dates and other information. Additional meetings are held by our committees as needed. We hope every parent finds an activity or a committee to which they can contribute.

Website

The band site has the latest and greatest information, as well as resources such as links, forms (including Band Booster membership), and an interactive calendar. This website will be updated often so be sure to check back often.

Cuthbertson Bands – <http://cuthbertsonbands.org>

Online Notification (email group) - This has proven to be an excellent method of communicating messages to our parents, especially since handouts do not always make it home! Last minute details and instructions are often sent through this service. Be sure to join the group and to check your email often. Also keep updated with the latest updates by following the Cuthbertson Band –Official Site Facebook page! This is a great resource for finding out information such as return time from football games as well as other school performances.

PRIVATE LESSONS

In a band class it is difficult to provide one-on-one instruction for any length of time. Private or group lessons are designed to help the individual student become a better performer and learn more about his/her instrument. Specialists on the different instruments may be brought in by the director to help student achievement. This is similar to tutoring and students are better able to become proficient on their instrument. We encourage all students wherever possible to participate in lessons, as this will make practice time less difficult and performances even more fun. If you are interested please pick up a form from the director. Private lessons are highly recommended in order to increase the advancement of performance skills on a musical instrument. The one-to-one approach allows the student to benefit from the attention of the private teacher.

Recent studies have shown that over 80% of students in the All-State Band take private lessons regularly. Participation in honor bands increases the chance that students will receive a college scholarship.

As a Parent:

- Support your young musician with a quality instrument and supplies.
- Note the care of the instrument. The cost of repairs is high. Make sure repairs are dealt with in a timely manner.
- Enroll your child in private lessons whenever possible.
- Arrange a regular time and quiet place for your child to practice.
- Acknowledge and reward their efforts. Complement often. **Be their biggest fan!**
- Make it possible for your child to attend professional concerts and buy band-related recordings.
- Consider upgrading and adding to instruments and equipment if you have the means. Keep the lines of communication open between parent, band member and director.

- Encourage your child to play for others when opportunities arise at home, at school, church, and in the community.
- Teach the importance of being on time for rehearsals and performances.
- Come hear our concerts and support your child and the other band members

Numerous studies indicate parental attitude, support, and involvement are important factors in a child's ability to successfully learn to play and to enjoy music. Your decision to provide your child with a quality musical instrument is an investment in your child's future. In making it possible for your child to play a musical instrument, you are providing the opportunity for self-expression, creativity and achievement.

ADVICE ON GETTING AN INSTRUMENT

Buying an instrument is a big step and can be confusing. I will be happy to give you some seasoned advice in regards to instrument purchasing, and let the parents and students decide what works best for their situation.

Intermediate/Professional Model Instrument: These instruments are made with better quality materials and better quality control. In some cases these instruments have more keys or have a bigger bore (to help get a bigger sound), or are made of more expensive metals. Some of these options are cosmetic, and some are truly beneficial. Generally, if your child is serious about band, and really enjoys playing their instrument, this can be an excellent option.

Recommendations for purchasing instruments:

- Shop around.
- Do not purchase an instrument on ebay or the internet without consulting the band director or private instructor first.
- Used instruments are plentiful and can have excellent value. However, as with buying a used car, the rule is "buyer beware."

If buying a used instrument, consider the following:

- Quality of instrument when it was new.
- Age of instrument – old is not necessarily bad if it's a quality model.
- History of instrument – How long was it played? How long has it sat unused? An instrument that was played for 2 years and sat for 10 is most likely better than a 5 year old instrument played all 5 years.
- Repair history – How often was it serviced and checked?
- Appearance of instrument – Several dings and dents can harm the sound of a brass instrument.
- Most used instruments will need some kind of repair to put it in the best possible playing condition.

CUTHBERTSON



BAND

Todd Ebert, Director of Bands
Katie Ebert, Assistant Director
Samantha Liddle, Associate Director
Cuthbertson High School
1400 Cuthbertson Road
Waxhaw, NC 28173
cuthbertsonband.org



Marching Band Handbook 2025

INFORMATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

The marching band performs at various activities throughout the year, including all football games, parades and other community events, as well as pep rallies. Students who are interested in dance may choose to audition for the Color Guard. Membership in the Marching Band is available for high school band members, interested 8th grade band students, and non-members (guard only) on an audition only basis. Students must demonstrate the highest level of commitment, as there are no substitutes for anyone's spot.

The marching band season begins at the beginning of August, before school starts with band camp, a mandatory activity. *Band members are expected to coordinate schedules so there are no conflicts with all dates on the season schedule.* Students will represent their school and community at events both throughout North Carolina and outside the state.

Student leadership positions will be based upon individual student performance and ensemble needs.

Attendance Policy

A calendar is posted with a listing of all after school rehearsals on the band website at cuthbertsonbands.org. **Students are expected to be present for all rehearsals listed.** The band director will work with all school activities including teachers, coaches, and directors of other activities to give each student every opportunity to be part of other groups. Non-school sponsored activities, teams, and organizations must not conflict with the practice/performance schedule of the band. Unlike other classes where students may succeed or fail independent of others, the band's success relies on the participation of all its members as a whole. Marching band is a team based activity, and everyone is a first string player.

It is expected that the band member and the family will make every effort to avoid or solve conflicts before requesting to be absent. The band director and other staff members understand that student's time is valuable, and we take pride in the fact that we use time wisely and begin/end rehearsals as promptly as possible. Students and parents are asked to give the band program the same consideration and cooperation. Students with jobs should realize that work is NOT an excused absence and should present their employers with the band schedule as soon as possible. Any conflicts should be discussed with the band director as early as possible in order to be considered excused. Students need to be picked up no later than 30 minutes after the rehearsal ends. Additionally, all absences need to be communicated via email by a parent/guardian.

- In order to count an absence as excused, special permission must come from Mr. Ebert and be considered an emergency situation.
- Unexcused absences will result in the loss of 3rd quarter break for that student and his/her section leader or designee.
- Students that miss the Thursday rehearsal preceding a Friday football game will not be permitted to march the half-time show due to changes that may have occurred at rehearsal.
- Students who miss more than 3 rehearsals for any reason will not continue in marching band.

Any special emergencies should be addressed only to Mr. Ebert via email or direct phone call.

Check your calendars! Routine doctor and dentist appointments are not considered excused and therefore should not be scheduled during your rehearsal time.

Fees

Fees for marching band are due before the season begins. Many items for the show have to be contracted and paid for before the season begins. To insure all students have a spot for the first day of band camp, all fees are non-refundable and due in full by the due date.

Football Games and Other Marching Performances

- Know the schedule and be on time (early).
- Do not arrive at the beginning of practice. Be ready to practice at the beginning of practice. We will practice before each game and competition
- Know what the uniform is for each performance. Come dressed, unless otherwise directed. We will inspect your uniform.
- In the case of inclement weather, practice will be held indoors. Students will receive a remind text when locations are changed. **Practices are never canceled because of weather!**
- Band members are responsible for all the band equipment; their own and others. Make a special effort to help the battery and pit percussion during marching band season.
- During football performances, the band may earn the privilege of a break during the third quarter. In order to keep this privilege, the entire band must return to their seats in order to perform at the end of the third quarter. Failure to do so may result in individuals, or the band, forfeiting this privilege.
- NO visitors are permitted in the stands, not even parents.
- When other schools march at our field, make them feel like the greatest band in the world.
- Always be ready to play. Short notice is given during football games. Be alert and remember that you are a performer, not a spectator.
- Do not eat or drink anything in the stands.
- Stay with a group of band members when not performing.
- Always follow the uniform dress code designated by the directors before, during, and after the game. Remember you are a visual element of the ensemble.

Marching Rehearsal Survival Guide

Before a Rehearsal

- **Take care of your personal needs.** Eat, drink, put on sunscreen, and go to the bathroom. This is not to say we won't let you use the bathroom, but we won't make a habit of letting you leave rehearsal.
- **Know the schedule.** Plan to be early, and to stay the entire time. Know when the next rehearsal is.
- **Resolve conflicts.** Do not tell an instructor that you can't make tonight's practice. That is to be done at least a week in advance, in writing. Rehearsal absences will be excused on an individual student basis.
- **Prepare.** Know your music and drill. Bring everything you'll need: uniform, dot book, water, lyre, flip folder, and music. Memorize show music and school songs.
- **Dress appropriately.** Know the forecast and prepare. Wear comfortable athletic shoes with socks. Never wear flip flops. Bring a hat and shades if it is sunny.

During a Rehearsal

- **Be where you are supposed to be, BEFORE you are supposed to be there.**
- **Listen.** Music must exist against a backdrop of silence. You will be given time to socialize. Otherwise, extra chatting will not be tolerated.
- **Give your enthusiasm and your effort.** Do your part to make it a great rehearsal; one which is productive and fun. Make the band better today!

- **Execute to the best of your ability.** You will perform the way you practice. Get your toes up higher each time. Run it back as fast as you can. Play your best.
- **Self-evaluate.** Don't wait for someone else to tell you. You can fix it, too. Be demanding of yourself and strive to do it better next time.
- **Do what you're told.** The staff and student leaders are working hard to create a superior performance. What we're telling you to do is solely towards that goal. Whether or not you agree is not relevant. Insubordination will not be tolerated. If you have a problem with someone in command, we would appreciate if you do the mature thing: suck it up for now and deal with it after rehearsal is over. Bring all personal conflicts to the attention of the director.
- **Do what everyone else is doing.** This is a group activity. If we are all singing, sing. If we are counting, count. Look around; there are role models everywhere.

After a Rehearsal

- **Announcements.** Every rehearsal ends with important info being dispensed. Listen carefully. The sooner you let the staff finish announcements, the sooner we can all go home.
- **Clean up.** It is EVERY band member's responsibility to make sure the practice field and the band room is clear of equipment and trash. Help others. Don't be the person overheard saying, "That's not mine," or "I didn't do it." That equates to saying "I'm not a member of this band."

Prepare for the next rehearsal based on what you learned in this one

Cell Phones

Cell phones must be turned OFF and kept out of sight during all band rehearsals and activities, including athletic events and marching band competitions. Students are permitted to carry and use cell phones during any band trips, and to use cell phones to contact parents for pick-up when the band returns to campus. Any cell phone that is seen or heard during a band activity will be confiscated by the band director and will only be returned to the parents.

Duties of the Band Member

- 1) **Be on time for all practices and performances.** At least five minutes early is "on-time", and "on-time is LATE!"
- 2) Arrive at all practices with the correct supplies and a positive attitude.
- 3) Make a real effort to improve on your instrument daily, including practicing your instrument at least 150 minutes per week
- 4) Be responsible for your actions, and assume the consequences, positive or negative.
- 5) Have proper respect for those in authority, including using polite manners.
- 6) Follow all class and school rules both on and off school property, including school dress code.
- 7) Show respect and courtesy to directors, teachers, substitutes, instructors, parents, and fellow students at all times.
- 8) Respect all school-owned property including: band instruments, sheet music, method books, stands, chairs, percussion instruments, equipment, etc.
- 9) Only touch what belongs to **YOU**.
- 10) Be responsible and not have **GUM**, food, or drinks in the band room.

UNIFORM

Each marching band student has two uniforms:

1. A main uniform, which is kept at school. Please be sure your student wears slick shorts and their show t-shirt underneath, to allow the uniform to go on easily & quickly, along with black socks (their black dress socks must reach the calf at a minimum), their black marching band shoes, and ball cap.

2. A second uniform, which consists of their show t-shirt, black shorts (which they can buy from the Boosters), black socks, their black marching band shoes and their band baseball cap.

If a student forgets an item, they may “rent” that item from the uniform parents. If the student does not return the item (cleaned) within 7 days, they will be charged the full value of the item. It is the student’s responsibility to have each and every item at every performance. Excessive “renting” (over 3 times) will result in the student being charged full price for the item. A determination of which uniform will be worn to football games, will be made during the Thursday Practice before each game. Be prepared for your student to wear both uniforms each weekend during the marching show season. It is helpful to purchase a second show shirt to avoid late night launderings.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

All successful band students possess a degree of personal discipline. This element is essential to a strong band program and is a must for every individual. Examples of personal discipline include:

1. **Prepared for rehearsal**
2. **Responsibility**
3. **Individual practice**
4. **Dedication**
5. **Effort**

Behavior Policy

We believe that all students can behave appropriately. **Students are expected to do so at all times. No student has the right to interfere with the teaching or learning of other students in the ensemble.** Due to our large size and expensive instruments, good behavior is a must to participate in marching band.

TRAVEL

The Cuthbertson Band Program is a very active program that provides opportunities for students to travel off-campus for performances. These performances can include festivals, clinic bands, competitions, football games, and other scheduled performances. Students will be notified in advance when a trip has been scheduled. **All band trips are school sponsored and students will follow all Cuthbertson High School Guidelines.**

Inappropriate behavior will be handled by the director in the manner outlined by Cuthbertson High School and the Union County School Board of Education, and if deemed necessary by the band director, the student will be sent home at the parent’s expense.

- All students must ride designated buses. (A student may return from an event with his/her parents or relative, providing they have submitted the transportation release form **one week prior** to leaving for the event, and with approval from the director).
- All bus safety rules will be observed
- Buses are to be treated with care and trash will be picked up before any student is dismissed.

NOTE: The Cuthbertson High School Code of Conduct will be in effect at all band-related functions. Please familiarize yourself with the Student Code of Conduct as well as the rules that relate to the band.

SPIRITWEAR

The Boosters sell band-related spiritwear to offset a portion of the cost of the marching band season. Through the spiritwear team, students receive a show t-shirt at the beginning of each marching band performance season and a band baseball cap at the beginning of their marching band career, both for free. Many students find it useful to purchase at least one back-up show t-shirt and baseball cap, in the event the original is lost or misplaced (or to avoid doing laundry at midnight following a Friday football game). All students are sized for black shorts, marching band or guard shoes, guard gloves, etc. during band camp. Other items such as section shirts, hoodies, etc., may be purchased from the spiritwear team. Contact: cbbspiritwear@gmail.com for more information.

PERCUSSION SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Students will be selected by audition for the percussion section. Auditions will be based on ability on the current instrument, behavior, and natural talent. Students are responsible for taking care of the school owned equipment. Students who do not take care of the instruments may be removed from the section.

Percussion students will need to own the following sticks listed below for their instrument. These items should be marked with the student's name and can be rented or purchased through our local music store.

Snares – Vic Firth Thom Hannum Snare sticks

Tenors – Tom Aungst Tenor Hybrid and Bill Bachman Tenor Stick

Bass Drums – Vic Goth Marching BD Mallets 1-2-3- or 4. Number correlates with the Bass Drum played.

Front Ensemble – Andrew Markworth Mallets – Marimba – M231, M232, Vibes – M234, M235.

It is each percussion student's responsibility to provide the mallets and/or sticks required by the percussion director(s) for the performance season. No exceptions.

The Boosters maintain a supply of required percussion mallets and sticks that your student may purchase at a discounted price or rent. Rented mallets/sticks must be returned within 3 days of any performance. Failure to return rented items in good condition will result in the full value of the item being charged to the student's band account. Excessive borrowing (3 or more times) will result in your student's band account charged.

Behavior is a must for this section! Students should be looking over music and not talking during rehearsal.

COLORGUARD SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Students will be selected by audition for the colorguard. Students are responsible for taking care of the school owned equipment. Students who do not take care of the instruments may be removed from the section.

If you are not a member of the Cuthbertson Band class it is your responsibility to keep up with the weekly band newsletter for all information and periodically stop by the band room for directions printed on the board.

As a member of the Cuthbertson Band Colorguard, all band rules including discipline and attendance policy apply to you and must be followed.

Content

Practice with the Colorguard will consist of the basics of dance, body, equipment and show elements. We do these as a group during the spring, August practices with the whole band, and after school until November. It is your responsibility to practice at home to be prepared for practice. We have many elements to learn in this activity and it is up to you to be prepared because we are adding to our guard vocabulary while together. Individual time is to be done at home so you are not behind.

Clothing

Wear appropriate clothing that is tasteful, not too short, covers the body and is appropriate to wear on school grounds. Please make sure it is comfortable enough for you to move, dance and bend in. Items not allowed are long fingernails, large earrings, jewelry except studded earrings, halter tops or bathing suit outfits, see through undergarments and very short pants, skirts or bodysuits. Make up and hair styles will be determined by the staff before competitions and must be uniform throughout the guard.

We recommend you bring a water bottle or sports drinks but not sodas during practice time. Also, eat a nutritious meal in the morning before August practices and a meal or snack before evening rehearsals during the spring and

band camp practices. Always try to have a small snack with you in case you need food during rehearsal time. Bring towels, sunscreen, insect repellent, proper tennis shoes and foot coverings if we are working inside. We prefer students never to be barefoot.

Guard Uniform

Each student will be issued two basic types of uniforms:

1. A performance uniform that is chosen specifically for the marching band performance season. This uniform is fitted to you for your exclusive use, and is stored in the high school uniform room in between performances. This uniform is on loan to you, and you are expected to treat it with care and respect until you return it at the end of the performance season. You are responsible for promptly reporting damage to your uniform to the Booster parent(s) in charge of student uniforms. The cost of repairing or replacing lost or damaged performance uniforms will be assessed to the student's band account. All guard members are issued a pair of special gloves at the beginning of their band career. Replacement gloves are available for purchase from the Boosters.
2. An alternate uniform, consisting of a show t-shirt (issued by the Boosters at the start each marching band performance season, and yours to keep), black shorts of appropriate length (purchased from boosters), band baseball cap (issued by the Boosters during your first performance season, to be used throughout your high school band career) and your guard performance shoes (which may or may not include socks, depending on the style of guard shoe worn). This uniform, identical to the uniform worn by non-guard members of the marching band in most respects, is to be worn during designated performances in place of one's performance uniform (such as at the start of the performance season, when high temperatures could make wearing your performance uniform impractical). Replacement t-shirts, black shorts and band baseball caps are available for purchase from the Booster parent(s) in charge of student uniforms.

Guard members may purchase an optional, two-piece warm-up outfit to be worn over the student's performance or alternate uniform from the Boosters

Equipment

Your equipment is your responsibility whether at school for practice, during a performance or at home. Equipment is to be treated with respect. Every member is responsible for all the equipment assigned to that member. Taking care of the equipment is a very important part of being a member. Without the equipment, we would have nothing which to show color and emotional expression of the show. Equipment is not to be left anywhere except for the designated areas during practice, in the guard room or at your house. Please understand that we (the staff/school) try to provide the best equipment for all members and would appreciate your cooperation.

Home Practice

Members are strongly urged to practice at home every day. There is no set amount of time but it would be in the member's best interest to practice as often as possible understanding that school work needs to be your first priority. The amount of personal practice time will greatly determine the growth of the member but more importantly, the growth of the group.