REVISED Aug 2026

THE GRISSOM HIGH SCHOOL BANDS

Welcome to the Grissom High School Bands! We are happy to have you as a member in this awarding-winning organization. Mr. Patrick Darby, Band Director, and Mr. Brent Harris, Associate Band Director, bring to our band program the dedicated effort and outstanding leadership that have characterized our directors since Grissom High School opened in 1969. As one of the consistent largest student organizations at Grissom, the program includes the marching band, two symphonic bands, a concert band, jazz ensemble, and more.

The Instrumental Music Department at Grissom strives to maintain a balanced program in all facets of music education, including the development of the individual musician. Over the years, the Grissom Band program has consistently produced excellent musicians who are in demand by colleges and universities throughout the Southeast and many parts of the country. Superior medals are awarded to Grissom students at the Solo and Ensemble Festival each year. Grissom students receive placement in one of the Alabama All-State Bands each year.

Awards and recognitions have come often to the Band as a whole, too. Since its inception in 1969, the Symphonic Band 1 has never received less than a superior rating in any adjudication. They have been invited to perform at music educators' and conductors' conferences. The Symphonic Band 2 has rarely received less that a superior rating in any adjudication and the Concert Band has never received less than an excellent rating. The Marching Band has won numerous titles in contests and festivals throughout the Southeast and has never received less than a superior rating. They performed as the lead band on national television in the 1999 Macy*s Thanksgiving Day Parade. The Jazz Band has gained recognition throughout the United States and abroad; participating in Austria's Millennium Celebration in 1996, being selected as one of 20 bands to compete in the “Essentially Ellington Jazz Band Competition and Festival” in 1999, a Kennedy Center performance in 2000,a performance at the prestigious North Sea Jazz Festival in The Hague, Netherlands in 2002, and the Savannah “Swing Central” Jazz Band Festival several times. (one of 12 bands from across the United States selected).

The tradition of excellence held by the Grissom High School Band program developed through the hard work and dedication of past members and directors: Mr. Dave Ward, Mr. James Sparks, Mr. Ronald Rich & Mr. Theo Vernon, is continued now through the hard work and dedication of our present directors and musicians like you!

Grissom Band Web Page Address
http://www.grissomband.com
Check your student's account by logging in to:
https://www.mymusicoffice.com/login.php
Contact band directors or board members for more information about MyMusicOffice

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction....1
Band Activity Calendar....2
Band Fees....2
Marching Band....3
Percussion Section....4
Color Guard....4
Concert Season....5
Concert Season Band Camp....5
Jazz Band....6
Rehearsal Attendance....7
Rehearsal/Class Procedures....9
Individual Practice....9
Private Lessons....9
Challenging Procedures....10
Band Rules and Regulations....11
Uniforms....12
Trips....13
Rental of Grissom Band-Owned Instruments....14
Privately Owned Instruments....15
Student Leaders....15
Awards and Honors....18
Honor Bands and Festivals....19
Grissom Band Parents Association, Inc....19

BAND ACTIVITY CALENDAR

A Grissom Band Activity Calendar is posted on MyMusicOffice and the band's website www.grissomband.com at the beginning of each summer. This calendar will include all performance dates plus the yearly band activities along with other important dates for band members and their parents. These dates are published early so you and your family can plan around your band commitment. Missing a performance that is on this calendar will result in a lowered grade for that nine week grading period. Please plan ahead and refer to rehearsal attendance policies for more information.

BAND FEES

The amount of fees shall be determined each year by the elected Board and adopted by the Association. Each year's fees will be based on the Association's operating budget. See fee schedule on the band website. A 20% penalty fee will be applied to the dollar amount portion of the fees after the deadlines. Fundraisers are offered during the summer and school year to assist families with raising credits to offset the cost of the band fees. Requests for extension of payments or payment plans can be made directly to the Grissom Band Parent Association Treasurer.

The fees cover:

(a) General operating expenses of the band:
Purchase, replacement, and repair of instruments, equipment, music, folders, flags, rifles, competition registration fees, clinicians, music stands, copy machine expenses, paper, web site, general office supplies, etc.

(b) Uniform rental: cleaning, maintenance, replacement fund, part replacement

(c) Band polo shirt

(d) Marching Band Camp: drill design, music arrangements, clinicians during the summer and fall, music copies, pencils, drill chart copies for teaching, etc.

(e) Bus transportation: to away football games, Marching Contests, State Concert Festival

(f) Concert Season Band Camp: Guest conductors, master-classes conducted by specialists for each instrument, equipment rental for rehearsals, recital expenses, catered meals, and new music.

MARCHING BAND

The Grissom High School Marching Tiger Band consists of instrument-playing members in the three band classes, plus the Color Guard. Membership is required of all first year students (those who have not marched at least 1 year). All upperclassman students and parents will sign a Band Participation Agreement prior to the end of each school year indicating their plans for the next year. Upperclassman students can choose to participate in the Marching Bands or Concert Band Only. New students will sign their contracts at New Member Orientation Camp each year. Agreement outlines all requirements for those marching, which include playing their concert instruments in class daily except when an adult instructor for Marching Band is present to work with their particular section. All students participating in Marching Band are required to also participate fully in Symphonic/Concert Band.

Marching Band Performances

The Football Marching Band attends all football games throughout the football season and any post-season playoff games. In addition, the Marching Band performs at the following:

*2 to 3 Marching Contests – Saturday events (Contest Band only)

*Parades as announced

*Other announced performances

The marching contests are held on Saturdays during the fall with a rehearsal before departure. Occasionally this is an overnight trip. Refer to trip information included in this handbook.

A schedule of summer band practices is distributed at the end of each school year and posted on our web sites. “New Member Orientation" is for incoming freshmen and anyone else who will march with the Grissom Band for the first time that fall. "New Member Orientation" is held in late May or early June. Band Camp is held in the summer (2 weeks prior to first week of school), where the marching music is learned and marching fundamentals practiced. All summer marching band rehearsals are required for all marching band members. Refer to Marching Band schedule posted on our websites. During football season, practices are held from 6:00-8:30 PM on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Refer to Marching Band schedule posted on websites. Extra

Color Guard and Percussion rehearsals may vary from these days. A run-through of the show will be held on the day of a performance immediately after school from 4:00-4:30pm. Attendance at all of these rehearsals is required and is a part of the student's grade.

Percussion Section

Spring percussion clinics/auditions are held before the end of the school year. All prospective members of the marching percussion section are required to attend. Percussion camps are held at Grissom in June and July. Clinicians are brought in to work with the section. All of these rehearsals are very important and attendance is required. Summer rehearsal schedules are given as soon as possible depending upon the clinicians' schedule. All members of the percussion section will pay the instrument rental fee for all 3 semesters; summer, fall and spring.

Color Guard

Members of the Color Guard are selected by an audition held in late spring semester. All members of the Guard are scheduled in one of the band classes and or the color guard class. Prior to auditions, a four-day clinic is held after school at Grissom to teach basic flag techniques and dance coordination. This clinic is required for all students auditioning for a position in the Guard. Parental permission forms, references from teachers, and grade sheets are also required before auditions.

<u>Membership in the Color Guard includes:</u>

1. Attendance at Guard Camps - weeklong camps scheduled in June and July at Grissom. Our clinician is brought in to teach equipment work for the marching drill and work on fundamentals of marching and dance movement. Any member missing these camps could be chosen as an alternate until the equipment work is learned.
2. Paying Band Fees - as set each year by the Grissom Band Parents Association. This fee covers the cost of Guard Camps, Pre Camp, Band Camp, uniform rental, transportation to football games, contests, and a general operational fee. Please refer to "Band Fees" within this handbook and on the band website.
3. Wearing a "Spirit Uniform" on game days. Each member is responsible for purchasing this "spirit uniform", which is not included in the band fees.
4. Maintenance of flags/rifles - Each guard member is responsible for the purchase of a practice flag, pike, and/or rifle. The band supplies performance flags and rifles.
5. Other costs will be required: duffle bag, equipment bag, shoes, makeup, etc.
6. Following all rules and regulations of the Grissom High School Band - of which you are a member.

At any time, any Guard member can be designated an alternate if too many rehearsals are missed or performance at rehearsals is not up to the standard of the ensemble.

CONCERT SEASON

Concert season, which begins immediately after the last Marching Band competition, is the major part of our music program. Grissom has three performing bands. Symphonic Band I, Symphonic Band II, and Concert Band. Your placement in one of the bands is based upon your performance at an audition. Auditions for the first semester are held at the end of each school year. Incoming 9th graders will use the audition material posted on the band's website. Auditions for the second semester are held in December. Both auditions are used for the semester exam grade. It is possible for you to move up or down a band at the change of semesters or from one year to the next. (It is also possible to change chair positions **within your band** by challenging the player above you)-- see "Challenging Procedures".

Symphonic and Concert Bands perform at the following:

1. Christmas Concert - December
2. Symphonic/Concert Band Camp - February
3. Music Performance Assessment (MPA) – March
4. Other Concert Festival - March/April
5. Spring Trip - destination varies every other year - April/May
6. Spring Concert – April/May
7. Graduation Exercises - May

Sometimes the Symphonic Band 1 will receive an invitation to perform at a convention or festival during the spring and will have an additional band trip. On occasion one or more of our bands will be invited to perform overseas or at a nationally recognized event. These are announced as soon as possible in order to raise funds.

CONCERT SEASON BAND CAMP - "Symphonic Band Camp"

During the early part of the 2nd semester each year, all three bands participate in a Concert Season Band Camp. Students will be involved in full band rehearsals with a guest conductor; master-classes on their respective instruments with guest faculty; recitals by guest faculty and Grissom students; clinics, and a performance in an informal concert at the conclusion of the camp. Grissom began this program in 1995. We use these camps to prepare selected festival music and to enhance our students' educational opportunity. These camps are held from Thursday after school through the Saturday afternoon final concert. This is a required activity that is included in your Band Fees.

JAZZ BANDS

Membership in the Jazz Band will be auditioned/determined by the director in the spring semester prior to the new school year. Jazz Band instrumentation includes Saxophones, Trombones, Trumpets, Drumset, Piano/Keyboard, Electric Guitar, and Upright Bass. The Jazz Band class is an extra ensemble in a students schedule and cannot replace their primary concert band class. (Exceptions might be given for students who are not in a concert band but are filling in empty spots for Guitar, Bass, Piano).

The Jazz Band will perform in a Winter Concert, Spring Concert, and any other specially requested performances during the year.

All Jazz Band students can see the All State Jazz Band info listed later in the handbook or talk to the director for more information.

REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all scheduled rehearsals (full band and sectionals) and performances is required of all members of the band program. Unexcused absences or frequent tardies will lower your grade and/or hinder you from performing.

To submit a request for an excused absence, you must email a detailed rationale for the absence to Mr. Darby (patrick.darby@hsv-k12.org) or Mr. Harris (brent.harris@hsv-k12.org) by the deadlines outlined below. Only emailed excuses will be accepted for consideration. Please do not share these requests on Remind or in-person requests after a rehearsal/performance. Absences will be excused at the discretion of the directors. A parent note does not automatically excuse the student for their absence.

It is your responsibility to notify the band director in advance **(at least 2 weeks for a rehearsal and 4 weeks for a performance; unless an emergancy)**. You must make up for all excused rehearsals by staying after school, making up the lost time. Failure to do so **within one week** will result in a zero in place of the rehearsal grade. We request that 2 weeks prior to a performance no rehearsal is to be missed; no excuses except family emergencies. Students who miss a performance for an unexcused absence will result in a zero for the major performance grade.

In addition to zeros in the grade book, students who retain unexcused absences during the semester will waive the right to perform with the Grissom Band.

***This is why we post calendars on MyMusicOffice and the website in June (or earlier) of each year for the following school year. ***

Excused absences included the following reasons: (Must be made up within one week)

1. sickness – must have signed note from parent/guardian and/or doctors note
2. death in the family
3. pre-arranged conflict -- must be cleared in advance
   (at least 2 weeks for a rehearsal - 4 weeks for a performance)
4. emergency doctor's appointment.

Unexcused absences include the following reasons: (Cannot be made up)

1. skipping
2. forgetting
3. employment conflict
4. babysitting
5. birthday
6. club meeting
7. make-up test that could be scheduled at a different time
8. doctor and other appointments (hair/nail appts, tele-health, etc.) that could be scheduled at a different time
9. trip made in disregard of band commitment

10. any other conflict not cleared in advance with the band director
11. any conflict that is not school related

***This is a list of common items that are counted for unexcused absence but this is not a complete list.**

The directors of the program retain the right to determine if absences are excused vs. unexcused as determined by the information provided in this handbook, timing of communication, quality of communication, etc.

MISSING MATERIALS OR NO INSTRUMENT

If a student has missing materials or does not bring their instrument to class, a zero or reduced grade will be placed for that day's rehearsal. In addition, students will compose a paper during the rehearsal in question.

CONFLICTS WITH OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:

Students who participate in multiple school activities that may have overlapping schedules, must communicate with the band directors and their other faculty representatives as early as possible to allow both parties to agree to a shared schedule. We release our calendar months in advance to allow those students/families to cross reference their calendar for these conflicts. When a student has to miss for another school activity, they must balance the amount of time missed from band with the other activity. Communication is key for this to be successful and is up to the student to be responsible for facilitating the communication. We have been very successful in making this work for many students as long as they communicate and plan accordingly.

REHEARSAL/CLASS PROCEDURES

1. Class begins five minutes after the tardy bell rings. This means that you are in your seat with your instrument, a music stand, your music, and a pencil warming up for the day's rehearsal. Make sure you have extra reeds, mutes, oil, etc. During warm-up time, percussionists will be setting up all needed equipment for the rehearsal and studying your music quietly.
2. Talking will not be tolerated during a rehearsal. Whether or not the director is directing information to you, you should pay attention because in some way it applies to you. Every member is very important to the performance and must know what is going on.
3. When not being used in class or taken home for practice, music folders are to be kept in a music cabinet slot or your instrument locker. NO MUSIC IS TO BE KEPT IN YOUR INSTRUMENT CASE. Music is very expensive. If you do not keep it in good condition or lose it, it will be your financial responsibility to replace it.
4. In your individual warm-up, it is important to do each of the following on a daily basis, being very aware of all the fundamentals of playing your instrument:

a. long tones (low and slow)

b. lip slurs for brass, arpeggios for woodwinds

c. scales -- using different rhythms, tempos, and articulations

INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE

The band will be only as good as the weakest player in the group. Everyone is expected to work consistently on an individual basis -- THAT'S CALLED PRACTICE. Those who are not keeping up with the group will be pulled out for remedial work, which will be checked daily by the band director.

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private lessons are an important part of the Grissom Band and its success. Students who take lessons are improving themselves musically, which benefits the band also. Therefore, students are encouraged to take private music lessons. A list of teachers on each instrument is available from the band director. Many of Grissom's upperclassmen also teach private lessons. If you are interested in teaching see the directors for information.

CHALLENGING PROCEDURES

To move to a higher chair position within your band, you may challenge the person sitting directly above you who plays the same part. The whole idea of a challenging system is to be a positive one. It is provided for your individual improvement and for the overall improvement of your band. Please take advantage of this and use it to help you and your band.

The challenge may come at any time, as long as there are at least two weeks before the next performance. To initiate the challenge, you must tell the person you wish to challenge and bring him/her to the band director to sign the challenge list. The challengers will decide upon a date at least one week after they sign up. The challenger will decide and tell which sections from the band music they will challenge. During the challenge, the band director will choose other sections from any of the present band music in addition to the original material. If you are challenging up to a higher part, you must challenge on the new part so you must have all the music for that part. Challenges are held before school, directly after school, or following an after school rehearsal. During the challenge, the person who requested the challenge will play first. Scales may be required, as well as the assigned material. If you requested the challenge and you win, you may then challenge the next person in line or you may be challenged back the next week. If the directors see that two or more students are using this system for cruel purposes, the students will not be allowed to challenge for the remainder of the semester.

BAND RULES AND REGULATIONS

At all times, band members should behave in a manner that reflects positively upon the school band community and themselves.

Band Room:

1. There should never be gum, food or drink in the band room. Consequences will occur if caught disobeying this rule.
2. All instruments are to be stored inside your assigned instrument locker only; not on the floor of the band room.
3. Music folders may be stored in your instrument locker, not on the floor or table. Your music folder should stay in the band room at all times unless at home for practice. Make arrangements to have your music at school when you are absent for any reason if you are sharing copies. The student must replace any music lost or damaged or grades will be held.
4. This is your band room so keep it clean by putting any trash in the trash cans, whether you made the mess or not.
5. Students should only use their personal equipment or instruments that have been rented to them this year. Students should not use another person's instrument/equipment without permission. Only percussionists are allowed to use the percussion equipment. The jazz drummer uses the drum set only. The jazz pianist uses the piano only unless the band director gives permission.
6. Only band members are allowed in the band room unless authorized by the band director. Outsiders are not allowed due to all of the expensive equipment. Anything damaged could be blamed on them since we do not know them.
7. Textbooks and other school-related materials are not to be left in the band room. They will be thrown away periodically during the school year.
8. DO NOT LEAVE MONEY AND/OR VALUABLES (besides your instrument!) in the band room or school.
9. Practice rooms are for practicing music. You must ask permission to use the practice rooms. If food or drink is found in these rooms, the rooms will be locked and considered unusable.
10. Solo and Ensemble music, method books, tuners, etc., must be checked out with the director.

General conduct:

1. Band students are expected to participate in all classes in accordance with school attendance policies. Failure to do so may result in loss of membership in the band.
2. All band members must are expected to remain in good academic standing in their other classes. Often the band students are the smartest in the school so this is expected!!
3. The use of alcohol or tobacco products is strictly forbidden at any band function.
4. Huntsville City Schools and Grissom School Rules apply to all band functions.

At Football Games:

1. At the stadium before each game, section leaders will conduct a complete inspection of section members' uniform and equipment. Shoes must be clean. If they are not, the student will not be allowed to perform that night and points will be deducted from their grade.
2. You will be expected to sit and remain in the area designated for your section. Only band members in full uniform will be allowed to sit in the band section.
3. All band members will stay seated in their sections at all times unless asked to stand to play. All percussionists will stay seated by their respected instruments at all times, ready to play.
4. All members should be alert to what is going on down front. Instructions are given from the front of the band by drum majors and directors.
5. You must be in full, proper uniform at all times unless otherwise instructed by the director. Do not walk around with only a part of the uniform on, or with collar unhooked, coat unzipped, etc. Jewelry and nail polish are not to be worn with the uniform. Hats are worn at all times unless you are told by the drum major or director to take them off. All hair is to be under the hat.
6. Do not play instruments except when the band is playing together.
7. In-stand section "Go Cheers" will not be played unless practiced and cleared with the director prior to game day.
8. Gum chewing or eating while in uniform, excessive screaming and yelling will not be tolerated.
9. If a student must leave the band section for an emergency, another student must accompany and the director must grant permission. When permission is given to go to the restroom, there must be two students at a time in full uniform.

UNIFORMS

All band students will be fitted for a full band uniform at a pre-determined day and time before or after school starts. Initial payments on band fees are to be paid at this time. The parts include the following: Playing members: jacket, pants, shako, plume (distributed and turned back in at marching performances)
Symphonic Band 1, 2 and Concert Band members: tuxedo coat and pants, black bow tie and cummerbund for men; long black concert dress, black hose, and black shoes for ladies.
Guard members: TBD each year

Band members are required to provide some of the parts of their uniforms. These parts belong to the student and they are held responsible for having them at each performance. The personally provided parts include:

Marching Band members: majority white/neutral tennis shoes for all marching band rehearsals, black socks, black band shoes (ordered at uniform fittings), khaki shorts, Band polo (distributed by band & included with fees), black gloves (available to purchase at or prior to performances)

Symphonic Band 1, 2 and Concert Band members: black tuxedo shirt, black socks, and black shoes for men; black hose and black flats for ladies.

Guard members: spirit uniforms, jerseys, flag bags, accessory bags, equipment bags

Jazz Band members: Tuxedo shirt worn with concert tuxedos or dress clothes or determined by the director.

A pre-determined uniform rental fee is payable as a part of the Band Fees at the time of uniform assignment. No uniform (which includes the band shirt) will be worn unless fees are paid or a promissory note is signed arranging for payment over a period of time. The Board of the Band Parents Association must approve exemptions to this policy. Marching band uniforms cost approximately $450 and guard members' uniforms $100+. Concert uniforms cost $100 -$175 each. Please take care of your uniform so it will last. Students are financially responsible for repairs to or replacement of uniform parts due to mistreatment or loss.

TRIPS

When you are traveling with the band, you represent yourself, your home, band, school, and community. Your conduct at all times must represent the above in the best possible manner or you may be dismissed from the band program. All school and band rules/regulations are in effect for the duration of the trip, as if you were in school. Rules pertaining to a particular trip may also be issued. Misconduct or violation of these rules and regulations while on an overnight trip may result in your being sent home (at your parents' expense) via the quickest means of transportation. In any such case, you will notify your parents immediately of the problem.

The cost of trips for the full band will be divided equally among all members. Opportunities are available to earn credit toward trip expenses. These costs include transportation, lodging, most meals, registration fees, and any included sightseeing activities.

Chaperones for each trip are recruited at Band Parents Association meetings during the year or thought a sign up genius. The number of chaperones who can accompany each trip is limited to 1 per 10 students. Chaperone guidelines are handed out at a meeting prior to trip departure.

Trip itineraries will be sent home and emailed before each trip and posted on our web page with all pertinent information (cost, dates times, schedule, hotel address and phone number, etc.) **You will not be allowed to travel with the band if you have not turned in the proper permission forms/health forms, etc.**

Bus Procedures:
1. Bus lists will be signed for all trips.
2. Bus captains will be assigned for each bus.

3. No one loads the bus until roll is checked in the band room and announcements are made.
4. All equipment to be loaded on the truck must be put in the back of the band room by the person who will use the equipment in the performance.
5. At the performance site, buses will not unload until told to do so by the director.

Overnight trips:
1. Room lists will be signed before all overnight trips.
2. Before checking into the motel, room captains will pick up room keys.
3. All bus captains will be responsible for checking roll each time we load.
   -No one may change buses or rooms without permission from the director.
   -Bus captain and chaperones must be informed of any such change.
4. All band members will ride the bus to and from events. NO PRIVATE CARS ALLOWED. **Bus exemption forms for after performance travel with parents only are available on the web site and must be turned in 24 hours prior to the event. Parents must find your student's chaperone before departure to check in then check out.**

Hotels:
1. All rooms will be assigned and no changes will be made except those made by the band director and/or head chaperone.
2. You and your roommates will be expected to keep your room neat and clean. If the room is messy at checkout time, you and your roommates will clean the room before the bus departs.
3. Students must follow the curfew set by the band director and be polite to each other, hotel staff, and other hotel guests.

RENTAL OF GRISSOM BAND-OWNED INSTRUMENTS

If you use a Grissom Band-owned instrument, you are responsible for its care and minor maintenance. A normal amount of wear will be allowed for, but damage resulting from mistreatment or carelessness will be charged to the student. Careless treatment of a Grissom Band-owned instrument suggests that the individual is not deserving of its use. In this case, the instrument will be issued to someone more responsible. A rental fee will be charged for these instruments at the beginning of each semester. Summer-June, Fall-August, and Spring-January. The student and parent will sign a rental contract. This contract will be distributed to the students by the section leader of the respective section and/or band director. A copy of this contract is available in the band room. Students are expected to abide by all provisions of the contract to ensure coverage of the instrument by the Grissom Band Parents Association's insurance. The cost of rental is determined yearly by the Band Parents Association.

Instruments rented by the band, based on availability, include: tubas, sousaphones, baritone, mellophone (marching French horn), bassoon, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, piccolo, and all percussion equipment except sticks and mallets (which are the student's responsibility).

Instruments may be rented year-round, fall only or spring only, depending on the instrument and the student's needs.

PRIVATELY OWNED INSTRUMENTS

Parents/guardians are asked to provide the best possible quality instrument for their son(s)/ daughter(s). You are strongly encouraged to upgrade the quality of your instrument from that used by your dependent as a beginner/middle school. Suggested instrument make and model numbers are available from the band directors.

Grissom High School and the Grissom Band Parent Association assume no responsibility for instruments owned by individual students. You are encouraged to have your instrument insured against theft, damage, etc., through your family's homeowner's or tenant's insurance policy. It is also advisable to keep a record of the make and serial number of the instrument in your family records. All students are expected to maintain their instruments in good playing condition.

Plastic or brightly colored instruments may not be used while rehearsing or performing with the Grissom Band. While you are welcome to use a P-Bone, or similar instrument for at-home practice, instruments used with the band are required to have a traditional silver, nickel, or brass finish to ensure that the ensemble presents a unified appearance.

STUDENT LEADERS

The band directors appoint the student leaders of the Grissom High School Band after auditions, interview, and essays received. All students are looked upon as potential future leaders from the time they enter the band. These positions are all full year appointments, even though some duties listed below may refer only to Marching Band.

All students appointed as leaders shall, in addition to their listed duties, strive to uphold the image and spirit of the band at all times. These appointments are to be considered an honor and a responsibility, not a privilege. Leaders should aid the band director in every way possible. Please be aware that all leaders are to be available to teach or help teach at all camps for Marching and Symphonic/Concert Band. You are expected to keep the lines of communication open between each other and between students and the directors at all times. If responsibilities are not upheld, you can be removed from this position.

Leadership positions include: Band Captains, Drum Majors, Section Leaders
Their duties are as follows:

Band Captain (a year-round position)
1. Enforces band rules and maintains order.
2. Maintains "esprit de corps" within the band.
3. Makes announcements to the band as directed or when the need arises.
4. Oversees section leaders during marching rehearsals.
5. Meets periodically with section leaders to assist with any problems that may arise.
6. Assists section leaders with uniform inspections before games.
7. Checks section leaders' attendance notebooks periodically.
8. Checks attendance at each after school marching rehearsal and performance.

10. Reports any major problems to the director.
11. Assists the band director in all ways possible.
12. Helps with the organization of the annual Band Banquet.
Qualifications include: Senior (12 Grade) only, proficient on instrument, ability to communicate one-on-one or speak in front of a large group.

Drum Major (a year-round position)
1. Enforces rules and maintains order during marching rehearsals.
2. Directs and controls the band in field rehearsals and performances.
3. Maintains "esprit de corps" within the band.
4. Reports any major problems to the director.
5. Assists the Band Captains with uniform inspections and overseeing section leaders during marching rehearsals.
6. Conducts and is in charge of pep rallies.
7. Assists the band director in all ways possible.
8. Helps with the organization of the annual Band Banquet.
Qualifications include: proficient on respected instrument; ability to read musical score; ability to properly warm up band; at least one year's experience in Grissom High School Marching Band.

Section Leader (a year-round position)
1. Enforces band rules and maintains order.
2. Directs after-school section rehearsals.
3. Maintains "esprit de corps" within the band.
4. Is responsible for section's marching and playing performance on the field and behavior in the stands.
5. Keeps a daily record of attendance in designated notebook.
6. Inspects uniforms of section members before games.
7. Attends all meetings called by the Band Captains.
8. Reports any problems to the Band Captains or Drum Majors.
9. Issue school instruments at the beginning of summer/fall semester.
10. Issue and collect instrument rental forms.
Qualifications include: 1year experience in Marching Band; proficient on instrument.

Percussion Section Leader (a year-round position)
All of the duties of section leaders, plus the following:
1. Assists with percussion rehearsals during the summer and the regular marching season.
2. Is responsible for seeing that all percussion equipment is put in its proper place after each rehearsal and kept in an orderly manner.
3. Makes sure that all rehearsal sites are clean before leaving.
4. Oversees the loading and unloading of all percussion equipment at all band functions.
5. Keeps a record of all issued equipment and its condition.
6. Reports any vandalism to the band director immediately. Qualifications include: same as section leaders.

Color Guard Section Leader (a year-round position)
All of the duties of section leaders, plus the following:
1. Organizes and directs morning Guard rehearsals during the summer .
2. Assists in teaching the marching show to the Guard.
3. Makes sure that all rehearsal sites are clean before leaving.
4. Is responsible for seeing that all guard equipment is put in its proper place after each rehearsal and kept in an orderly manner.
5. Oversees the loading and unloading of all guard equipment at all band functions.
6. Keeps a record of all issued equipment and its condition.
Qualifications include: one year's experience in the GHS Guard (Marching Band).

Other Positions of Leadership
Librarians (a year round position)
1. Keep music library neat and orderly.
2. File and copy music as needed.
3. Keep the music index up to date.
4. Aid in passing out new music and collecting and filing it at the end of the year.

Truck Crew Members (a year round position)
Marching Band:
1. Collect lists from section leaders (guard, percussion & sousaphones) of what is to be loaded.
2. Load and unload all equipment for performances throughout the year.
3. Check to be sure that everything is tied down securely before truck is locked.
4. Check with band director to ensure that all equipment is loaded.
5. Arrive at all marching performances 30 minutes before reporting time to unload all equipment in an orderly and safe manner.
6. Change into uniform after all cases are put back on the truck before performance.
7. Leave the stands early to change out of uniform and get cases out and ready to load.
9. Unload equipment at school after performances and clean out truck for return to rental company.
10. No student will be allowed to drive the equipment tractor (Gator) at any time.

Symphonic/Concert Band:
11. Setup and take down all equipment for all Symphonic/Concert Band performances (local and out of town).
12. Change set between bands on stage for concerts, district, state, spring trip etc.
13. Load/unload truck for all Symphonic/concert Band performances as needed and maintain loading lists for each band.
Qualifications include: volunteer basis with band director approval

Bus Captain
Appointed by the Band Captains and or Chaperones with approval of the band director for a specific trip.

1. Maintains order on all bus trips.
2. Takes roll each time buses are loaded.
3. Informs chaperones of any problems.
4. Checks bus at the end of trip for leftover articles and brings them to lost and found by the big table in the band room.
5. Makes sure bus is clean by picking up trash and depositing in trash bag.
6. Assists the chaperones in every way possible.

Qualifications include: one year's experience in GHS Band.

BAND AWARDS

Band awards are given out at the annual band banquet each spring. Awards are given to all graduating seniors and all first-year band members. Recipients of the awards are selected by the band directors except as noted below: All first year members of the Grissom Band, Seniors, Band Captains, Drum Majors, Section Leaders, Outstanding Senior Musician - voted on by the band students, Outstanding Senior Bands Person - voted on by the band student, Outstanding musician from the Symphonic and Concert Bands, and the Eric Obermann Memorial Scholarship.

HONOR BAND AND FESTIVALS

Music Festivals such as the ones listed below provide experience that helps make any student a better musician, and therefore, strengthens the Grissom Band as well as the individual. Usually Grissom is well represented at all these festivals. All students are encouraged to participate. The student who participates incurs any fees associated with these events. These might include registration fees, transportation costs, lodging, meals, etc.

Solo and Ensemble Festival

Each year the Alabama Bandmasters Association sponsors a Solo and Ensemble Festival in Madison County where students are judged on music, which they have prepared. If you receive a superior rating, the Grissom Band Parents Association will purchase a medal for your accomplishment. This festival provides an opportunity for you to improve your individual playing ability and have fun working with other students on a duet, trio, quartet or a larger ensemble.

All State Band

Each spring the Alabama Bandmasters Association sponsors All State Band auditions in districts across the state. All band members are encouraged to audition. If you are selected for one of the four All State Bands (Red, White or Blue), you will go to the Festival held in April. The three-day Festival includes clinics and rehearsals and concludes with a concert that your parents might want to attend. If you are selected for All-State Band but cannot attend, tell the director two weeks in advance of the festival so an alternate can be called. The band directors make transportation and housing arrangements, but students pay their own expenses. Students must have no outstanding debt to the Association to be included in these arrangement.

Honor Bands

Each spring several universities sponsor Honor Band Festivals. Announcements about such festivals are made as soon as the band director receives the information. If you are interested in one of these bands, you must send in an application, probably accompanied by a recommendation from the band director. Most of these festivals bring in a famous composer, performer, or conductor to work with the students. Such festivals also provide an opportunity for you to visit a college campus and explore the music program there. Even though there are usually only a few students involved in these trips, all rules, and procedures for paying expenses listed above apply.

All State Jazz Band

Each year the Alabama Band Directors Association sponsors an All State Jazz Band. Members of the Grissom Jazz Band are eligible to audition. Audition music is handed out and a taped audition is made to send in along with an application and fee. The festival is usually held in January. A well-known jazz educator is brought in to work with the band for two days, culminating in a concert. Trip arrangements are as described above. If you are selected for All State Jazz Band and are unable to go to the Festival, tell the director two weeks in advance so an alternate can be called.

GRISSOM BAND PARENTS ASSOCIATION, INC.

The sole purpose of the Grissom Band Parents Association is to support the Grissom High School Band. If you are in the band, your parents are automatically members of the Association. The only financial support, which the Band receives from the city school system, is the nine-month salaries of the director and associate director. The Band Parents Association pays all other expenses (listed under “Band Fees”). It is for this reason that Band Fees are assessed of every participating student and a variety of fundraisers are held each year.

The Band Parents Association meets on the fourth Monday of each month, August through May. A monthly newsletter helps to keep band families informed of related activities, but attendance at these monthly meetings is strongly encouraged. The executive board of the Grissom Band Parents Association consists of the Band Directors, the Grissom High School Principal, and the Association's President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurers.

There are also several Association committees, each with very specific responsibilities:

Ways and Means Committee, Chaperone Committee, Bus Transportation Committee, Uniform Committee, Football Game Committee, Concert Committee, Color Guard Committee, Publicity Committee, Newsletter Committee, Historian Committee, and others.

Your parents' participation on their choice of these committees is encouraged. The Band depends on the Band Parents Association for support, and the Band Parents Association depends on the active involvement of all parents. Included on the band website is a list of the officers and committee chairpersons and their email addresses. Please communicate with them as you see fit. This is YOUR association. A copy of the Bylaws of the Grissom Band Parents Association, Inc. is included on the web site.

This Handbook revision made on Aug 2026