



Band Handbook

2024-2025

Superintendent: Bradley Roberson

Principal: Dr. Dana Bullard

Directors: Aaron Bailey, Jason Gunn, Jessica Roebuck, Michael Swann

Band Students and Parents:

Welcome to one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences in which you can be a part—the band! Now, more than ever, we have information to justify why we participate in this demanding activity. Experts have concluded that the study of music helps with spatial reasoning, test taking, and overall quality of life! Factor in social skills, emotional development, leadership training, group interaction, aesthetic perception, music-making, and the discipline of being in a band program, and I don't know why anyone would not want to be involved in a successful band program like the one we have here at Oxford High School. The ultimate goal is a lifelong understanding and appreciation for high-quality music and a high level of self-respect, honor, and empathy towards everyone we meet.

Everyone should read the information in the handbook, even veteran students and parents. Much of the information may have changed, so make sure you're informed! I have tried to cover almost everything you will need to know about high school band in this document so that the program can run smoothly and efficiently. Most questions can be answered by consulting the handbook, so please read this and keep it for your records. It is my hope that the information contained in this handbook will both inform and inspire! The section "How Parents Can Help" is designed to give guidance to parents; read it carefully to gain important insights. Students need to know we think that what they do is important! By becoming involved with our booster organization and encouraging your children, you will quickly find that the band is truly a family in and of itself!

I am looking forward to my fourth year here in Oxford! Each year that I've been here the band has improved and I know that this year will be no different. We have a really good group of freshmen moving up and some really great leadership in our upperclassmen. I encourage parents to come see the band at competitions and football games and to enjoy this experience together!

Sincerely,

Aaron Bailey

"If better is possible, then good is not enough!" --John Buchanan

Student Handbook

Band Policy

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

We firmly believe each student should improve through regular practice. When the student has lost the will to improve him or herself or to make a better contribution to the band, he or she is wasting the time and effort of fellow members and the community by continuing in the band program. The happiest student is one who improves through regular habits of practice and daily progress. He or she must not only know right from wrong but must be able to stand for principles and develop a high sense of purpose toward which he or she is willing to work. Responsibility is the focus behind any level of achievement within this program. We intend to conduct ourselves in a manner that will facilitate the learning of all students.

Purpose

As band director for Oxford High School, I feel that it is important to educate students about more than just music. It is of utmost importance for these students to learn cooperation and hard work to achieve success in all undertakings. It is my goal as Director of Bands to build and maintain a superior quality band program and to further the musical education of each band member, to teach music by its actual performance, to provide for the musical needs of the school and community, to develop leadership skills within each student, and to provide all students with the opportunity for worthy use of their time, a means for self-expression, and a healthy social experience. When I say, "Culture of excellence," this is what I am referencing.

The Importance of Attitude

The greatest single factor that will determine the success of any individual or organization is attitude. The kind of person you are is an individual choice, and how you feel about something is one of the few actual independent choices you have in life. The right attitude must be present along with sincerity, concentration, and dedication as the basic foundations of a successful band program. The band can do much for you. Make the most of every rehearsal!

Media Postings

All photographic, sound, or computer-generated images of any group/individual of the Oxford Band Program must be approved by the band directors and school administration prior to any postings for public view. Public postings include, but are not limited to, the following: television broadcast, radio broadcast, newspaper photographs-articles, and/or various internet postings through social-media such as Facebook, Twitter, web-pages, etc.

The OHS Band in Brief

Symphonic Band

The Symphonic Band is the primary performing organization in the instrumental music department during the winter and spring. Membership is by audition only. The Symphonic Band will be composed of students with the performing ability necessary to play level IV to V literature.

Concert Band

The Concert Band is composed of students with the performing ability necessary to perform level II / III music. Membership is by audition only.

Marching Band

Membership in the marching band requires strenuous physical exercise and the ability to play the difficult literature encountered in the activity. All students enrolled in the band program are required to march. The marching band performs primarily in the fall where we attend football games, MHSAA state Marching Festival, and other regional contests.

All-State, Region, and District Band

Members of the band program are eligible to audition for the Mississippi Lions Band. Auditions are held in November with "final" auditions one week later. The State Band clinic is held at Natchez, MS and the All State Band will meet and rehearse there. The All State Band is a concert band made from the top players of the Lions Band. There are also several other honor bands which students can audition for including Northeast Honor Band, I-55 Honor Band, and several college honor bands.

Responsibilities of Band Members

RESPONSIBILITIES TO OURSELVES

We owe ourselves the benefit of proper equipment and proper lessons. Whenever possible, you should avail yourselves of the best possible quality instrument you can afford and endeavor to take private lessons. Group lessons at school only teach at a moderate level. YOU have the primary responsibility for learning and contributing your talent to the group.

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SCHOOL

The school district provides the necessary setting and facilities for our performances and some of the larger, more expensive equipment. The Band Boosters are largely responsible for many large purchases. We, then, have the obligation to provide the best possible performances for the school, community, and citizens of our area. This means you agree to GIVE UP SOME OF YOUR FREE TIME ON HOLIDAYS AND VACATIONS FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF OTHERS. IT ALSO MEANS THAT IF THE SCHOOL OWNS YOUR INSTRUMENT, YOU ARE WILLING TO TAKE PROPER CARE OF IT—INCLUDING REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT IF NECESSARY.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROMPTNESS AND COMMITMENT TO THE PROGRAM

These are two essential facts vital to the success of the organization. Many times, we are leaving the area to perform. It is obvious that if you are late, you are left behind. YOU MUST arrange your schedule so you are able to honor your commitment to the performing group. Report times are the times that you are to be in your position, ready to perform. Remember – **To be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is unthinkable.**

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We must be responsible for the costs of the uniforms and equipment, as well as transportation and maintenance of equipment. While we receive exceptional financial support from the school, it is not enough to support the program to the extent that the community and the members themselves deem necessary. We would like to have a very active and supportive booster organization. We expect parents to join this group and to help with its activities. The students have the opportunity to participate in a couple fundraising events each year. We believe that it is reasonable to expect each member to participate in these fundraisers to the best of their ability.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR ATTENDANCE

Attendance at regularly scheduled rehearsals and performances is required for membership in the program. Absences are permitted in the event of PERSONAL ILLNESS OR DEATH IN THE FAMILY. Excessive absences, even for these reasons, will cause severe problems and will result in loss of position or rank within the organization. All requests for excused absences must be presented IN WRITING as soon as the schedule for the semester is received. Failure to appear at a scheduled practice without proper notice will result in suspension from the performing group for an amount of time deemed reasonable by the band directors and administrators, as well as a reduction of grade for that grading period. Failure to appear at a scheduled performance will result in the grade being reduced by one letter grade for that 9-week period and may also result in removal from the program. It is impossible to “make up” a performance, and the other members carry an extra burden because of someone else’s inconsideration. As a student member of the Oxford High School Band, please understand the performance culminates everything we work so hard at during the year. It is therefore essential to your fine arts education that you experience the performance of your art.

In case of emergency or sudden illness before an after-school rehearsal or performance, please send a Schoolstatus, Remind message, or email to Mr. Bailey immediately. My email address is albailey@oxfordsd.org. This is the best way to reach me. My email comes directly to my phone so I will see it much quicker than if you call and leave a message on the school phone.

Resolving conflicts between band and other activities or events is the responsibility of the student. Rehearsal and performance schedules are given out well in advance so that arrangements can be made. When outside activities create hardships concerning band, unless it is a situation that should only happen once, the student will need to consult with Mr. Bailey about a possible alternative. Students should have a calendar and be aware of all band dates well ahead of schedule. It is the policy of the band director to assist students when conflicts occur between school activities. If a conflict should arise with another school activity, please notify Mr. Bailey as soon as you are aware of the conflict so that I can work with the coach or sponsor to resolve the conflict in a manner which best serves both activities. Students are reminded that band is a very demanding activity and that involvement in outside activities should be limited to those compatible with the band schedule. All conflicts with performances must be resolved in favor of band participation. Work is not an excuse for missing any band activity as our schedule is sent out with ample time for students to schedule work around the band schedule.

Private Lessons and Musical Enrichment

Students, as well as the entire Band program, benefit from better players. As one might expect, private lessons on a musical instrument are the best way to improve performance skills. The one-on-one approach allows the student to benefit from individual attention as opposed to being one in a class of more than fifty. A recent survey of students in the all-state band revealed that approximately 87% of the students in that band study privately. Students are generally more inclined to practice diligently for a weekly music assignment, and this discipline increases the student’s enjoyment with the instrument. The band directors will be more than happy to assist in the selection of a private teacher.

Disciplinary Procedure

1st offense – Reprimand

2nd offense - Conference with director (parent will be called)

3rd offense - Conference with director and principal (parent will be called)

4th offense - Removal from program (parent will be called)

Note: Any of these procedures may be skipped if the director and school administration feel that removal is warranted. The band directors reserve the right to remove any student from the band program as we see fit. Being a participant in this program is an honor and the integrity of this program must remain intact!!

Optional Fees/Purchases

Camp Lunches \$40 (\$20 per week)

Band Shoes \$64

Fundraisers

We believe all the necessary resources are available in Oxford to be competitive at the state, regional, and even national level. We have talented children, a great band staff, and a supportive school administration. The goal of excellence neither comes easily nor inexpensively. Sacrifices and commitments must not only be set, they must be maintained and fulfilled. The hard work and dedication of our students will be the cornerstones of our success; however, the success of our student organization depends upon the tools with which we are provided. Unfortunately, the district does not possess enough of the funds necessary to purchase all of these tools. In almost any school district in the state of Mississippi funding for the Arts is limited. While we certainly have better funding than most, we still need to occasionally do fundraisers. The only way to be able to provide the best for our students is through fundraising or donations.

Fundraising opportunities will be provided for the members of the Oxford High School Band and Boosters. Some parents may prefer their children not to fundraise. In this event, we ask that you find other ways to help the program out. You can certainly make donations, or contribute by volunteering your time and being an active member of the band booster organization. **No student will be removed from the band program because they do not participate in our fundraising endeavors!**

Symphonic and Concert Bands

Chair Placement

At the end of football season, auditions will begin for symphonic and concert chair placement. ALL BAND MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO AUDITION. These auditions will determine chair placement. Seating of the Symphonic band will be placed according to desired amounts of each instrument. Seating will be adjusted by the director according to musical progression and preparation.

Musical material will be distributed in advance of the auditions. Material will consist of scales and sight-reading. The director will assign students to parts in order to achieve proper balance. Generally, students will be seated in order; however, some sections may be staggered to provide the best sound.

Challenges

Students who feel they are deserving of advancement within the section may challenge the person sitting one chair ahead of them. The challenge procedure is as follows:

1. The challenger must fill out a challenge form and return it to the director. Both members involved MUST sign the form.
2. The challenge will be held within one school week after the form is returned at a time agreeable to both persons.
3. Both members involved in the challenge will play scales and sight-reading.
4. The loser of the challenge must wait one week before submitting another form.
5. A forfeiture will result if the member being challenged refuses to sign the form, or if either has an unexcused tardy or absence for the challenge. Time limit for a tardy is 10 minutes.
6. In case of a tie, the players will retain the same seating prior to the challenge.
7. All challenges will stop at least one month before the State Band Festival or at the discretion of the director.

GENERAL POLICIES FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

1. TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, DRUGS, DANGEROUS OBJECTS: All school guidelines are in effect for all Band activities.
2. PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION: Holding hands, hugging, kissing is NOT permitted. The Band staff will determine the boundaries of acceptable behavior.
4. PLAYING YOUR INSTRUMENT IN THE STANDS: All performances will be done in an orderly manner. You are NOT permitted to play another student's instrument. We only play as a group in the stands. Students must also be ready and prepared to play when a song is called. This means that they must have their flip folder on their instrument and their instrument up and ready to play in a reasonable amount of time.
5. REFRESHMENT PERIOD: Performers are usually permitted a portion of each football game (3rd Quarter or half time if we perform pregame) where they may obtain refreshments and use facilities. This period will be designated at each event.
6. ASSEMBLING TO PERFORM: The group will assemble together and move in an orderly manner to the designated area. This includes riding buses to performance venues. All students must ride the bus to contests and festivals unless given special permission by the directors.
7. We will sit together at football games and there will be no visitors in the area. We are there to support the team.
8. Remember that when you travel with the band, you represent Oxford High School. Anything you do, in or out of uniform, will reflect on not just yourself, but the school and program you represent.

TRAVEL PROCEDURES

1. Dragonfly information must be current and on file with the Band Director before any student may participate. Special health problems should also be noted so that adequate care can be provided when away from home. Please update Dragonfly during the year if necessary.
2. Adult supervision is provided on all Band trips. Students traveling to an event with the band must return in the same manner, with the following exception: **students may return with their own parents or guardian if an email has been sent to the band director prior to departure.** The parent or guardian must pick the student up at the bus after their duties are complete.
3. BOARDING AND EXITING BUSES: Students will not board until instructed to do so. Students will remain on the bus and seated until instructed otherwise.
4. GENERAL CONDUCT: No foul or abusive language or gestures are permitted. YELLING IS NOT PERMITTED AT ANY TIME. THIS CAN CAUSE SERIOUS ACCIDENTS. All body parts must stay inside the bus. Moving from seat to seat is not permitted. No singing, clapping, or flash photography while on the bus.
5. UNIFORM/GUARD COSTUME CARE: Jacket and pants or costumes will be properly hung when not being worn. Hats are placed in hat boxes and uniforms hung in the uniform room.
6. All students will be assigned to a specific bus prior to departure. Switching of buses is NOT permitted. Return to your seat quickly so that attendance may be checked. You are required to obey the driver and staff member or person in charge of the bus in a courteous manner.
7. The Directors and Band Boosters organization assumes no responsibility for any personal items taken on trips. It is suggested that valuables be left at home.
8. Quiet Zone rules will be in effect when traveling. Talking is allowed only while the bus is traveling on the freeway; students must be quiet when the bus is on surface streets.
9. Buses are to be clean and free of trash at the end of all trips. There will be assigned cleaning crews for each trip.
10. Students are responsible for loading and unloading their own equipment and personal belongings before and after all events. **Should a student not ride the bus home, it is their responsibility to find someone else to return their instrument and uniform to the proper place.**
11. **At the conclusion of all events, students should arrange to be picked up at school promptly at the designated pick-up time. Pick-up times are listed on the itinerary that will be sent home with students prior to the event.**

How Parents Can Help

1. Student attendance is important—don't allow students to miss school. Please help us by helping your child keep track of all of their commitments. Remind them of the band calendar and rehearsal schedule.
2. Students should practice as often as possible. Have your student play for you occasionally. Encourage excellence from them!
3. Become involved with your child's band activities. Your presence at our events means a lot to your child and the other students in our program. Volunteering is a great way to be involved. Extra help is always needed!
4. Make positive and encouraging comments about competitions and performances. Our attitudes reflect on the students, which in turn affects their performance.
5. **Many people are needed to volunteer in the concession stand during football season to keep it staffed and functional! Please help our booster organization with this. All the proceeds go directly to bettering your child's band experience.**

Please encourage your child or children to achieve excellence in whatever they do. In the music program, practice and attendance at both rehearsals and performances is mandatory and will require parental support. Without your encouragement, children often fail to take into account the long-term goals they set in favor of a few fleeting moments of fun. I believe that it is our duty as adults to remind them of their long-term goals and to help keep them on track for success. I know many times I told my parents "I don't want to go" or "It's too hard" and, much to their credit, they made me go or made me tough it out. Looking back, those were some of the best times of my life!

Parents are encouraged to become members of the Band Boosters organization. All Boosters are encouraged to volunteer their time and effort in the support of these young people. The Booster organization is a great way to meet fellow parents and become more involved in what your child is doing. All after school rehearsals are open to the parents and I encourage you to stop by and see what is happening whenever you are able. Attendance at performances and competitions is an enjoyable activity and an excellent way for parents to show support of their child's talent and interests. Believe me, it means a lot to your child to look out and see you or know that their mom or dad is there to see them perform.

Important Contact Information

Oxford High School
101 Charger Loop
Oxford, MS 38655

High School Office—662-234-1562

Band Directors:

Aaron Bailey, Head Band Director

albailey@oxfordsd.org

Jason Gunn, Assistant Band Director

jdgunn@oxfordsd.org

Jessica Roebuck, Assistant Band Director

jtroebeck@oxfordsd.org

Michael Swann, Assistant Band Director

mkswann@oxfordsd.org

Oxford High School Administration:

Dr. Dana Bullard, Principal

dmbullard@oxfordsd.org

Website: <https://www.oxfordsd.org/domain/168>

2023-2024 Media Release

There are several times throughout the school year in which pictures and/or sounds are recorded for the purpose of notifying the community of accomplishments and /or upcoming events. Occasionally, a reporter may ask to interview a member of our band or print a picture image for the newspaper. This media-release form will serve as permission to post such information for public view.

I hereby give permission to the Oxford School District to photograph, record, and interview my child. It is my understanding that these images/sounds or portions thereof may be used for public view.

I agree to participate in these projects without financial remuneration and I understand that this agreement releases the school district, photographer, recorder, interviewer from any future claims, as well as from any liability, arising from the use of the said image or sound.

Oxford Band Contract

My signature below indicates that I have read, understand, and will fully comply with all of the procedures, guidelines, expectations, and policies stated in this handbook.

(Please make sure that both student and parent have read the handbook before signing.)

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

This contract as well as all Dragonfly information must be signed and returned in order to participate in any activities of the Oxford High School Band.