

**Tupelo High School
Madrigals/MadJazz Handbook
2026-2027**



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Please take time to read this handbook thoroughly.
You are responsible for ALL information in this handbook.

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Welcome

The Tupelo High School MadJazz choir is an award-winning, auditioned ensemble which regularly performs throughout the Tupelo community and the surrounding areas. This choir has a long-standing tradition of excellence that began in 1974. Throughout the academic year, the MadJazz Singers partake in many concerts including a Fall Madrigal preview, Church Tour, Madrigal Singefeaste, Vocal Jazz Showcase and many more exciting concerts.

Involvement in music classes provides avenues and opportunities for artistic expression and the discovery of hidden talents while promoting self-confidence, individual growth and leadership among our students. Our students benefit from a strong sense of community while learning valuable life lessons in teamwork and leadership.



General Rules and Expectations

The success of a choir depends on how it rehearses. How it rehearses depends on the conduct and cooperation of each student. Rehearsals are the place to correct mistakes. Be patient, attentive, careful, and cooperative in observing these rehearsal expectations.

Self-Discipline is an important element of choir rehearsal and performance. Good behavior, attitude, and self-discipline are essential to producing a GREAT CHOIR. If you are successful, the choir is successful.

Students are expected to:

1. Be Respectful

- Respect students, teachers and music equipment.
- DO NOT USE CELL PHONE during rehearsals.

2. Be Ready

- Bring pencil and music to class every day.
- Be prepared to sing when asked

3. Be Responsible

- Be responsible for your behavior and act accordingly
- Take care of school and personal property
- Keep the classroom clean and organized

Missing rehearsal due to a discipline infraction will result in a zero grade for the days missed and the student will not be able to travel with the group. Expulsion and or probation from the group due to discipline is at the director's discretion. If money has been paid to a tour company the student will not get a refund.

Student's grades must be in coherence with the MHSAA regulations to be eligible perform and travel with the group. Progress reports and report cards will be monitored.

Some behaviors are totally inappropriate for the classroom and dictate immediate removal. A chronic violation of classroom rules that infringes upon the rights of others to learn may indicate a more deeply rooted problem that requires immediate action and or removal from the group.

GRADES

1. Rehearsal and Performance Attendance (major and exam grades)
 - a. Students will receive a 100 major test grade for all performances. If a student misses a performance and it is unexcused, they will receive a 0 major test grade.
2. Individual growth and progress in choral discipline observed.
3. Active, productive participation during rehearsals and performances observed
4. Positive, self-disciplined rehearsal attitude
5. Although attitude and active participation are more subjective in nature, it is important that students be held accountable for these areas.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required at all rehearsals and performances. Students cannot achieve proper choral blend or learn nuance without being in rehearsals daily. Choral music is not an individual event but requires constant listening and teamwork.

Absence from a performance without, well in advance, prior approval will be deemed unexcused unless one of the following conditions are met:

- Severe Illness (signed doctor's note is required for this condition)
- Death in the immediate family
- Emergency Situation

Conditions that **WILL NOT** be accepted as excuses, especially from performances, include but are not limited to:

- Work Schedules
- Vacations
- Non-emergency appointments
- Athletic events
- Community Events

If there is a known conflict with an event, let the director know **well in advance**. School conflicts can usually be worked out as long as attention is brought to the conflict as soon as possible. (Months before, not days) The handbook may not cover every possible situation. Circumstances not explicitly listed above will be subject to the director's discretion.

Excessive unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances will not be tolerated. **Students will be placed on probation if they have more than 4 unexcused absences total from rehearsals and performances. Director must have a written excuse turned in from a parent at least 48 hours ahead of absence to be considered for an excused absence from rehearsals and at least 2 weeks ahead for a performance.**

Class Attendance:

Poor daily class attendance will not be tolerated. Excessive absences will result in expulsion from the group.

Tardies: Updated School Policy

Tardy to Class

The practice of being punctual is considered by Tupelo High School to be an acquired habit that enhances the student's ability to succeed in adult life. A student who is absent from the classroom or tardy in arriving will not achieve at the same level as the student who is punctual to class. Tardy to class is defined as not being in the classroom when the tardy bell rings to begin class. **Each student will be allowed a cumulative total of two (2) tardies to class per nine weeks; not per class.** A student who exceeds the allotted number of tardies per nine weeks will be subject to disciplinary action. For any excessive tardy, the administration reserves the right to review a student's schedule and adjust, if necessary. Students who arrive to school between 8:00 and 8:30 will report directly to their first block class and a tardy will be recorded by their classroom teacher. Students who arrive after 8:30 will be considered absent for first block and must report directly to the Attendance Office to check-in. Students must follow the THS attendance procedures to excuse this absence (parental, medical, etc.). Car trouble, personal and/or family errands, failure to awaken, failure to be awakened by a family member, or a family member assuming responsibility for a late arrival to school or to the first scheduled class are not examples of an excused tardy.

Tardy to School

Students will be allowed two (2) unexcused check-ins per nine weeks prior to disciplinary action. An unexcused check-in will also count as a tardy. Students will receive a tardy for each additional check-in and will be subject to disciplinary action. All unexcused check-ins may result in both period and daily absences. Tardies to class and tardies given for late check-ins will be tallied separately. A student who exceeds the allotted number of tardies per nine weeks will be subject to disciplinary action.

Tardy Consequences

Tardy 1-3 – Warning

Tardy 4 – (1) Detention

Tardy 5 – (2) Detentions

Tardy 6 – Required Overnight Parent Conference

Tardy 7 – (1) Day of ISS

Tardy 8 – (3) Days of ISS

Tardy 9 – Required Overnight Parent Conference

Tardy 10 – (1) Day of OSS

Tardy 11 – (3) Days of OSS

Tardy 12 – 20 Days at Structured Day Program

Positive Behavior Incentive for Tardies

To positively motivate students to improve on punctuality, students who attend ten (10) days without getting a tardy will be able to return to the first step on the tardy discipline ladder (Warning).

Dress Rehearsals:

Students may not miss rehearsals the full week prior to a show.

Attendance:

Attendance at performances is **required and graded**. Unexcused absences from performances will result in expulsion from the group, unless excused by the director. Chronic Absenteeism from school, unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances and tardiness will result in:

- Grade reduction
- Loss of Performance Status
- Removal from the current choir and/or removal from performances

Examples of Unexcused Absences include:

- Work
- Oversleeping
- Transportation
- Babysitting
- Eating
- Homework

Transportation

Students are responsible for arranging transportation to and from school for extra rehearsals and trips. Not having a ride is not an excuse.



Mad Jazz Fees

Participation Fee \$200

Sponsorship sales begin at the start of the school year and each student is asked to raise \$750 in sales. This will be covered in the sponsorship sales packets.

Sponsorship Sales \$750

Booster Fundraisers will only be used if the total amount needed from sponsorship sales is not raised.

Trip cost varies from year to year depending on where the group travels. It can be as little as \$400 for the year up to \$1200. If there is money in the school budget, director usually tries to cover a portion of the student's travel costs. Chaperones must pay full cost.

Trip Cost \$_____

Madrigal Costume \$0 to \$1,000

Vocal Jazz Costumes At your discretion

Banquet Fee Ticket price is TBD

Communication

Student Communication

- Band app Student Group
- Keep student cell phone up to date with director

Parent Communication

- Band app Parent group
- SchoolStatus

Please make sure to keep your cell numbers and email current. Our primary source of communication is SchoolStatus and the Band App. Many performance times, locations, etc. change and this is how we communicate those changes to you.



Travel

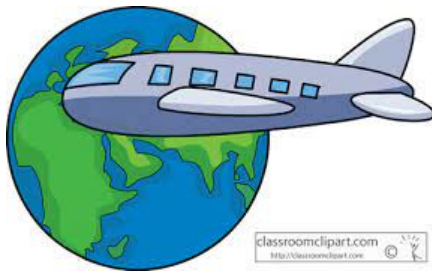
Students are required to travel with the group to Madrigals and Vocal Jazz competitions. This will involve raising funds and while fundraising opportunities will be provided, **there may be out of pocket expenses.** Competitions will involve travel, and all students are REQUIRED to attend.

Student travel will be governed by the TPSD handbook. When traveling, the TPSD rules, regulations and consequences will be applied to all situations.

Student travel requires that students behave professionally and appropriately at all times. This includes adhering to the time schedule that has been posted prior to the trip. Late arrivals that cause the remainder of the group to wait will not be tolerated.

If any type of disciplinary action is required during travel, the student will be sent home at the parents' expense.

School day performances require students to be driven by a parent or guardian or by members of the choir with a driver's license. Appropriate travel authorizations will be filled out at the beginning of the school year. It is the student's responsibility to secure travel to performances during the school day. The director will facilitate these travel arrangements, but the student must adhere to what plans are made.



Honor Choir

Students may choose to audition for the Mississippi All State Honor Choir. Interested students will be given the required materials and extra lessons to help prepare them for the audition. The students selected have an incredible opportunity to perform with the best student musicians in the state. Students attend the All-State Honor Choir Convention with minimal expense. This is a wonderful opportunity to work with an experienced choral music conductor and sing great music.

Solo & Ensemble Festival

Students who desire an additional challenge may prepare a classical solo and/or a musical theater solo or join a small ensemble for this competition. The contest is an excellent performance opportunity for all students in the choir program. Participation in this event is optional, but highly recommended. The preparation process for this

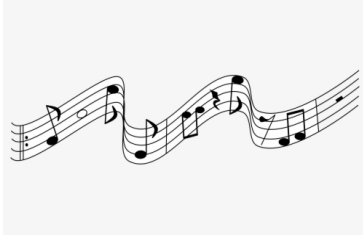
festival improves individual singing and technique more than any other event. As individual singers become stronger, so does the choir.

The contest relies on the responsibility of each individual student and is not required for the course. Once you have decided to participate there will be a timeline to follow to perform in front of the judge.

Rehearsal Expectations and Guidelines

Students are expected to...

- Respect the rehearsal by remaining attentive while the teacher is giving instruction even if it does not pertain directly to you or your section.
- Focus on whoever is leading the rehearsal, making notes in your music when appropriate.
- Have your music folder, music and pencil with you in class **every day**.
- Put your music away in the proper folder slot at the end of rehearsal.
- Be in your seat with your music **immediately following the tardy bell**.
- Enter and exit the room quietly so as not to disturb rehearsal in progress.
- **No food, gum or drinks (except bottled water) into the rehearsal set.**
- Demonstrate appropriate singing posture (sitting or standing).
- Work cooperatively with others in both large group and sectional rehearsals.
- Be on time for all extra rehearsals.
- Refrain from public displays of affection and cursing or arguing.
- **NO PHONES DURING REHEARSALS.**
- Wear uniform correctly, not loan uniform to anyone, remain dressed at functions.
- Social Media posts that pertain to the group should always be positive. Do not post any questionable information on social media about the group or anyone in the group.



Conduct/Participation/Concert Etiquette

The choral program is built on the core values of Excellence, Teamwork and Individual Responsibility. Members are expected to show respect for the director, fellow members and volunteers who assist with choral activities. All singers are expected to participate fully at every rehearsal. There is never a reason to do any other schoolwork or reading while in rehearsal. Even if a singer is physically unable to sing, he/she is expected to have music open, pencil in hand and participate.

Concert Etiquette refers to the students' behavior during a performance or in a performance setting. Students are expected to behave professionally at all times. Remember you represent the TPSD in any type of performance setting. Detailed below is proper audience etiquette.

- Clapping is the appropriate way to show appreciation for the performance rather than whistling or cheering.
- If you must leave during a performance, please do so when there is a pause between performances or between songs.
- Please take small children out if they become unhappy or disruptive, performances are recorded.

Performer Etiquette

- While on stage, act professionally at all times. Do not call attention to mistakes.
- Sing your best.
- Dress appropriately.
- Do not wave or talk to audience members.
- Always set a good example.
- No Cell Phones.

- Stay in one place and remain still with hands at your side.
- Show appreciation for the efforts of other groups.

Madrigal Costume

Buying a Costume off the internet is not recommended. These costumes usually do not hold up to the wear and tear and they do not look like the costumes that our students wear. If you must purchase a costume of the internet, it **MUST BE APPROVED** by the director.

Costume Closet:

The costume closet has several costumes that have been donated over the years. If one of them works, you will need to get it altered and cleaned. It may need to be freshened up with new beading and trim. **You are responsible for the upkeep of the costume and making sure it is always in presentable condition.** It will need to be dry cleaned a few times throughout the year, or it will develop a bad smell that will not come out.

Making a Costume:

If you are planning to have your costume made you will need to get the pattern, and all fabrics approved. Find a picture of a costume that you like. Use Google Images and type in Madrigal Costumes, Renaissance Costumes, Medieval Costumes, etc. Make sure you are looking at costumes for royalty, not peasant costumes. Send pictures of what you like to Mrs. Ray for approval. Once you have a basic plan, we move forward with getting it made.

You may find a seamstress of your choice to make it or do any alterations, or you may use our new seamstress, Mrs. Jill Hart.

When creating a costume, you may use the arms from one costume, bodice, neckline, skirt, etc. from a different costume and put it all together for your costume. If you find a picture of a complete costume you like, that is the best option.

Next, we meet at the fabric store to pick fabrics. It is very important that the fabric be representative of the time period. Patterns may be found in the pattern books at the fabric stores or found online.

Costumes require a good bit of bedazzling, so they show up from the stage and catch the lights. We will pick trims when we pick fabrics.

Costumes require a headpiece for girls and a hat for guys. Girls' headpieces must have a veil.

6. Costume must be ready to perform in by the week of September 21-25. You will need to bring the finished product that week.

7. Make sure to make the dress big enough to allow for growth during your high school years.

Mad Jazz Booster Club

Board Members:

President: Erin Beall

Vice President: Rosa Rutland

Treasurer: Liz Worthey

Secretary: TBD

Members at Large: TBD

Spring Trip Information

Plans are currently being solidified. The trip cost out of pocket per student will be \$___.

More information to follow soon.

Tentative Madrigals/MadJazz 2026–2027 Calendar

July–August	Sponsorship Sales
July 25	All-State Honor Choir Audition Registration opens
July 27	Staff Reports
July 31	Students Report
August 31	Sponsorship sales come to an end
July 28	Mandatory Parent Meeting @ 6pm
August 6	Team Bonding (2:30–4:30pm)
August 11–22	All-State Honor Choir Audition Window
September 12	All-State Results Posted
October 9	Madrigal Preview @ 6pm PAC
October 12–16	
October 10	All-State Registration/Payment Due
October 23	Celebration Village
November 15	Church Tour
November 15–18	All-State Honor Choir Conference (Sunday 11/15 travel only day)
November 23–27	Thanksgiving Break
Nov/Dec TBD	Various Madrigals Holiday Singing Events (booked closer to Oct..)

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	by invites)
Dec. 6	SingeFeaste Setup
Dec. 7–9	SingeFeaste Dress Rehearsals (2:45–6:45pm)
Dec. 10–11	SingeFeaste Dinner
December 14	District Choir Christmas Dress Rehearsal (during school/Civic Aud.)
December 15	District Choir Christmas Concert (6pm Civic Auditorium @ TMS)
December 18	60% Day
Dec 18–Jan 1, 2027	Christmas Break
January 5	Students Report
February TBD	Solo & Ensemble Festival
Feb/March TBD	Ole Miss Treble & Tenor/Bass Festival
March 9–13	Spring Break
April 1 OR 2	State Performance Assessment
April 6	Send Off Concert for WorldStrides Trip @ 6pm
April 8–11	WorldStrides Spring Trip/Competition
April 27	MadJazz Banquet (6–8pm)
May 3–6	MadJazz Spring Show Dress Rehearsals 2:45–4:45pm
May 7	MadJazz Spring Show PAC – 6pm
May 11	Madrigals/MadJazz Auditions
May 20	Graduation Practice 3:30–4:45pm @ Cadence Arena
May 21	60% Day & THS Graduation

Commented [5]: Time will be updated if graduation practice time is adjusted with new bell schedule

**After school rehearsals will be every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 2:30–3:45pm.

Student Handbook Agreement Form

Please sign and return to Mrs. Ray.

We have read and agree to abide by the principles, policies, and procedures stated in MadJazz Student Handbook.

Date: _____

Parent(s): _____

Student: _____

Print Name: _____