

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

Welcome back to a new school year!!! There are many exciting performances to prepare for this year and I am looking forward to getting started. As you know we work very hard and we have a great time in the process. In this document, I have tried to touch on and clarify all of the policies, needs and common questions. Please take a few minutes to read over this information carefully and refer back to this document as needed. All **concert dates** for the year are listed so please **add them to your calendar now**. All 7th and 8th grade students will be in the same band, which meets **twice a week on day 2 period 9 AND day 3 period 9, in addition to a small group sectional lesson once a week**. My Band Moodle will also host a variety of important information throughout the year.

How Do I Become A Member of the 7th and 8th Grade Band?

- All 7th and 8th grade students must have at least a basic skill level to allow success in our program. We DO NOT start beginners at the MS level. All 7th grade students or students who are new to the band program, must play for Mrs. Ruth and will be placed in an appropriate sectional group. Those students who are below the average playing level will be placed in a sectional group but will not perform until an appropriate playing level is achieved. These students are also strongly encouraged to take private lessons.

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What Do I Need For Band?

- **ALL** students need an **instrument, music and a pencil**. A folder and band music will be provided.
- **ALL** students (except percussionists) need a **lyre and a flip book** to be used for the parades and the band night performance. These may be purchased at any local music store or online. Please take care of this ASAP as supplies are often limited and outdoor practices will begin soon. Also, I recommend that you take your instrument when you make the purchase to be sure the lyre fits properly. You will need to purchase about 5-6 extra pages for the flip book so that students will have enough space for all of our music. Use white out to put your child's name on the back of the flip book.
- **ALL** students need a **MS band T-shirt and black pants** for parade and band night performances. Please return the T-shirt order form from MOODLE and return it with payment ASAP.
- **ALL** students will need **plain black pants** (or a long black skirt) a **plain white dress shirt** and **dark colored dress shoes** for concert performances. Gentlemen need a **tie** of any color or pattern. Jeans and sneakers are not appropriate attire for formal concerts!

When Does Band Meet/When Do I Need My Instrument?

- **All 7th and 8th graders will have band on day 2 (period 9) AND day 3 (period 9)**. The only exception to this is students who participate in band AND orchestra. Those students will attend orchestra on day 2 period 9 and band on day 3 period 9. All other students will have band twice a week.
- In addition to full band, each student will have a **sectional that meets once a week on a rotating basis**. These groups and the sectional rotation can be found on the MS Band Moodle, posted on the band bulletin board, on the AM announcements, and hard copy from Mrs. Ruth. Sectionals are NOT optional, they are part of the band curriculum. Students should plan ahead and complete homework and other studying at home. Students must turn in their work to teachers during AM homeroom the day they will be missing a class for sectionals.
- **Make-up work should be done on NON-band days/periods as band is curricular and missed rehearsals cannot be made up.** Students are responsible for notifying teachers when they will be missing class for sectionals and for band rehearsals.

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

How Often Should I Be Practicing?

- Practice time is a must!! It is essential that all students contribute to the overall success of the group by being prepared. Although the amount of practice time necessary to accurately perform the materials may vary by student, an average of 15-20 minutes of practice is recommended EVERY night- consistency is key! It is very helpful to set up scheduled time each day for practice, make it part of your daily routine!

How Do I Get Graded In Band/Attendance Policy

- Students will earn an O,S,N or U for band each marking period. Grades will be based on the following: individual performance during weekly sectionals (completing and performing weekly playing assignments), attendance during sectionals, written tests and quizzes, having the proper materials at all sectionals and full band rehearsals (music, instrument and a pencil), attendance at full group rehearsals, after school rehearsals (when scheduled) and performances, and behavior during all sectionals, rehearsals, and performances. Band is part of the curriculum and will be treated as such. All test dates, materials and grades will be posted on HAC.
- Any student who misses a performance will automatically be deducted two letter grades from their final 9 weeks grade. This policy is consistent with other MS ensembles and the HS music program as well. Please write the performance dates on your calendars NOW and make plans to attend.
- Attendance is expected and is the responsibility of the STUDENT to check the schedule and attend rehearsals and sectionals at the proper date/time. Teachers will NOT remind students to attend and I will not call students from classes. Any student who misses a combination of three or more sectionals/rehearsals (unexcused) during any marking period will be excluded from participation in the end-of the year trip to Hershey Park. Students who have excess absences from band and or sectionals may also be excluded from performances.
- Students must earn the privilege to participate in scheduled concerts and events. All students must earn an average playing grade of at least a 70% average ("O" or "S") in order to play in any scheduled performance.

Where Should I Keep My Instrument?

- All students will have an assigned locker in the instrument locker room. Students will keep instruments in the assigned locker during the school day and take instruments home after school. Instruments should NOT be left overnight or over weekends.
- Please CLEARLY make your child's instrument with his/her name. Many instrument cases look the same/similar and every year we have some mix-ups because instruments are not marked. You can do something as easy as using a piece of masking tape to mark the outside of the case. Please be sure your child's name is on the outside of the instrument case!
- Please write down your child's instrument serial number and the brand name of the instrument for your records! This brand name is usually clearly visible somewhere on the instrument (Selmer, King, Bach, Armstrong etc.) and the serial number is usually found near one of the joints on woodwind instruments and usually on or near one of the valves on a brass instrument. This is important information to have in case there is a mix-up at any time.

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

Should I be taking private lessons?

- Private lessons are highly recommended. There are many fine instructors in the area who specialize in each instrument. Please ask Mrs. Ruth for a list of recommended teachers if you are interested in getting lessons for your student. Lessons make a HUGE difference in students' playing level.

What If My Instrument Breaks?

- If your instrument is in need of repair bring it to Mrs. Ruth before you take it to a repair shop. She may be able to fix it for free! If you do need to take it to a repair shop please be sure they give you a loaner instrument so your child is not without an instrument while his/hers is being repaired. Our local repair shops: **Menchey's** – Queensgate Plaza, **The Broken Note** – Red Lion, **Olphin's** - Dallastown

Can I Do Band *and* Other School Activities?

- **YES!! Sports** at this level conflict minimally (if at all) with band. **Students need to make Mrs. Ruth aware of any conflicts in advance** and an arrangement will be made between the coach and Mrs. Ruth if a conflict does occur. Students may do sports *and* band and we have many students who do both successfully.
- Students can do multiple music groups as well. We will work with your student on an individual basis to find a schedule that will work for multiple ensembles.

Will There Be After School Rehearsals?

- YES, but not many, and primarily in preparation for performances. Extra curricular rehearsals will be announced in advance. When scheduled, these will run from 3:00-4:15 in the band room and students can ride the activity bus home from rehearsal.
- **PERCUSSION** students should **expect to stay after school once a week during most of the school year (Thursday's from 3:00-4:15)** to prepare for a variety of performances and to help them develop technique on the marching instruments which they do not have at home. Marching percussion is very specialized and we are fortunate to have a special instructor for the students to help them learn the proper techniques and necessary skills.
- **PERCUSSION** students also may choose to participate in indoor percussion ensemble from October-April which will also meet once a week after school (this will replace the marching rehearsals in the fall and the spring- it will not be additional). This ensemble is optional but highly recommended to help develop ensemble playing and technique on a variety of percussion instruments.

Is There a Jazz Band?

- Yes! Jazz band is our only auditioned ensemble. It is open to all 7th and 8th grade band members (and some non-band members who play guitar, bass or piano) who play trumpet, trombone, baritone, alto, tenor or bari sax, drum set, bass (upright or electric), guitar (preferably electric) and piano. Traditionally the audition packets are posted on the band bulletin board after Thanksgiving break and students try out the last few days before the December holiday break (see schedule at the end of this document). Practices are held on Friday's after school from 3:00-4:15 beginning in January and continuing through May.

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

Quality Instrument Products:

- At this point in your child's musical career you should be purchasing an improved quality of reeds and possibly an upgraded mouthpiece for your child's instrument. Your child's private teacher can recommend an upgrade and I can also offer some suggestions for upgrade. Below, I have listed some online sources for these products (often they offer significant discounts and/or free shipping). They also offer reeds, cleaning supplies and drum sticks. These items can make a BIG difference in students' performance.

The Woodwind and Brasswind Company www.wwbw.com or call 1-800-348-5003.

Musicians Friend www.musiciansfriend.com or call 1-800-391-8762

Orders from both companies are usually filled quickly and it's hard to beat their prices- **check it out!!!!!!**

These items can also be purchased locally from Menchey Music, Campbell's or The Broken Note.

- **Clarinets and saxophones** need to have extra reeds at all times. At this point in their playing career I feel it is necessary to purchase **better quality reeds** which will in turn help your child produce a higher quality sound. The recommended brand for clarinets and saxophones is **Vandoren** and they can be bought at all local music stores as well as at the companies listed above. These reeds are going to cost a little more but the improved sound is definitely worth it! Students should also have a tube of **cork grease and a swab** of some sort to clean their instruments out after playing. Also recommended is an **upgrade in the quality of mouthpiece**. This can be discussed with your students' private teacher or I can make a recommendation. A new mouthpiece will *greatly* improve your child's sound quality and can also improve their range.
- **Brass** players should have **valve/rotor oil and/or slide cream and a cleaning snake** (tool for cleaning out the inside of your instrument. It is a long coil with brushes on either end). You'll be surprised to see what comes out of your instrument after a good long bath in lukewarm water and dish soap!!! *******ALL slides on brass instruments should be in working order.******* If slides do not move, first try a soak in the tub with warm water and dish soap (and then lubricate slides with slide grease before putting them back in) and if that is not successful you should take it to a music store to have the instrument fixed.
- **Percussion** students need a pair of **drum sticks-Vic Firth SD1** so that they can learn the proper technique and can play together. They should have a **stick bag** to hold their sticks (available through the companies listed above for around \$10.00). It may be a good idea to have a pair of sticks at school and a pair at home. All percussionists also need a hard cover binder with poly-view (clear) page protectors for their music.



7th and 8th Grade Band Information

Guidelines for Music Sectionals

- Students should report directly to their band, chorus or orchestra sectional as per the schedule distributed to students and staff.
- Students will not miss more than 1 class a week for a sectional. Choral sectionals will now be held during morning homeroom/SSR.
- The period in which the student should report will rotate throughout the schedule. For example the first week they will come pd.1, next week pd. 2 etc.
- Students are responsible for reporting to sectionals at the appropriate time and will not be called or reminded after the first few cycles. Missing sectionals will result in a grade reduction.
- Students will be expected to remind teachers ahead of time (preferably during AM homeroom) when they will be missing class to attend sectionals. It is important that students also communicate with their music teacher when they know they will have to miss a sectional for a test or other commitment.
- All students and teachers will have a sectional schedule which will be updated as needed along with a list of students in each group. Music staff will be responsible for promptly updating any adds/drops in their groups. Schedules will be posted outside of music rooms, and communicated to students weekly.
- All students are required to make up or turn in any missed work or assignments. Homework assignments should be turned in during AM homeroom time. Students are responsible for any missed work in their music sectionals if they cannot attend for any reason.
- Teachers will notify the music staff if there are any students abusing the system or not turning in work. **Any student earning less than a “C” in a class will not be excused from that class to attend sectionals.** Please notify music staff if this situation occurs.
- Students who have a major assessment, benchmark or standardized test should remain in class to take the test. Students should see music instructors prior to the test pd. regarding an alternate time for their sectional that week.
- Students in both band and strings will be dealt with on an individual basis to accommodate their sectional.
- Students should report to sectionals even if they forget their instrument or music just as they would be expected to attend class whether or not they have forgotten materials.
- It is essential that open communication is maintained throughout the year between classroom teachers and music staff.

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

2014-2015 Performance Schedule

****Please put these dates on your calendar NOW so that conflicts do not occur. All students are required to attend the December and May performances. If there is a conflict, please let me know now!****

PLEASE REFER TO THE BAND MOODLE FOR UPDATED INFORMATION ON ALL OF THESE EVENTS AND ANY THAT MIGHT BE ADDED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR!

Friday, September 26, 2014 – Band Night- Report by 5:30 to the high school auditorium. We must be lined up and ready to go by 6:00 so PLEASE be on time. Students will perform the pre-game show with the high school band and will then sit in the stands with the HS band until half time when they will be dismissed after watching the guest band perform. Dress will be black pants, band T-shirts and sneakers.

Wednesday, December 10, 2014 - MS Holiday Concert, 7:30p.m. - High School Auditorium. Dress is black pants, white dress shirt, and dark colored dress shoes- NO sneakers! All boys will wear a tie of any color. Report time and further information TBA. **This will be a combined band, chorus and orchestra concert so arrive early if you want a good seat-you are in for a real treat highlighting our entire music department!**

*** Thursday-Monday, December 18,19, 22, 2014–Jazz Band Auditions.** Audition materials will be posted following Thanksgiving break and should be prepared (without my assistance) for the audition. Students will sign up for an audition time during the school day. Students are encouraged to utilize their private teachers to help prepare their audition materials as they will NOT be rehearsed during school (students are welcome to come to me with any questions). Jazz band practices every Friday after school from 3:00- 4:15 from January-May. Please consider potential spring sports conflicts when auditioning. Attendance at Friday rehearsals is mandatory to remain a member of this group.

Wednesday, April 29, 2015 – Spring Band Concert in the high school auditorium 7:30 PM. This concert will feature all the MS band groups: 7th and 8th grade band, jazz band, and percussion ensemble (and hopefully our newly formed wind ensemble!). Dress is black pants, white dress shirt, and dark colored dress shoes- NO sneakers! All boys will wear a tie of any color.

Friday, May 22, 2015- End of the year Hershey Park adjudication and fun day! (See attendance and grading policy for requirements to attend this trip.)

Monday, May 25, 2015- Dallastown Community Parade. Students will report to the MS band room at 8:00AM and will be finished at 10:00 AM. Dress is band T-shirts, black pants and sneakers. The parade leaves from Park Street, continues down Main St. and finishes at the cemetery.

Additional performances TBA!

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

Your child will enjoy middle school band. We have a lot of fun learning about music and improving technical instrumental skills. However, it is important that you and your child understand the level of commitment that is required to be a contributing member in a large group ensemble. Please read the band information document and sign and return the contract below so we can ensure that all band members and parents will do their part to make this the best possible learning experience for everyone.

Please **fill out and return** the following 4 items by Friday, August 12, 2014:

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- ☐ **Band Contract**
 - ☐ **T-shirt order form**
 - ☐ **T-shirt money** (\$8.00 cash or checks can be made out to Elliott Productions) Please put in an envelope labeled with your child's name.
 - ☐ **Parade permission slip**
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Items your child will need for band:

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- ☐ **flip book and lyre for outdoor performances. You need to buy about 5-6 extra pages for the flip book. (Trombones should get the lyre that attaches to your bell.) Percussion students need a hard cover binder instead of the flip book with clear poly-view pages to protect their music.**
 - ☐ **Black pants for performances and concerts (no athletic pants with stripes, please)**
 - ☐ **white dress shirt**
 - ☐ **boys will need a tie of any color/pattern**
 - ☐ **a pencil to keep in students' instrument case**
 - ☐ **band T-shirt**
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ALL band information including performance schedules, sectional rotations, report times, etc., can be found on the MS Band Moodle. Please use HAC to access your child's grades and assignments.

Please visit the band MOODLE. It's easy and I will keep information current throughout the school year. I can also be reached at jennifer.ruth@dallastown.net with and questions or concerns. I'm looking forward to working with your student this school year!

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

Band Contract

I have read the band information document (on the MS band Moodle) and have put the performance dates in my schedule (please check moodle for updates). I have discussed the information with my child and we understand the policies regarding attendance and assessment and understand that band is curricular and that it is a responsibility that he/she and I are willing to accept. My child will be responsible for practicing, reporting to sectionals and band at the appropriate time (teachers will not remind students not will call for missing students), behaving properly, and attending performances and full group rehearsals. He/She understands that **day 2 (period 9) and day 3 (period 9)** are reserved for band (not homeroom activities, study hall or other activities). Any make-up work should be completed on a NON-band day of the week as band rehearsals cannot be made up and band is a graded curricular class. I understand the grading/attendance policy and that it must be followed in order to attend the end of the year trip to Hershey Park. Although it is not mandatory, private instruction is recommended (especially for percussionists) and a list of area teachers can be obtained from Mrs. Ruth.

ALL band information including performance schedules, sectional rotations, report times, etc., can be found on the MS Band Moodle where I will keep information current throughout the school year. I will also send out email reminders containing important information. Please be sure the school district has your current email address so that you receive these emails!

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!

Print Student's Name _____ Student's homeroom teacher _____

Student's homeroom number _____ Student's team name _____

Student's signature _____

Parent(s) name(s) _____ Parent's signature _____

Parent email _____

I would be interested in chaperoning if needed Yes No

Please list any medical concerns that I may need to be aware of:

Comments/Questions:

7th and 8th Grade Band Information

Due to the nature of middle school being a time for exploration and involvement in many activities, bands students will have the option to miss one band rehearsal per marking period to participate in another activity. This could be a party in their homeroom, a kickball game outside or a day to complete a project or homework. Students must use this pass wisely as there is only one for each marking period. **Passes may not be used for sectionals, after school rehearsals or anytime the week prior to a concert.**

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1ST MARKING PERIOD BAND REHEARSAL PASS

Student's Name _____ Reason for missing _____
Date _____ Teacher Signature _____

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2ND MARKING PERIOD BAND REHEARSAL PASS

Student's Name _____ Reason for missing _____
Date _____ Teacher Signature _____

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3RD MARKING PERIOD BAND REHEARSAL PASS

Student's Name _____ Reason for missing _____
Date _____ Teacher Signature _____

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4TH MARKING PERIOD BAND REHEARSAL PASS

Student's Name _____ Reason for missing _____
Date _____ Teacher Signature _____