

SWARTZ CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL BANDS
HANDBOOK



- I. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

- II. PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE POLICY**

- III. GRADING PROCEDURES**

- IV. CLASSROOM RULES**

- V. PERFORMANCE ATTIRE**

- VI. PARENT/STUDENT COURSE POLICY AGREEMENT**

John A. Michailo II – 591-2004
Jean A. Murdock – 591-1779



I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

6th Grade Beginning Band is designed to introduce students to instrumental music performance in a full band class setting with the exception of percussion students who will be in a “percussion only” class. Students will initially be taught how to properly assemble and disassemble their instruments as well as how to perform general maintenance on their instrument. They are then instructed on proper playing position and development of basic tone production. In addition, basic rhythms, and simple melodies are taught using the Essential Elements 2000 beginning band method book which is purchased by the students. This may be ordered through your child’s director or may be purchased from most music stores.

Students learn to perform individually as well as in a full band setting. In doing so, they can develop a sense of responsibility, dedication, teamwork and positive self esteem. In order to increase student’s success, they are taught and encouraged to **develop good practice habits** as well as **establishing a regular weekly or daily practice routine**. Parents can play a positive role by encouraging their child to practice and offering constant praise as well as constructive criticism.

Although performance is not the main objective or focus at the 6th grade level the 6th Grade Band performs three times during the school year. Prior to each performance, the students are combined for one after school rehearsal as well as one scheduled during the school day. A list of all performances will be issued to each student within the first few weeks of school. Students will be given ample prior notice about the after school rehearsals.

7th and 8th grade bands both meet daily in a full band setting. In both groups, students continue to fine tune their knowledge of their instrument as well as instrumental music as a whole. Both bands participate at district band festival where they are rated and compared with other middle school bands in the state. The goal for all eighth graders is to be prepared to make a smooth transition into the high school band program.





II. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend all regularly scheduled performances through the school year. A master schedule of all performances should be received within the first few weeks of school in the fall. This should include all known performance dates and times. It might also include expected performances with dates and times T.B.A. Excused absences are few, but include; Personal illness: **(Please include Doctors excuse or at the least, a note from a parent or guardian explaining the absence)**; Death of family member or close personal friend **(Please, bring me a note explaining the circumstances)**; Personal injury as well as, severe injury to an immediate family member; **(Again, please bring me a note explaining the circumstances)**. All notes should be in to the director no later than ten days after the missed absence. School related events that conflict with scheduled performances will be worked out by staff members involved without any penalty to the student regardless of the decision made by the staff members.

Students receive points for each performance they attend. These points are part of the grading system for each marking period. Students that have an excused absence receive half of the possible points for the performance that was missed. They also have an opportunity to do a report due one week after the missed performance to make up the remaining points for that performance. **Students who have unexcused absences from a performance receive no points for that performance.** They may not do a report to make up points for the unexcused event. (Please see GRADING SYSTEM.) **It is vital to the success of the organization, that we have full attendance for all performances and rehearsals.**



III. GRADING PROCEDURE

Band students' grades are based on three primary areas:

I. Weekly Practice - This is an area that is so vital to students' success that it is generally worth between 1/3 and 1/2 of a students' grade depending on the particular marking period.

6th grade students have a practice record log in the front of their "Essential Elements 2000" method books where they should log in the number of minutes they practice on any given day that they practice. At the end of each week students will need to obtain a parent's signature or initials in the space provided on the practice logs. Students will not receive credit for their practice time without a parent signature. The first day of each school week they are to show their Practice Record to their instructor to be recorded as a grade. This is usually done at the beginning of class. The Practice Record process will begin around the third or fourth week of the school year. A letter explaining the Practice Record process will be sent home at that time.

7th and 8th grade Band Students use different Practice Records which are available in the Middle School Band Room. Students are encouraged to grab a stack of them to keep at home. They are also available as a printable PDF on the Band Booster Website located at: sbandboosters.com. Practice Records are due each Friday unless the school week ends on a different day. In those instances, the Practice Record is due the following Monday. Thanksgiving break, Winter Recess and Spring Recess are examples where this would occur. School closings due to weather may also cause the due date to be altered.

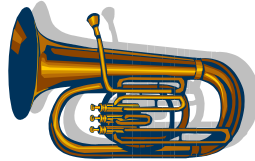
II. ATTENDANCE OF ALL SCHEDULED PERFORMANCES - Because music is a performing art, attendance of all scheduled performances is **MANDATORY**. The success of any performing ensemble depends greatly on all its members' contribution. Having all students present and contributing at all performances is essential! However, certain situations do come up and cannot be avoided. When these situations occur, students will be excused from that performance with no penalty to their grade pending written notification from a parent or guardian. Please refer to the attached attendance policy. A complete schedule of all performances is included with this Hand Book.

III. Playing and written test - Students will be given a variety of playing and written test to measure their progress. Certain tests are used as a motivational activity and are referred to as a chair test. During a chair test students all play the same exercises and are placed in a specific chair according to their score. They are given an opportunity to challenge their way up the chair order on a BI-weekly basis.



IV. CLASSROOM RULES

1. Students must be in the classroom when the tardy bell rings, and be in their seats with their instrument assembled three minutes after the tardy bell rings. Students must have a sharpened pencil and folder as well as any accessories they might need for class including: extra reeds, mutes, valve and slide oils etc.
2. Once class has started all talking stops. When the director speaks, no one else does! Raise your hand and wait for the director to call on you if you have a question or comment.
3. No gum, candy, pop or any other food or beverage allowed in the band room. Students needing a drink of water may quietly step outside the room for a drink.
4. All instruments and music should be placed in its proper storage place at the end of each rehearsal.
5. Only handle your own instrument. Only percussionists may even be near percussion equipment! The same goes for tubas and tuba players!
6. Do not mess up the rows of chairs and stands once they are set up for rehearsal.
7. No INAPPROPRIATE language allowed in the classroom.
8. No homework from other classes allowed during band.
9. Students must participate in Band related activities during the entire Band class period. Students that are too ill to play must still finger along to the music on their instrument. Students without their instrument or whose instrument is not working are required to finger along to the music as well. Students never just sit out during a rehearsal!
9. All four legs of each students' chair must stay on the floor at all times.
10. Remain in your seat at all times unless you have been given permission to leave your seat.



V. PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

6TH GRADE BAND - Performances are very special occasions for our students and their attire should reflect that.

*Gentlemen should wear a dress shirt or nice sweater, dress pants, dress socks and dress shoes. (**Athletic shoes are NOT acceptable!**)

*Ladies have a few more options to choose from. They may wear dresses, skirts, dress slacks and a blouse or sweater and dress shoes. If they chose to wear dresses or skirts they should wear proper legging attire. Skirts and dresses must be school appropriate in length.

Remember, we want our students to feel good about what they are doing! Dressing nicely can help.

7TH GRADE and 8th GRADE BAND - Uniforms consist of the following:

1. Polo Shirt purchased by student. Orders will be placed within the first few weeks of school.
2. Black dress pants or skirts.
3. Completely black shoes. Absolutely no athletic shoes or flip flop sandals will be permitted.
4. Black socks (ladies must wear hosiery if wearing a skirt).





PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2014

We have read and understand the policies within this handbook. The student agrees to follow all instructions and obey all rules when participating in all band functions. We understand that the director has the final decision authority in all matters concerning the band program and any support organizations affiliated with the Swartz Creek Bands under the authority of the Swartz Creek Public Schools Board of Education.

Parent signature_____

Date_____

Student signature_____

Date_____