

Dallastown Area School District  
Intermediate School Band Program

# Band Handbook

For Parents and Students



2017-2018 School Year

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Instructor and Contact Information.....	3
The Basics.....	3, 4
The Instruments.....	4
Goals of Lessons and Band Rehearsals.....	4, 5
Expectations for Parents and Students.....	5
Guidelines for Music Lessons and ensembles.....	6, 7
Attendance and Grading Policy.....	8
Band Schedule and Rehearsal Times.....	9
Morning Band Rehearsals and Jazz Band Intramurals.....	9
Webpage Information.....	10
Dates to Remember.....	10
Concert Dress and Method Books to Purchase.....	11
FAQ's.....	12

## Introduction

Welcome to the Band Program in Dallastown Area School District. Our band program continues to enrich the lives of many students and has brought joy and fine music to the community for many years. As your child continues or enters this program, he or she will have the opportunity to become a part of a long-standing tradition of musical excellence in our school system. It is a challenging journey from the first beginning lessons to performing with the high school band. This handbook is a guide to help your child achieve their greatest musical potential. It will serve a resource to answer many of your questions and concerns that arise during this exciting learning process.

## Instructor

Currently, Mr. Auen and Mrs. McComas are the instructors teaching band instruments at DAIS with many years of experience. Both have specialized training in teaching band instruments to beginning students. You may contact them through e-mail or voicemail by the following:

**Mr. Auen – [richard.auen@dallastown.net](mailto:richard.auen@dallastown.net); ext. 1726**

**Mrs. McComas – [leah.mccomas@dallastown.net](mailto:leah.mccomas@dallastown.net); ext. 1545**

## The Basics

School band instrument lessons are offered to students in grades 4, 5 and 6 held once in a 6-day cycle. Lessons are 30 minutes in length and are offered in large group format (6 to 10 students). Students may miss part of an academic class to attend the lessons; **it is their responsibility to make up missed classwork or tests.** In addition to these lessons, students need to attend full band rehearsals held on the last period of the day (also once in a 6-day cycle). Grade 5 & 6 full band will begin in September. Grade 4 full band will begin in January or February. **Students in grade 5 who begin an instrument must meet certain criteria in order to join 5<sup>th</sup> grade band before the concert.**

*\*Beginning lessons for 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students will not be offered unless private lessons are taken outside of school.*

Students who already play an instrument will participate in two band concerts held at the intermediate school. Beginning students most likely will participate in one concert.

**\*Choosing to participate in band is a commitment. Your fellow band members are counting on you to be prepared and achieve your full potential.**

**One student makes an enormous difference—we need you. Only under extreme circumstances will a student be given permission to discontinue. These will be reviewed after the December and May concerts.**

## **The Instruments**

Instruments offered to be taught in the band program are the flute, oboe, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, french horn, trombone, baritone, tuba and bells/snare drum. Larger instruments (such as tenor or baritone saxophone) will be taught to more experienced students who wish to double during band rehearsals. Auxiliary and mallet percussion instruments will be taught during lessons and rehearsals.

Most parents rent instruments through Menchey Music Service (located in the Queensgate Shopping Center). The district deals exclusively with this company. They provide high quality student instruments at a reasonable cost and a representative visits the school each Tuesday to take care of repairs, returns and other issues. Please view their website at [www.mencheymusic.com](http://www.mencheymusic.com) for more information. You are not obligated to rent from this company, but if you choose to rent an instrument elsewhere, please make sure it is of good quality. Instruments can also be found by contacting Dave Wilson at: [djazzwilson@aol.com](mailto:djazzwilson@aol.com) or [davewilsonmusic.org](http://davewilsonmusic.org). **Be aware of poor quality instruments and bargains on the internet!** The school district does provide larger school owned instruments like snare drums, baritones, trombones, and tubas to ease on transportation issues. Other school owned instruments may be provided if circumstances warrant. However, the success rate is much higher for students who have their own instrument.

## **Goals of Lessons and Band Rehearsals**

### Lesson Goals:

- To develop a love and wider appreciation for music.
- To gain a thorough understanding of his/her chosen instrument.
- To develop the coordination and skills to read, play, and listen intelligently according to his/her own individual interests and abilities.
- To learn responsibility and patience through music.

### Band Rehearsal Goals:

- To give students the opportunity to perform in a large ensemble setting.
- To help the student understand their individual role within the group.
- To apply techniques learned in lessons.

- To perform repertoire beyond that offered in the method book.
- To enhance their confidence and self-esteem.

Fifth Grade Eligibility for Band:

1. 2<sup>nd</sup> year player OR
2. Effectively play in the "Sound Innovations" book **to Level #3**. Percussion students will need to perform on both mallet and battery instruments.

Sixth Grade Eligibility for Band:

1. 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Player

### **Expectations for Students**

Students who decide to play a band or string instrument should be doing solid academic work in the classroom. Please realize that since lessons are during the school day, students will be missing class time. Remember, most of the music learning happens at home during practice time! Students must realize that music is a slow process; the rewards will come. Students should:

- Be on time and attend all concerts and rehearsals, with instrument, music, and a pencil.
- Develop a daily practice routine and prepare for lessons.
- Keep instrument well maintained.
- Help and encourage other students—we are a team!
- Seek help from an instructor as soon as you have a problem or question.
- Have a positive attitude. ☺

### **Expectations for Parents**

- Encourage and supervise practicing, proper instrument care and schedules. Mark lesson days, special practices and performances on the family calendar. Please contact an instructor if you are unsure of these dates.
- Encourage your child to set the instrument out with their backpack the night before the lesson. This includes the method book and band folder. Forgotten instruments will not lead to a successful musical experience for your child.
- Establish ground rules for consistent practice. Show excitement at the smallest progress!
- Help your child use the CD and DVD from the method book; they are useful.
- Attend your child's concerts.
- Take your child to other musical performances; both in and out of the district.
- Refer to this handbook regularly and check e-mail and the district website for additional information.

## Guidelines for DAIS Music Sectionals and Ensembles

**Sectional:** A 30 minute instrumental lesson to support student learning, technical skill, and musical growth. Sectionals rotate 30 minutes by cycle day.

**Ensemble:** A large group rehearsal during 9<sup>th</sup> period to integrate sectional objectives in a performance setting preparing for concerts. (Band, Orchestra, and Chorus)

### Sectional Guidelines:

- 1) Students should report directly to sectionals as per the rotating schedule distributed to students and staff.
- 2) All students and teachers will have a sectional schedule updated as needed, with a list of students in each group. The music staff will be responsible for promptly updating any adds/drops in the groups. Schedules should be posted outside of music rooms, classrooms, and common areas.
- 3) Students are responsible for reporting to sectional at the appropriate time. Sectional updates will be forwarded through email—please promptly share these with students. Unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction.
- 4) The time in which the student should report will rotate every thirty minutes each cycle. This includes special or encore classes. Students will miss the same class time every 8 weeks, when the sectional schedule has completed the rotation.
- 5) Students will be expected to remind teachers ahead of time when they will be missing class to attend sectionals.
- 6) Attendance Exceptions:
  - a. **Any student earning less than a “C” in a specific subject should remain in that class if their sectional is during that time.** Please notify the music staff in advance if this situation occurs. We want the students to be successful in all areas.
  - b. Students who have a major assessment (chapter/unit/OLA test), benchmark or standardized test, should remain in class to take the test. **Students should see the music instructors prior to the test to schedule a make-up lesson time.**
- 7) All students are required to make up, or turn in, any classwork or assignments missed due to sectionals.
- 8) 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 their materials.

- 9) Lessons and ensembles are part of the student’s schedule; they do not have the option to “skip.” They must take responsibility and see their music teacher to address the situation.

**Ensemble Guidelines:**

1. In order for students to receive full rehearsal time, students should pack up materials at 2:30, and report to their ensemble rehearsal. (See chart below) They may bring their backpack and be prepared for end of the day dismissal. Students will go back to their homeroom from rehearsal.

**Grade 4:**

Day 3:	Day 4:	Day 6:
2:30 Band (Begins in Feb.)	2:30 Orchestra	2:30 Chorus

**Grade 5:**

Day 2:	Day 4:	Day 5:
2:30 Band	2:30 Chorus	2:30 Orchestra

**Grade 6:**

Day 2:	Day 6:	Day 5:	Day 3:
2:30 Chorus	2:30 Band	2:30 Honors Chorus	2:30 Orchestra

2. Ensembles are part of the student’s schedule; they do not have the option to “skip.” They must take responsibility and see their music teacher to address the situation.
3. Teachers will notify the music staff if there are any students abusing the system.
4. Students should report to ensembles even if they forget their instrument or music just as they would be expected to attend class whether or not they have forgotten their materials.
5. It is essential that open communication is maintained throughout the year between classroom teachers and the music staff. We will continue to work with administration and classroom teachers, as we foster the education of the whole child.

## **Attendance and Grading Policy**

Students will receive a band grade for instrument lessons at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> marking periods. Evaluations consist of the following areas:

- Lesson attendance
- Band attendance
- Rhythm and Counting
- Tone Quality
- Tonguing
- Fingering, Positions or Stickings
- Posture
- Note Reading
- Practice/Preparedness
- Attitude

Student grades will be calculated and posted on e-school for parents to view. Students will lose points from their grade for unexcused absences from lessons AND rehearsals. Students are allowed one unexcused absence from a lesson and one excused absence from a rehearsal each grading period with no penalty.

All else is considered non-excused and will result in the following:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> absence: email sent to parent
- 4<sup>th</sup> absence: phone call to parent
- 5<sup>th</sup> absence: phone call to parent and conference requested to discuss child's continuation in the program.

Students get a clean slate after the second marking period.

Excused Lessons and Rehearsals:

- Absence from school
- Involvement in a school function such as an assembly or field trip
- Class or standardized testing



## **Band Schedule and Rehearsal Times**

School lessons for band students may conflict with special or encore subjects since the times will be on a rotating schedule. However, band rehearsal is fixed and will be held over enrichment times. It is of utmost importance that **ALL** students attend the practice each week. These will not conflict with orchestra or chorus rehearsals, which are held on different days.

Grade 4 Band (begins in late January or February): **DAY 3 from 2:35 until 3:20**

***School lessons for all groups will begin the final week of September.***

Grade 5 Band (begins September 6): **DAY 2 from 2:35 until 3:20**

Grade 6 Band (begins September 12): **DAY 6 from 2:35 until 3:20**

Morning band rehearsals will also be a part of your child's ensemble experience, but are held in addition to the times above. It is suggested that students attend them. Please see "MORNING BAND" below.

### **Morning Band Rehearsals**

It is highly recommended that every student in band attend morning band practices. Since in-school rehearsals are limited, the morning rehearsals are vital to quality performances. Morning band will be held from 7:40-8:20am on the same day as their band day (5<sup>th</sup> grade-Day 2; 6<sup>th</sup> grade-Day 6). Morning band will begin the week of October 24<sup>th</sup>. Morning band rehearsals will be held until the December concert and will resume in March. If your child is unable to make these rehearsals, we understand; there is no penalty for missing the morning rehearsal. These rehearsals will simply improve your child's confidence and enhance their musicality in preparation for the concert.

### **Jazz Band**

Jazz Band is offered by invitation to advanced students in fifth and sixth grade who play trumpet, saxophone, trombone, and tuba. Additionally, students who play piano, guitar, bass, or drum set are invited to audition. Students are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. Rehearsals will be held each Tuesday after school from 3:30-4:30. Rehearsals will begin in January and continue until the spring concert.

## **Webpage Page Information**

Parents and students can access to find information concerning the program on the Intermediate School band page. Find "Encore", then "Music", then click "Band". Here, you will find important dates, concert information and recordings of our pieces to be performed. The webpage is updated often, so please check it regularly.

## **Dates to Remember in 2017-2018**

**Monday, September 11:** Instrumental sign-up forms due. All students must be registered.

**September 12 & 13:** Instrumental Guidance Nights at DAIS Auditorium anytime between 6:00pm to 8:30pm (Beginners Only!).

**Week of September 26:** Students begin group lessons (schedule to be sent).

**Week of October 24th:** Morning band begins for grade 5 and 6 students at 7:40.

**Thursday December 14:** Instrumental Holiday Program for grade 5 and 6 band and all string students @ 9:30am, 1:30pm and 7:00pm in the DAIS auditorium.

**Late January:** Band Instrumental grades issued to students and parents; Grade 4 full band begins on Day 3 at 2:35. Jazz band begins after school for invited 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade band students.

**Tuesday, May 22 @ 1:30pm and Wednesday, May 23 @ 9:30am and 7:00pm**  
Eighth Annual Band Festival in the DAIS auditorium. Bands for grades 4, 5, 6, and Jazz band will perform.

**June 6:** Tentative last day for students.

## **HOLIDAY CONCERT DRESS (daytime and evening):**

**Boys:** Dress shoes if possible. Black or dark blue pants. White dress shirt or sweater.

**Girls:** Dress shoes if possible. Black skirt or pants. White blouse or sweater. Please make sure that skirts are at least knee length.

## **Method Books to be purchased for beginning students:**

**“Sound Innovations”** Book 1 – All wind instrument students (beginners)

**“Sound Innovations”** Combined Book 1 for percussion students

**“Sound Innovations”** Book 2 (Red) All instruments – for some 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade students

**Students will also need a home music stand, reeds (for woodwinds), valve and slide oil (brass). An instrument cleaning kit is also a good idea to purchase).**

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **I don't know anything about music. How can I help my child with practicing?**

The first step in good practicing is developing a consistent practice routine. Help your child find a quiet place to practice, and set a time when the child should practice. The method book is user friendly and comes with CDs and DVDs that are helpful learning aides. Ask your child to be the teacher and show you how to do some things they've learned. Contact your child's teacher for additional suggestions.

### **How will I know how my child is doing?**

Stay in close contact with instructors via email. If at all possible, visit and observe the lesson at school. Teachers will be in touch with you if there are major concerns. Report cards will be distributed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> marking periods.

### **Do we really need private lessons for our child in addition to school lessons?**

Students who study privately excel beyond students who only participate in school lessons. One-on-one instruction benefits the student in many ways and exposes the student to musical opportunities beyond those offered in school. If interested, a list of private teachers is available through the school instructors.

### **My child now wants to quit. He says "It's boring." Should we let him?**

Probably not! As with all things, students don't realize how much hard work is involved in learning to play an instrument. Often, "boring," is a substitute for "I don't want to do the work." Remind your child that they have made a commitment to themselves and others to reach musical goals and reward one another with an exciting performance. Please contact your child's instructor so they are aware of your child's lack of interest.

### **How much should my child practice?**

In general, 1<sup>st</sup> year students should practice 100 minutes per week. This means that each practice session should last at least 15 minutes every day! 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students should practice 150-200 minutes per week. This means their practice session should last at least 20 minutes every day! Of course, busy schedules always make things difficult, but students should be able to find at least 15 free minutes of every day. Practicing for an hour the night before the lesson is not going to allow the student to be successful. Consistency is key! You will need to encourage your child to practice; very few children are motivated to practice without reminders.