

# DRIPPING SPRINGS MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND HANDBOOK

The Dripping Springs Middle School Band is an active and very prestigious organization, which has set very high standards of excellence. These can only be maintained when each member resolves to do his or her best to constantly improve.

1. Participation in band provides a richly rewarding activity in terms of fellowship, healthful recreation, and personal gratification.
2. Although band requires time for individual practice, students do have plenty of time to enjoy a wide variety of other co-curricular activities and are able to maintain excellent scholastic averages.
3. Since many students choose to be in band in conjunction with athletics and other extra-curricular activities, schedules are carefully planned so that there are only minimal conflicts. There are no restrictions in choosing to do both, and any conflicts that do arise will be worked out on an individual basis.
4. Members of the band organization are proud to be a part of a superior program. The band hopes to make the student body, faculty, and administration of Dripping Springs Middle School equally proud of the program. It is with this spirit that another exciting school year begins.
5. In order to maintain a high standard of excellence in the Dripping Springs Middle School Band, it is necessary that the members and parents acquaint themselves with the regulations, procedures, and traditions of the band program.

This booklet will help to answer many questions regarding policies and regulations. Whenever a question arises, consult this booklet. If unable to find the answer, consult one of the band directors. They are here for the education of all DSMS students and are willing to help in any way possible. Our conference time is 9:00-9:50, or 9:55-10:50. Please call to schedule a conference whenever needed.

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**Website: <http://www.dsbands.org>**

**Conference: 9:00-9:50, or 9:55-10:50 M-F**

Jay Larson, Eddie Briskey

Directors of Bands



# Band Hall CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Come into the band hall quietly. Be in your seat with your materials ready for class promptly.
2. If you have a question, raise your hand.
3. Play only your instrument when instructed to do so.
4. Absolutely no food, drinks, candy, or gum are allowed in the band hall.
5. Respect the teacher or other students when they are talking.
6. Respect each other's rights and property.
7. Act sensibly and responsibly when in the band hall.
8. Stay in the band hall until dismissed by the teacher.

## CONSEQUENCES

Each misbehavior will be dealt with on an individual basis depending on the severity of the offense.

## ATTENDANCE AT REHEARSALS AND PUBLIC PERFORMANCES

Every member is important to the overall success of a performing band. Consequently, every member is required to attend every performance and rehearsal made by the band organization. Each member of the band depends on each other to attend these performances. One of the primary purposes of a band program is the preparation for and participation in public performances. Students should report to the designated place with enough time to spare to assemble their instrument and equipment, and be ready to play at the assigned time. All rehearsal regulations are in effect during public performances, as well as all regulations stated in the Dripping Springs Middle School DMP and SCC.

A calendar of events is included in the back of this handbook. Students are expected to attend all of these events during the course of the school year. Specific information regarding these events will be given to the student prior to the performance. An excused absence from a public performance will be granted in the case of genuine emergency only. This includes a serious illness of the student or a death in the family. Whenever possible, a director should receive notice of an absence before the event occurs. If it is not possible to notify a director before an event, the director must have a written account of the incident signed by a parent or doctor within one week of the absence in order for it to be considered excused. If the student has an excused absence from a performance, an alternate assignment will be needed to make up the grade. An engagement, family trip, etc., does **not** justify an excused absence. **Non-school sponsored** activities, teams, organizations, and student jobs must not conflict in any way with the practice/ performance schedule of the band. An unexcused absence from an event will result in the student receiving a zero for the performance missed.



## **Sectional And Full Band Rehearsals (Symphonic and Concert Bands Only)**

Symphonic and Concert Band students will be required to attend a sectional rehearsal one day a week either before or after school. In the weeks before UIL Concert Contest, both groups will hold full band rehearsals after school twice a week, and before school once a week. Attendance is absolutely required to be a member of the Symphonic and Concert bands. All rehearsals will be graded. It is the student's responsibility to arrange transportation, etc. If a rehearsal outside regular school hours needs to be made up due to an excused absence, it must be completed within one week of the missed rehearsal. Students who have attendance problems will be assigned to a non-performing group.

## **Full Band Rehearsals (Beginning Band)**

One after school rehearsal per concert will be held for all beginning band students. Attendance is absolutely required. All rehearsals will be graded. It is the student's responsibility to arrange transportation, etc. If a rehearsal outside regular school hours needs to be made up due to an excused absence, it must be completed within one week of the missed rehearsal.

## **Trip Performance**

Students must be current on all benchmarks by 4:15 pm the day before all scheduled trips in order to participate. They must also meet eligibility requirements as stated below. Students who have paid and are not allowed to attend due to benchmarks and/or eligibility issues will not receive a refund.

## **Individual Public Performance**

The TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) requires all instrumental music students to perform both individually and in groups. The group performance requirement is met through concerts and small ensembles. In order for students to fulfill an individual performance requirement, all DSMS band students will perform a solo at our annual Solo and Ensemble Contest. Students who are unable to attend the Solo and Ensemble contest will be required to perform individually at the band's Spring Concert.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!** Emergencies do arise, but most conflicts can be avoided now with good planning.

## **Eligibility**

Most of the work that our students do is either curricular or co-curricular and not subject to eligibility. Curricular and co-curricular activities are free concerts, sectionals, and concert rehearsals.

Students who participate in extracurricular activities must meet T.E.A (Texas Education Association) and U.I.L (University Interscholastic League) eligibility requirements. Students who fail any single class at the end of a nine-week period, or the end of the first six week period will become INELIGIBLE seven days later. Ineligible students do not regain eligibility immediately. They must wait seven calendar days after the end of the grading period. Students may regain eligibility seven calendar days after the end of the three-week grade evaluation period provided the principal and teachers have determined that the student is passing ALL courses. Semester grades are never used for eligibility. Activities that are classified as extracurricular for which TEA, UIL, and DSISD eligibility requirements apply include:

1. Any event for which an admission is charged.
2. Any event that is inter-school competitive.



3. Any event where ratings are awarded.

Should a band student become ineligible for an extracurricular function, he or she will still be eligible for curricular and co-curricular functions. Ineligible students will be given alternate assignments during contest preparation time. If a student becomes academically ineligible to attend a specific performance or rehearsal, an alternate assignment will be given to the student. Students who have chronic eligibility problems will be assigned to a non-performing class where performances will not be affected.

## **Band Participation**

In order to maintain your skills as a musician, participation in a band each and every semester is required. In other words, students not enrolled in band for one semester or more, may not rejoin. In addition, students who do not complete all of the benchmarks in a year will not be eligible to continue participation in band.

## **Band Placement Process**

All members of the band program are assigned by audition to one of three band classes that meet as academic classes. Auditions are held at the end of each school year. Placement in classes is determined by a combination of the single audition and a student's eligibility status for the year prior. No consideration is given for grade level or previous band placement. All results are final. Balanced instrumentation within each band is an integral part of the selection process.

## **Band Classes**

### **BEGINNING BAND**

It is generally better to start in the sixth grade as students who start later have difficulty catching up for the remainder of their musical career. Preparation for Symphonic and Concert band is the primary objective. Each student will provide his/her own instrument, except in the case of a student playing very large or expensive instruments such as euphonium, tuba, or french horn. As long as inventory lasts, the school will provide these instruments. The beginner band performs at several concerts, and one Schlitterbahn Concert. Students will also be required to perform at the Solo and Ensemble Contest.

Uniform: Nice Dress Clothes within school dress code for all performances. (Dresses or skirt and blouse for girls; slacks, shirt with a collar, and a tie for guys; dress shoes for both. NO DENIM, TENNIS SHOES, SHORTS, SANDALS, or TSHIRTS)

Book: *Yamaha Advantage*

### **INSTRUMENTAL TECHNIQUES**

Instrumental Techniques is a non-performing class designed to continue the musical growth of its members. Students who are unable to meet benchmarks for any six weeks grading period will be placed in this class for assistance and extra instruction in completing objectives. Once students have demonstrated mastery of benchmarks, they will be moved back to a performing class at the beginning of the next nine weeks.

Uniform: DSMS Band Shirt (\$12-14)

Book: *Foundations for Superior Performance* (provided)  
*Essential Musicianship for Band* (will be ordered through the school)



## CONCERT BAND

The Concert Band is an advanced performing group with preparation for Symphonic Band and the High School band as a primary objective. Students will perform at concerts and contests throughout the school year. Rehearsals and sectionals are required before and after school. Students will also be required to perform at the Solo and Ensemble Contest. Instrumentation is limited to those who show advanced performance abilities and superior attitudes. Members are selected by audition, completion of nine-week benchmarks, and eligibility. Students may be moved during the school year to Symphonic band at the directors discretion regardless of audition.

Uniform: DSMS Band Shirt (\$12-14)

Solid black dress pants or skirt solid black socks and shoes  
Wing tip tux shirt (can be bought at craft store for around \$15)  
Bow tie (provided by school)

Textbook: *Foundations for Superior Performance* (provided)  
*Essential Musicianship for Band* (will be ordered through the school)

## SYMPHONIC BAND

The Symphonic Band is an advanced performing group with preparation for the high school band program as a primary objective. Students will perform at concerts and contests throughout the school year. Rehearsals and sectionals are required before and after school. Students will also be required to perform at the Solo and Ensemble Contest. Instrumentation is limited to those who show advanced performance abilities and superior attitudes. Members are selected by audition, completion of nine-week benchmarks, and eligibility. Students may be moved during the school year to Concert band at the directors discretion regardless of audition.

Uniform: DSMS Band Shirt (\$12-14)

Solid black dress pants or skirt, solid black socks and shoes  
Wing tip tux shirt (can be bought at craft store for around \$15)  
Bow tie (provided by school)

Textbook: *Foundations for Superior Performance* (provided)  
*Essential Musicianship for Band* (will be ordered through the school)

## JAZZ BAND

The Jazz Band is an advanced performing group with preparation for the high school Jazz program as a primary objective. Students will perform at concerts throughout the school year. Rehearsals and sectionals may be required before and after school. Instrumentation is limited to those who show advanced performance abilities and superior attitudes. Members are selected by audition only. All wind players must concurrently be members of the Concert or Symphonic bands as well. Students who are removed or drop Concert or Symphonic band at any time will also be removed from jazz band. Rhythm members are open to all members of the student body by audition only. Instruments and accessories such as guitar and bass are not provided by the school at this time.

Uniform: Nice Dress Clothes within school dress code for all performances. (Dresses or skirt and blouse for girls; slacks, shirt with a collar, and a tie for guys; dress shoes for both. NO DENIM, TENNIS SHOES, SHORTS, SANDALS, or TSHIRTS)

Textbook: *Essential Elements for Jazz Ensemble: A comprehensive method for jazz style and improvisation*

## Materials

All students will be expected to record all assignments in the assignment log. Lost assignment logs can be replaced at the cost of four dollars. The initial purchase of an individually owned instrument will likely be the most expensive purchase the student will need to make. After this initial purchase is made, the other materials are very inexpensive. A complete materials list for each instrument is attached at the end of this document.



## Use of School-Owned Instruments

A limited number of the more expensive instruments are owned by DSISD for the purpose of balancing the instrumentation district wide and maintaining performing bands at every level. There is a yearly maintenance fee of \$75 for each student playing a school-owned instrument. This fee covers cleaning and minor repair of the instrument on a regular basis.

A checkout form will be sent home for parent/guardian signature each Fall acknowledging that they take full responsibility for the instrument. It is the responsibility of the student /parent to check over the instrument and understand that the instrument must be returned in the same condition at the end of the year. If repairs are necessary during the year, it is the responsibility of the student and parent to deliver the instrument to a repair facility as instructed by the band director. Repair of damages determined by a director not to be normal wear and tear are the financial responsibility of the student.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If, in the opinion of a DSISD director, a school-owned instrument is not being properly maintained or cared for at any time of the school year, it is the director's prerogative to remove the instrument from the student's care.

## Instrument Care

All students should keep their instrument in good condition at all times. Keep it clean inside and out; valves and slides working; mouthpiece clean; keys and wood oiled; clarinets swabbed. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR INSTRUMENT IN THE CAR!** Keep a supply of valve and slide oil, extra reeds, swab, and whatever else is necessary to maintain your instrument. Sticky valves, slides, and keys, should be dealt with before class begins.

## Grades/Benchmarks

Band students will receive grades each three weeks. Special emphasis is placed on the participation of every member of the band. The participation grade will be determined by active appropriate participation and responsibility.

Success and achievement can be accomplished only through diligent outside of school practice. Practice needs vary by student, but a minimum of three hours per week of individual practice is required with emphasis on results.

A playing exam may be given on any music assigned. In addition, every student will receive a Benchmark Sheet at the beginning of each Nine Weeks. These benchmarks represent all skills the student will demonstrate for that time period. As the student completes a benchmark either in person, or through the Smartmusic Software, a director will initial the completed task. All students will complete every benchmark on time, or will be moved to a non-performing group to receive extra assistance in achieving them. Students are responsible for maintaining benchmark sheets. No credit will be given for benchmarks completed on lost benchmark sheets, except for Smartmusic assignments that have been received and posted by directors. The students will begin a new sheet to complete with no time extension. Each benchmark represents a major test grade.

## Grading System

Daily/Participation Grades include but are not limited to:

- In-Class Assignments
- Homework Assignments
- Quizzes (written and playing)
- Active appropriate participation (playing and learning)
- Having materials every day



- Being a productive member of the group

Test Grades include but are not limited to:

- Benchmark Assessments
- Major Performances/Attendance
- Smartmusic Tests
- Sectional Attendance
- All Contests
- Solo and Ensemble
- Playing tests
- Composer Projects (Jazz Band only)

## **Grade Calculation**

Nine weeks averages will be determined by the following system:  
 Daily and participation grades constitute 20% of the nine weeks average.  
 Test Grades constitute 80% of the nine weeks average.

As with all classes at DSMS, a minimum numerical average of 70 is required to pass the class for the year.

## **Campus Late Work Policy**

Daily work, homework and individual project components will be accepted with a grade penalty up to 3 days beyond the due date of the assignment. Grade penalty will be assessed as follows:

- 1 day late may receive a maximum grade of 90
- 2 day late may receive a maximum grade of 80
- 3 day late may receive a maximum grade of 70

## **Campus Make up Policy**

Students will have the opportunity to make up or redo daily work, homework and individual project components within three (3) days of grade notification for a maximum grade of seventy (70). Students are required to attend re-teaching or tutorial prior to the work being accepted.

## **Make Up Work for Assignments Failed**

Students will have the opportunity to re-take or correct quizzes, tests and projects for a maximum grade of seventy (70). Students are required to attend re-teaching or tutorial prior to re-taking or correcting the work. Teacher will determine whether the student re-takes or corrects material to determine mastery.

## **Interim Reports**

All students will receive an Interim report at the end of the third week, six-week and nine-week grading period.

Interim report grades in band are determined by grading half of the benchmarks. For example, if there are eight total benchmarks, four of them are graded at interim report time. If a student has only completed 2 of 4 benchmarks by the middle of the nine weeks, they would receive two 100's and two 0's. (For an average of 50%.) Once those benchmarks are completed, however, the student's average would change to 100



## **Band Hall Hours**

Students are encouraged to use the band hall before and after school for practice. The band hall will open at 8:15 am five days a week and will close by 4:30 pm Monday-Thursday. Fridays, the band hall closes immediately after school. Directors will be available before and after school to listen to benchmarks. Computers will be available both before and after school for completing Smartmusic assignments. At times, band hall hours may need to be adjusted. Any changes to band hall hours will be posted in the band hall to notify students who ride the bus.

## **Communication**

Clear lines of communication are integral to the success of our program. Parents are encouraged to check the band website regularly at [www.dsbands.org](http://www.dsbands.org). Parents who wish to receive regular notices electronically should send an email to the directors, or send a note to request a paper copy of this. Phone calls and emails are always welcome as well.

## **Private Lessons**

For the past several years, the DSISD Band Program has offered private instruction from some of the finest musicians in the area. The parents and students who participate support the cost of the program. Lessons are offered during and after school on every weekday except Friday after school.

Private instructors will assist the students with the preparation of music for All-District and All-Region tryouts; Solo and Ensemble Contest, and occasional parts of the band performance music. Teachers will reinforce consistent fundamentals that will need to be practiced regularly for the greatest benefit. Parents should become informed about the lesson content, expectations of the teacher, and their child's rate of progress. Private Lessons are offered as enrichment, not remedial instruction. It is HIGHLY encouraged for the complete development of each student's potential as a performing musician. Private instruction is not required except for double reed students and student placement in band or their grades are not judged by participation in private lessons.

### **Student and Parent Responsibilities to the Private Teacher**

1. Be fully prepared for each lesson
2. Bring a pencil, method books, and any other required materials.
3. Keep a written assignment for each lesson
4. Notify the private teacher 24 hours or more in advance in the event a lesson must be missed. Failure to do this will result in an unexcused absence and the lesson must still be paid for. Excused absences by the student or the teacher shall be rescheduled or the money credited or refunded.
5. The cost for each lesson is \$18 for a 30 minute after school lesson, and \$16 for a 20 minute during school lesson and is payable to the individual lesson teacher. Lesson should be paid for one month in advance.
6. A late payment means the teacher is not getting paid. Think about the problems you might have if your employer forgot to pay you on time!

## **Fundraising Information**

Each year DSMS band students are asked to participate in one fundraiser.

75% of the profits raised go into individual student accounts and can be used to fund band trips and a few other band activities. The money stays with the individual student for the duration of their participation in band all the way through high school. The High School band takes one "BIG TRIP" every four years that can be very costly. Past trips have included California and Florida. Students are encouraged to begin raising money NOW to help pay for the expensive trips later in their band career.

The other 25% of profits stays in a band activity account to help pay for functions and operations of the total program.

### **How Can We Help?**

The key to our success is 100% participation from students and families. Please make an effort to help in any way possible. Families can help by asking relatives, coworkers, and friends to participate as well.

# Dripping Springs Band Booster Information

The DS Band Booster Association provides a considerable percentage of operating funds for our band program. It earns these funds through numerous fundraisers and operation of concessions at DSISD athletic events. Every band parent and band supporter is invited to join the Band Boosters. Directors recommend parents become involved in this organization. More information on joining this worthy endeavor can be found at the end of this packet.

