

Band Program 7-12

Junior Band * Concert Band * Symphonic Band **Grading Syllabus - Mr. Allen**

Band is a unique classroom experience that develops the abilities and successes of the individual while continuing to promote better learning, listening, communicating, and performing throughout the group.

Band is a tremendous hands-on class that fosters commitment, responsibility, learning, teamwork, and success through performance on a musical instrument. Through class work, lessons, and practicing at home, students will develop and nurture their own musical skills and individual growth while working together as a team for the best possible outcome.

OBJECTIVES

- To develop and continue the music education of junior high and high school students through learning to read, perform, analyze, and critique music, as well as develop the skills of sight-singing, sight-reading, and ear training.
- To create and develop a successful, consistent practice routine out of class.
- To help each student achieve success through commitment, hard work, perseverance, and individual work on their instrument.
- To create a positive, healthy, and fun learning environment for all students.
- To learn the value of successfully functioning as a group, working together and supporting one another throughout the year during class and in concerts.
- To enjoy learning, performing, and participating in music.

DAILY REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Be on time and prepared (instrument, music, folder, and pencil) for every class.
- 2) Be seated, ready to play 2 minutes after the bell has rung.
- 3) Practice outside of school a minimum of one hour each week.
- 4) Maintain the condition of your instrument and music throughout the year.
- 5) Attend every concert and performance throughout the year.

GRADING POLICY

A Note On Grading: Grading music does not always use a “right” or “wrong” approach. There are some aspects (such as class work and lesson work) where we are working on developing sounds and abilities. These elements will not be graded on accuracy, but on effort and participation. If the student is trying and participating in the exercises, then it will be a good grade. To achieve a high grade in this style of grading, the student simply must be there, with the proper supplies, putting forth effort, and not disrupting others.

There are other times where we will be grading for accuracy. If a student is taking a playing quiz (as part of their weekly lesson grade) or a playing exam, then we will be looking for accuracy of rhythms, pitches, tone, etc. These will be assigned ahead of time, so the student has the necessary amount of time to prepare.

Classwork: 30%: Students will come to class on time and prepared each day, with their instrument, folder, music, and a pencil. Grading elements will include the work of each day (warm-ups, rhythm and chorale work, band music, etc.), along with effort, participation, and behavior. Following the rules and procedures of the classroom are extremely important for a group of this size.

Part of being prepared for each class means having the material learned and practiced. Students must practice their music at home. When students fail to tackle this responsibility, the development of the overall band slows down dramatically, making it repetitive, frustrating, negative, and boring.

Lessons: 30%: Each lesson is graded on the following elements: Equipment (instrument, folder, music, and pencil), Weekly Preparation (practice sheets and weekly improvement), Lesson Work, and a Playing Quiz (assigned the previous lesson).

Attendance is mandatory at each lesson. Excused absences include not being in school (sick, dismissed early, athletic competition, etc.) or a test. Excused absences do not affect the lesson grade. Anything else is an unexcused absence, which must be made up after school (or during a free time that works for both the teacher and student). Failure to make up any unexcused lesson absences will affect the student’s grade very quickly. Regardless of how a lesson was missed, the student is responsible for learning the material, getting a new practice sheet, and getting the assignment for the following week.

Performances: 15%: Concerts, parades, and ceremonies are a major part of our learning to perform, as well as an assessment tool for teachers and a forum to display all of our hard work. When even one individual is removed from the equation, the entire group is changed in an unpredictable way. Every student must attend each concert and marching band performance to support the group and play their part! Any misses that stem from emergencies will be handled on an individual basis.

Exams: 25% Exams will come in two parts: either written exams or playing exams. Written exams will be given as an assessment to written units (such as note reading, music vocabulary, etc). Playing exams will be administered either reviewing smaller sections of music, or large-scale exams that cover scales or exercise. They will be evaluated similarly to the NYSSMA Solo Evaluation. **There will never be a pop exam.**

Breakdown of the 7-12 Band Spectrum

GRADE IN SCHOOL (Estimated NYSSMA Solo Level)	JUNIOR BAND (NYSSMA Majors Level I - II)	CONCERT BAND (NYSSMA Majors Level II - IV)	SYMPHONIC BAND (NYSSMA Majors Level IV - VI)
7 (Pre-1 to Solo Level 1)	All 7 th Graders at any level	- - - - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - - - -
8 (Solo Level 1-2)	Beginners & Intermediates	Advanced Students (By Audition/Recommendation)	- - - - - - - - - -
9 (Solo Level 2-3)	<i>(special circumstances w/permission of Conductor)</i>	Beginners & Intermediates	Advanced Students (By Audition/Recommendation)
10 (Solo Level 2-4)	<i>(special circumstances w/permission of Conductor)</i>	Beginners & Intermediates	Advanced Students (By Audition/Recommendation)
11 (Solo Level 3-5)	- - - - - - - - - -	Beginners & Intermediates	Advanced Students (By Audition/Recommendation)
12 (Solo Level 4-6)	- - - - - - - - - -	Beginners only	All Non-Beginning Students

Beginner: Student new to their instrument, or new to band.

Intermediate: Student who is playing at their grade level (typically 3+ years of experience)

Advanced: Student whose ability and musicianship is well above grade level.

NYSSMA MAJORS – Short for the “NYSSMA Major Organization Festival” where an entire group participates. The group is judged by two NYSSMA certified adjudicators based on the level of difficulty and sound of the group. They consistently give an honest, unbiased account of the sound and ability of the group based only on musical qualities. The grading system is (in order): performance certificate, Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Gold with Distinction. Participation in this festival is determined by Mr. Allen near the end of the 2nd quarter. *Students may be removed from participating in this event based on poor attendance: if the student has missed more than 30% of previous 20 classes leading up to the event, they will not know the music and will effect/hold the class back.*

NYSSMA SOLO – Short for the “NYSSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival” where students can perform a solo, duet, or small chamber work. The student is judged by one NYSSMA certified adjudicator based on the level of music and the performance. Again, they give an honest account of what they hear, offering praises mixed with suggestions for improvement. While this is not required, extra credit is given to students who perform here.

NOTE: A NYSSMA Solo at a level 4 is MUCH more difficult than a full band piece at a level 4. Often times, NYSSMA Level 3 solo players can easily play a Level 4 band piece.

Taking a 2nd Instrument – Upperclassmen who are already in the Symphonic Band can, schedule permitting, *additionally play in Concert Band on a different instrument.*

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Offenses can include any of the following:

- Persistent Tardiness
- Excessive Talking/Inappropriate Behavior
- Abuse of School Property
- Continually Being Unprepared/Late for Class
- Continually Not Practicing for Lesson/Class*

1st Offense: Verbal Reprimand and Warning, Phone Call Home.

2nd Offense: Referral, Phone Call Home.

3rd Offense: Referral, Phone Call Home, further action as deemed by principal.

*in this situation, I will handle the detention myself, making sure the student uses the after-school time to practice and make up any work missed.

GENERAL REMINDERS

- Your **HOMEWORK** is in the form of the weekly practice sheet. It is graded based on completion, time practiced, and parent/guardian signature, and is 30% of each lesson grade.
- No gum chewing or candy is allowed. Besides the choking risk of taking quick, deep breaths with food in your mouth, the sugar in candy and gum is very bad for your instrument, deteriorating pads, clogging pipes, and it makes your instrument smell terrible.
- Reeds, valve oil, and snare sticks are now the student's responsibility. It is a part of playing an instrument, and it is something that hasn't been consistent. You can pick up supplies through any the following:
 - The "School Music Store," run by the Performing Arts Council.
 - Through *Fowler's Music* in Bennington
 - Through *John Keal Music* (they make regular trips here on Fridays)
 - Online in many places.