

Eisenhower Junior High School

Band Handbook

“Each day we create, collaborate, improve and inspire”

2018-2019

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DARIEN DISTRICT 61 BANDS

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC



PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Music provides students with the opportunity to learn life lessons and skills that they may not have access to in a traditional classroom. It is because of this type of learning that students grow both as musicians and as young adults. Due to this type of development it is the belief of the Band Department at EJH that all students should have the opportunity to receive high quality musical instruction in school. Musical instruction provides students with opportunities to learn about cultural heritages, self-expression, perseverance through hardships, and so much more! Education in music also allows students to gain specific qualities such as self discipline needed for excellence, the empathy required for music making, and the openness and curiosity needed in order to create music. It is the belief of the EJH Bands that these qualities are essential in any life situation, whether it be musical or not. Music is an important aspect of our everyday existence and serves as a common interest/activity in all our lives! It is something that connects our cultures, beliefs, and upbringings. It is through music that students learn the aspects of diversity, working cohesively with others, and acceptance. This is what makes music so unique, in the way that it links people of various backgrounds and cultures together and gives those that partake in music education insight into a human experience that is universal and accepting!

The primary goal of all band classes in District 61 is to improve each student's creativity, aesthetic awareness, and artistic abilities through music. While there are many other objectives and goals that are also set for the students through the music curriculum, using music and sound as a way to express the emotional feeling of a piece is always the main focus of the band classes at EJH. The bands at EJH will always promote the development of musical skills that lead to purposeful, emotional and substantial musical experiences. The band program will also encourage students to become active listeners to both themselves and their peers through performance, as this will create accepting, informed, and respectful members of our EJH community. Participating in music will cultivate students that are responsible, critical thinkers, and knowledgeable. Participating in the bands at EJH will promote higher-level thinking skills, promote creativity and self expression, and teach students positive qualities such as dedication and the determination and willingness to accept challenges. We accept these goals may not be fully realized at the elementary and middle school level. We therefore strive to start young people down a path that will eventually lead to aesthetic awareness. We make a special effort to stay connected with the local high school programs and our students are frequently invited to their performances and classrooms. By keeping our students' eyes on the horizon, we continue to instill in them the personal drive that will propel them into adulthood.

If there is any way in which I can better serve your student, any accommodation your student may need, or any questions you may have about our program, please do not hesitate to contact me directly through phone or email. THANK YOU SO MUCH for allowing your student to participate in this program and for recognizing the importance of music in their lives.

Danny Tedeschi
Director of Bands
Eisenhower Junior High School

Bands at Eisenhower Junior High

The Eisenhower Junior High School Bands are open to all fifth through eighth grade students.

Cadet Band

The Eisenhower Junior High Cadet Band is a new ensemble that will partake in their inaugural year at the start of the 2018-2019 school year! This ensemble will consist of solely 5th graders that have successfully completed beginning band. Each student in the Cadet Band receives one 30 minute small group sectional per week and come out of class at the same time each week. The Cadet Band Rehearses Tuesday's, Wednesday's, and Thursday's from 7:30 a.m to 8:15 a.m at Eisenhower Junior High. At the conclusion of the rehearsal the students are bussed back to Lace where they will begin their school day!

CONCERT BAND

Students in Concert Band rehearse every day during 3rd period. The Concert Band consists of 6th grade students and each member receives a weekly sectional during the school day on a rotating basis. The members of the Concert Band continue to develop their skills that were learned in 5th grade Cadet Band and prepare to advance into symphonic band the following year. Due to the fact that the students are developing their skills students of the Concert Band are expected to practice **AT LEAST** every day for 20-30 minutes. The Concert Band will participate in school concerts and assemblies, community events, and festivals in the surrounding chicagoland area.

SYMPHONIC BAND

The members of the Symphonic Band are chosen upon their display of excellence both in playing ability and maturity. These students have successfully demonstrated proficiency on their instrument and are promoted after the completion of Concert Band. The Symphonic Band is the top-performing curricular group in the Eisenhower band program and, as such, the level of expectation is significantly raised. It is **STRONGLY** suggested that students in Symphonic Band take private lessons. Students rehearse every day during second period in the Eisenhower Band room and have weekly scheduled sectionals during the school day.

MARCHING BAND

The Marching Band is comprised of all members of both the Concert and Symphonic Bands. The Marching Band rehearses during first period on Fridays from the start of the school year through the end of October in the Eisenhower Band room.

JAZZ BAND

Due to the variety and complexity of the music involved, the Jazz Band primarily consists of members of the Symphonic Band. Players are selected by audition and rehearse one evening a week for two hours. The Jazz Band is comprised of Trumpets, Trombones, Saxophones, Keyboards, Bass Guitar, and Percussion. Jazz band meets 1 time a week on Tuesday evenings starting at 6:00 p.m

PRACTICE

Practicing is necessary to build the muscles and skills that ensure mastery of the instrument. In the same way that a great athlete has devoted many hours to practicing his or her skills, so must the musician to build the endurance needed to play his or her instrument. The student who does not practice will simply not succeed.

Band members are expected to practice a minimum of 20 minutes each day. However, make it your goal to get better, not to count the minutes. Parents are encouraged to sit down with their child during practice from time to time to hear the progress made and to get involved with what their child is doing. **Remember that since we are building very small and precise muscles, it is more beneficial to practice 15 short minutes a day than to slam through 2 hours on Saturday!** Even five minutes of scales a day will make a VAST improvement, and your student will notice it as soon as they start shooting up the chair placements!

Students are encouraged to practice in the band room during their lunch period, study halls, after school, or if they are excused from a class after a test. **The student who commits to a small amount of practice each day will improve. Always.**

Practice is easy and extremely productive when you know how and why you are practicing. Two things that are essential are time and patience. Follow some of these suggested guidelines as you practice in order to maximize your time!

Tips on How to Practice

- Find a place to practice that is free from distractions.
- Find a time to practice that is consistent and stick to it! It is important to balance practice time with other school homework so that you can accomplish everything and not become overwhelmed.
- More important than “how long” you practice is “how” you practice. Don’t count the minutes, but instead make each minute valuable.
- Give yourself goals, both short-term and long-term.
- Don’t immediately start to play each song! Try parts this formula when first learning a song: Clap the rhythm while counting, say the letter names while fingering (or say the letter names while faking hitting the notes if you are playing bells), hiss air while fingering, and finally play the instrument. If you follow this formula your first time playing each piece should be a good one!
- Go slow at first. Everything is easier slower.
- Practice in short phrases, such as one or two measures at a time or even smaller if needed.
- Repeat each section a number of times, playing slightly faster each time.
- Parents-Listen to your children. Music should be shared and they love to hear your encouragement!

GRADING

Performance/Lesson Assignments

One part of every student's grade is his or her weekly pull out sectional. Students are expected to be at each sectional, unless otherwise discussed with Mr. Tedeschi **BEFORE** the sectional. If a student shows up for their sectional and is prepared with all materials they will receive the full 25 points for their sectional day that week. If a student is unexcused from a lesson they will receive a 15/25 for their sectional grade that week.

In addition to having a grade for being present and prepared for their lessons, students will receive weekly performance grades during their sectional times. Each week students will have an assignment in which they will perform for Mr. Tedeschi during their sectional time. If a student is **EXCUSED** from a sectional they will be allowed to perform the assignment for Mr. Tedeschi before or after school, and during their lunch for full point values. If a student is unexcused from a lesson they will still be allowed to come in during the make up times to perform their assignment only they will be unable to receive full credit for their playing assignment

Daily Participation and Preparation

Each day the students meet as a full band ensemble they will start with 3 points for the day. If the students are prepared and engaged during rehearsal they will earn 3 points for the day. If the students are disruptive to the rehearsal or are unprepared they will receive a 0 for the day. Being disruptive and unprepared includes; talking during rehearsal, using a cell phone or other form of technology, not having the necessary materials (pencil, tuner, music, band binder) and not bringing an instrument. Students will be notified if they receive a 0 grade for a rehearsal. Students are able to earn their three points back if they show a willingness to go above and beyond individually. This could include helping other students, volunteering to move equipment before a concert, or helping Mr. Tedeschi organize music

Performances

Attendance at **ALL PERFORMANCES** is mandatory for band members. All dates and times are announced as far in advance as possible and will be posted on the district website and band website. Itineraries will also be sent home at least a week in advance with specific details of the event. Every effort should be made to attend all extra after school and special practices. Students receive the grade of 100 points for attending and participating in these performances. Deductions from the grade are taken for incorrect attire (not wearing black dress shoes, white dress shirt, etc.) or inappropriate behavior (talking during other groups performances, being on cell phone, etc.). Additionally if a student is **UNEXCUSED** from a performance they will receive 50/100 points. Being a part of a musical ensemble is a team activity and if a student is not present for a performance it affects the ensemble as a whole.

Absences should be explained to Mr. Tedeschi in an email, or phone call from the parent or guardian. Absences with at least two weeks notice would be deemed **excused absences**. Students who miss concerts due to illness or an emergency would also be deemed excused. For graded performances, such as parades, concerts, and festivals, a student who had an excused absence should complete an **Alternate Concert Assignment**, which would earn the student full credit towards their performance grade. This assignment will be due within two weeks after the date of the performance.

Students who miss concerts without written notification to Mr. T at least two weeks in advance or not due to illness or emergency would be considered an **unexcused absence**. Students who are absent and unexcused can complete an alternate concert assignment, but the highest grade they can earn in making up the missed concert is 50 points.

Please do remember that performances are part of our curriculum and missing a performance is depriving a student of the full musical experience, in the same way that a math teacher would not allow an “excused skipping of the test.” I understand that family commitments and emergencies exist and I will never discriminate against a student because of these events – I simply ask that a student who misses a performance for any reason communicate and complete the alternate assignment. **OUTSIDE SCHOOL ATHLETIC EVENTS, CLUBS OR ACTIVITIES ARE NOT CONSIDERED AN EXCUSED ABSENCE!!!**

Sectionals

Sectionals are an integral part of the band curriculum at EJH. These sectionals allow students to work on skills and techniques that are not always addressed in a full ensemble class. Sectionals also allow the students to grow as a section, meaning the students will begin to listen to and work cooperatively with their section mates! Additionally, in the sectionals students will receive a weekly assignment that helps build technique and abilities in each students playing.

5th Graders will meet during school on Thursdays and possibly Tuesday’s (if needed) in the Safety Village at Lace. Their sectionals will be scheduled for the same time each week during a class that will not hurt the student academically. If the student has issues missing this class, please speak with Mr. Tedeschi or Mr. Bonnanotte about rescheduling the student’s sectional time.

6th, 7th, and 8th Graders will meet for sectionals with Mr. Tedeschi in the EJH Band room. These sectionals will occur during the school day on a rotating basis. The exact times will be specified in small group lesson schedules. These schedule will be handed to the students each quarter,

posted on the band website, displayed in the band room, posted around the school, and hung in each classroom. ***It is each student's responsibility to know his or her lesson schedule and to come to the band lesson during the correct time.*** They are also responsible for "checking in" with their regularly scheduled teacher and making up any work missed due to their band lesson. The focus of sectionals is to help the students hone in on the required skills to be successful musicians. Here is more important information about playing assignments and sectionals.

1. If a student misses their scheduled sectional, they can make-up their sectional for Mr. Tedeschi before school, after school, or during lunch. They should speak to Mr. T directly to set up a time for a make-up lesson.
2. Mr. Tedeschi will help encourage the students to find "Band Buddies" in each of the classes in which they might be pulled for sectionals. These "Band Buddies" should help take notes, assignments, etc. for the band students while they are gone for their sectional.
3. Students WILL NOT be able to receive full credit if they are UNEXCUSED from a lesson.

NECESSARY SUPPLIES

- ❖ **1.5 Inch Binder (THIS IS REQUIRED BY ALL STUDENTS!!!) - This is an essential material for the class as it will hold each students band music, warm ups, written work, instrument specific handouts, and any extra music they may want to include such as jazz band music, marching music, or solos.**

The binder should include

- **5 Dividers**
- **Pencil**
- **All Band Music**
- **Band Warm Ups**
- **Method book (More information will be distributed regarding this at a later time)**

- ❖ **Other Supplies**

- Music stand (for home use)
- Pencil (to be kept in band folder)
- Metronome
- Tuner

PHONE'S WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE USED AS TUNERS OR METRONOMES DURING CLASS TIME!!!

INSTRUMENT MAINTENANCE

All students are responsible for maintaining their instruments, whether school or privately owned. An instrument that is not kept in top playing condition will not provide the student with the best sound. There will be periodic instrument checks of all instruments. If your student's instrument needs maintenance Mr. Tedeschi needs to be notified so he can communicate a repair time with the representatives from PM Music. Parents are also able to bring their student's instruments to PM Music themselves in order to have a quicker turnaround time!

UNIFORMS

A prescribed uniform is worn throughout the year at all parades, concerts, and contests. The band boosters will issue the uniform. Each student is responsible for the various parts to the uniform. A detailed uniform sheet is handed out when each student is fitted for his or her uniform. **Rules for wearing the uniform will be discussed with students at the beginning of the school year, as well as located on the uniform sheet.**

SOLO AND ENSEMBLE Festival

Each February, every 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade student will participate in a solo performance at a festival. Performing a solo on your instrument provides an experience that is both entertaining and educational in ways that playing in a full band simply can't provide! **It is required for all members of the Cadet Band, Concert Band, and Symphonic Band to participate in this event!**

PRIVATE LESSONS

Private study is strongly encouraged for all band members. Simply put, there are concepts unique to your instrument that the full band class format simply doesn't provide enough time to cover.. **Private lesson teacher contact information is distributed at registration and is always available in the EJH Band room.**

BAND BOOSTERS

The District 61 Band Boosters is a parent volunteer organization whose membership is open to all parents of Darien District #61. All parents of band members are automatically members of the Boosters by having a son or daughter who is a member of the band program. General meetings are held monthly, typically the second Thursday of each month starting at 7:00 p.m. The goals of the Boosters are as follows:

1. To support the band director in any means possible.
2. To lend moral and financial support to the program.
3. To cooperate with those in charge of the music program.
4. To build and maintain an organization of parents which promotes the activities of the music department.

Eisenhower Junior High Band

Rules and Expectations

EJH Bands Motto:

“Each day we create, collaborate, improve and inspire”

The EJH Bands follow the PBIS guidelines established by Darien School District 61 which are a respectful, responsible and safe learning environment.

Respectful

- **Students treat their peers, instruments, classroom, and Mr. T with respect each day.**
- **Conversations between students during class time are held to a minimum and should be centered around the musical topics being presented in class.**
- **Students raise their hand and wait to be called on if they have a question or comment.**
- **Students throw away any trash that may be left on the floor and keep the band room clean and neat.**
- **Students put back any chairs or stands that they may move and keep the band set up the same as when they arrived to class.**
- **Students play their instruments and their instruments only. This includes the percussion section!**

Responsible

- **Students arrive to class on time and are seated and ready to play 3 minutes after the 2nd bell rings**
- **Students come to class with all necessary supplies (instrument, band binder, pencil, and any other specific materials they may need).**
- **Students look up and find their sectional times and arrive to all sectionals on time and prepared.**
- **Students come to Mr. T before or after school if they need to replace missing music.**

Safe

- **Students put away any instruments that are removed from a cubby prior to band starting.**
- **Students raise their hand and ask to leave the classroom if necessary.**
- **Students will not run or climb on any of the band room furniture.**
- **If a student is using a practice room they must notify Mr. T before they enter and once they are done with the room.**

HANDBOOK AGREEMENT (*due Monday, August 27*)

We have read and understand the handbook and all of the details listed within it. I will have all required supplies or proof of purchase by Friday, September 16.

Student Name (Printed) _____

Student Signature _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

Parents/Guardians, please initial in the boxes next to the statement that applies to you.

_____ We currently have no conflicts with the performances on the calendar.

_____ We currently have the following conflicts with the performances on the calendar.

Parent and Student Information

Parent / Guardian Name _____

Parent / Guardian E-mail Address _____

Emergency Telephone Number _____

Student Name _____

Student Instrument _____

