

Martha Puckett Middle School



Band Handbook 2021-2022

Greetings parents and members of the Martha Puckett Band Program!

To our returning parents and students, 'Welcome back!' and to our new members, 'Welcome to the Martha Puckett Band Family!' We are very excited about the upcoming year!

Band is a wonderful opportunity for the middle school students. Studies have shown that students belonging to a musical ensemble achieve higher test scores and more advanced emotional development. More than that, band is the beginning of a lifetime journey as a musician. Long after the days in the classroom are over, memories and skills from band will be a part of your everyday life. The rewards of discipline, practicing, and working together to achieve a common goal cannot be replaced.

This handbook is written to inform both students and parents of the policies, procedures, and goals of the band program at MPMS. Please take time to read and discuss this handbook with your family. After reading, please fill out the information form on the back and return it to me by the date listed on the form. This is a written assignment grade for your student.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions about this handbook, or anything else regarding the band program. You can call the school or email me. I am eager to get to know each of you and to work together with you to continue to build upon a tradition of excellence that makes Martha Pucket and Wayne County one of the finest public school systems for music in the state!

Sincerely,

Chris Harper
Band Director

Martha Puckett Middle School Band Handbook

PURPOSE

The middle school band programs in Wayne County seek to offer each student who is interested and eager to learn, an enjoyable experience centered on individualized musicianship and ensemble performance. A working understanding of basic tone production, rhythmic comprehension, fingerings, music vocabulary, dynamics, articulations, scales and key signatures, and rehearsal and performance of middle school literature reflect the MPMS band goals of achievement.

EXPECTATIONS

Members of the Martha Puckett Middle School Band are expected to do more than simply play their instruments well. The following are required of ALL members who participate in the program.

- **BE RESPECTFUL:** There is NO TALKING OR PLAYING when an adult is instructing whether it is on or off the podium. We want our rehearsals to be as efficient as possible in order to produce our best product.
- **BE RESPONSIBLE:** Keep up with ALL of your equipment (instrument, folder, mouthpiece, reeds, pencil, etc.). Students must bring a pencil, all equipment, and music to every rehearsal! Also take care of your equipment. Keep your cases neat and organized.
- **BE TEACHABLE:** Come to class with a positive attitude and a focused mind!
- **BE POSITIVE:** Make sure all comments to the director or peers are respectful and reflect only positivity.
- **BE PREPARED:** Be on time for all classes, rehearsals, and performances. Class begins when the timer goes off and the director steps on the podium. You are late if you are not in your seat with your instrument assembled and music prepared! Students who are not prepared risk falling behind and adversely affect not only themselves but the members of their section and class who are relying on them to play their part.
- **BE ACCOUNTABLE:** Band is a performance class. There are no “free” days. Bring your instrument to class and expect to play your instrument every day. **PRACTICE MAKES PROGRESS!** Take your instrument home and practice! Our band is a team effort and everyone should do their part to become a better musician and team player.
- No food or drinks allowed except for bottled water. **This includes GUM!** Gum is a choking hazard and can cause significant damage to instruments and facilities.
- Keep your hands to yourself. You may play your own instrument but no one else’s. If you damage someone else’s instrument, you will be responsible for any repair costs.

These rules are in addition to any district or school rules.

CONSEQUENCES

1st Offense- Warning

2nd Offense- Student-Teacher Conference/Parent Contact/Behavioral Contract

3rd Offense- Removal of Student from Band

An administrator will immediately handle any extreme display of disrespect or misbehavior.

GRADING PROCEDURES

30% (Daily Grade/Class Performance Assessment)- Band is a team effort. Being a part of a band means being on time and having all necessary equipment. A student is not prepared for class by not having an instrument or proper equipment and cannot participate in band. A student unprepared will receive no points for the day. The band does not have instruments that students can borrow from lack of preparedness.

Breakdown:

(20 possible points for each day x 5 days = 100 possible points for the week)

No instrument: -20 points

Instrument + participation: +20 points

No pencil: -5 points

Chewing gum: -10 points

No music/notebook: -10 points

No reed or mouthpiece: -10 points

Tik Tok dancing in the room: -5 points

Cell phone: -20 points and surrender the device to the teacher and/or Administration

30% (Summative Assessments- Concerts)- Band is a performance-based class. Each student is required to be at rehearsals and performances. A tentative calendar of events will be posted on Google Classroom. Each student is expected to attend, be on time, and be prepared for all performances/rehearsals. Each student will receive a test grade for every concert that he/she is required to perform. If a student misses a concert with a *written* excuse, they will be given an alternate written assignment of the director's choice in place of the concert. **If the grade is not made up within one week, the student will receive a zero for that performance grade.** A valid excuse for missing a performance includes events that are unforeseen, such as a death in the family, illness, etc. Other events will be excused or unexcused at the director's discretion. **It is the student's responsibility to see the director about making up for a missed performance.**

40% (Individual Performance Assessments / Written Tests)-Playing tests/pass-offs. In order to ensure the success of your child's future musicianship, we use pass-offs as a method of measuring student progress on an individual basis. These are a great way for the student to receive feedback that will help improve his/her musicianship. Students are required to play their pass-offs in front of the class unless otherwise specified. Examples of pass-offs include scales, musical excerpts, etc. Students will also be tested over musical theory concepts that reinforce their overall music education. Note: playing tests are usually scheduled on Wednesdays

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

1. Come in quickly and quietly
2. Grab your instrument case and music from the storage room.
3. Assemble your instrument quietly at your chair. Keep the cases out of the way of the area around you. Larger instruments should store their cases along the band room walls.
4. Warm up quietly.
5. When the director stands on the podium, all talking and playing ceases. Your attention is now onto the director.
6. After rehearsal, wait until you are dismissed from your chair. When you are dismissed, fix your chair and stand to be ready for the next class. Disassemble your instrument and return it to the instrument storage room.
7. Wait until you are dismissed from the band room before leaving.
8. You may not come to the band room before or after school unless you are bringing/taking an instrument to the storage room, or have received permission from the director in advance. You may not bring your non-band friends to the band room ever! There is a lot of expensive equipment and it is our job to protect it.
9. Girls restroom: Do your business and leave. It is not a place to congregate.
10. Attendance is checked at the beginning of the class. If you are not in your chair, you are tardy.

OUR BANDS

6th Grade Band- In 6th grade, students are taught the fundamentals of playing their instruments. Proper hand position, breathing, note reading, and instrumental maintenance are some of the major concepts covered. The 6th grade band will perform at the Christmas and Spring Concerts. Additional performances may be added with advanced notice.

7th Grade Band- The 7th Grade Band works on advancing knowledge of their instrument as well as music in general. Great attention will be given to reinforcing good playing habits and quality sound. The 7th grade will perform at the Christmas and Spring Concerts. Additional performances may be added with advanced notice.

8th Grade Band- By the time a student reaches 8th grade, they have already had two years of instruction on their instrument, and they are ready to perform music at a more advanced level. The 8th grade band is the top-performing group at MPMS. The 8th grade will perform at the Christmas and Spring Concerts, as well as Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE) in the spring. Additional performances may be added with advanced notice.

**** Please be aware that there may be additional after school rehearsals scheduled throughout the year to prepare for performances. These dates will be given at least two weeks in advance. ****

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- **Sound Innovations Book 1, Blue (all grades)**
- **3-ring binder/notebook for music and handouts with page protectors, minimum 1 inch**
- **Pencil(s) Mechanical pencils are the best**
- **Percussion only- stick bag with required mallets and drum sticks (the director will be sending home a list of required materials and where to purchase them)**

UNIFORMS

The band performs as one, therefore it is important that our appearance is uniform. T-shirts for Eighth Grade Band Night will be available for purchase through your child's school. A letter will be sent home with information after the start of the year for purchasing T-shirts. The following is the required concert attire for the MPMS Band:

- **Black Dress or Black Skirt**
- **Black Pants and Black Shirt**
- **Black Shoes- tennis shoes/skateboard shoes/Van's/and others similar are not concert appropriate**
- **Black Socks**

INSTRUMENT AND ACCESSORIES

It is the goal of the band program to help all students achieve success in music. The instruments chosen are chosen on the basis of reliability and are instruments that are designed to make it easier for the student to learn. There are many different brands of instruments. The ones recommended are not the only instruments that will work...however, these instruments tend to be more reliable. Remember, an instrument is like a finely tuned machine. It does not take much to cause it not to operate properly. Be weary of instruments found on Amazon or pawn shops.

MPMS Band will provide certain instruments such as background brass/low woodwinds. These instruments are checked out from the school through a written contract. These instruments are offered at no cost to the student, but students and parents are responsible for the care and maintenance of the instrument while it is in their possession. Please understand that you may be responsible for repair of a school-owned instrument, especially if the damage goes beyond normal wear and tear. Instruments below that are available at the school are marked with an *.

Instruments will not be distributed until a school instrument check out form is returned to the band director! Please note that an individual may purchase or rent these instruments instead of having them school furnished.

Note: The following brands are not acceptable: Allure, First Act, Mendini, Allure, Cellico. There are no replacement parts, instrument repair technicians will not work on them, and these instruments do not play/can not be played in tune. Beginning in 2021, O'Malley music will not be a vendor for the Wayne County Bands. All existing accounts will continue to be honored.

Recommended brands and required materials for each instrument:

Instrument	Recommended Brands	Required Materials	Other Information
Flute	Gemeinhart Yamaha Armstrong	Swab Cleaning rod Polishing cloth	Open hole flutes are preferred especially in older kids
Oboe	Fox Selmer Yamaha	Reeds Silk swab Cork grease	Handmade reeds are preferred and are better quality
*Bassoon	Fox	Reeds Bocal brush/swab Cork grease	Handmade reeds are preferred and are better quality
Clarinet	Buffet Selmer Leblanc Yamaha	Reeds: 2.5 6th/7th Reeds: 3 8th Swab Cork grease Ligature	Vandoren, Juno, or Rico Reserve are preferred brands for clarinet reeds
Saxophone	Selmer Yamaha	Reeds: 2.5 6th/7th Reeds: 3 8th Swab Cork grease Ligature	Vandoren, Juno, or Rico Royal are preferred brands for saxophone reeds
Trumpet	Holton Selmer/Bach Yamaha	Bach 3C/5C mouthpiece Slide grease Valve oil Mouthpiece brush	
*French Horn	Yamaha Holton Bach Conn	Schilke 30 or Bach 7S mouthpiece Rotary valve oil Slide grease	Double horns are preferred over single horns
Trombone	Bach Conn Yamaha	6.5 AL mouthpiece Slide cream Spray water bottle Slide grease Cleaning brushes	
*Euphonium	Yamaha Bach	6.5 AL mouthpiece Valve oil Tuning slide grease Cleaning brushes	
*Tuba	Bach Yamaha	Bach 7, 18, or 24 AW mouthpiece OR Helleberg mouthpiece Valve oil Tuning slide grease	
Percussion	Innovative Percussion	Percussion Educational Pack	

Reeds should always be in working condition and should never be left on the mouthpiece after playing! This can cause warping of the reed as well as mold. Always return the reed to its case after playing. Reeds can be purchased in the Media Center, All Season's Audio, or websites such as Amazon, Woodwind Brasswind, etc. Please reach out to the band director if you need help choosing reeds. Woodwind players are responsible for having three working reeds at all times.

Other Performance Opportunities

There are many ways for the individual to succeed on his/her own. None of these activities are required, and the work will be done outside of regular band class. We encourage every motivated student to try for some of the following groups. The rewards are well worth the hard work! Consistent practice at home will lead to great things.

District VIII Honor Band (7th and 8th Grade only)

The top players in our region are named to the District Honor Band. The audition consists of a short musical selection, scales, and sight-reading. Players meeting certain criteria are eligible to audition for the All-State Band. Making the District Band does not guarantee a spot or an audition with the All-State Band. Students interested in auditioning should inform their band director and pay the registration fee. Please refer to the calendar for audition and participation dates.

Students interested in auditioning for honor bands must consult with the director! Diligent practicing will be required in order to prepare for the audition process.

Parent Involvement

Parents play a crucial role in our program. Without your help and support, we cannot accomplish all of our goals. Parents are needed as volunteers in many areas in the program. Chaperones, fundraiser helpers, etc. are needed throughout the year.

You can help your student and the band program by

1. Showing an interest in your child's study.
2. Help keep the instrument in good repair with periodic servicing and see that your child has reeds, oil, and other supplies necessary to keep the instrument in good working order.
3. Ask your child to play for you occasionally and encourage them to practice.
4. Keep a schedule of band activities in a prominent place to help avoid conflicts with other activities and appointments.
5. Volunteer time to the middle school band program. Parental involvement is greatly appreciated.

If you are interested in helping out, please do not hesitate to contact your child's director. As chaperones and volunteers are needed, an email or letter will be sent home.

MPMS BAND HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

We have read the 2021-2022 Band Handbook and understand the policies and procedures of the Martha Puckett Middle School Band.

We also understand that any questions or concerns can be directed to Mr. Harper via email at chris.harper@wayne.k12.ga.us or contacting him KiNVO.

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent Email(s) (please print clearly!) _____

Parent Phone(s) _____

Student Name _____

Student Signature _____

Grade _____