

Wayside Middle School Band Handbook

Wayside Middle School Band Policies & Guidelines

Thank you for choosing to make the Wildcat Band an important part of your education. We hope you will enjoy being a member of one of the most successful organizations at Wayside Middle School. You will learn a lot about music and may pick up some important information on life!

This handbook will inform you about the goals, rules, policies and student/parent responsibilities, which will result in a successful band program. For the band to function smoothly, it is necessary to have fair but firm regulation. These regulations act as a means of clarification for students, parents, and staff.

The Wayside 'Wildcat' Band Program has a proud history of success, including numerous first divisions ratings in UIL Concert and Sightreading competitions, sweepstakes & festival awards, outstanding concerts, and a reputation for producing outstanding musicians. In 1998, the Wildcat Band was a finalist in the State Honor Band Competition. Many of our students earn chairs in the District and Region bands as well as superior ratings at our annual Solo and Ensemble Contest. We are especially proud of the numerous students who continue their music education as members of the Boswell Band of Gold.

Successful participation in the Wayside Middle School Band requires:

1. Evidence of regular home practice (I.e. taking instrument home, consistent musical growth, performing well on playing tests)
2. Regular attendance and appropriate behavior.
3. Consistent and careful maintenance of personal instruments and/or school-owned property.
4. Attendance at extra rehearsals and performances.
 - a. Honor Band will be required a weekly sectional attendance (graded).
 - b. Symphonic Band will be required a weekly sectional attendance (starting UIL season - graded).
 - c. Concert Band will be required several after school rehearsals in preparation for our end of the year contest.
 - d. Beginner Band will be required 3-4 before or after school rehearsals in preparation for our end of year contest.

Keep Up with the Wildcat Band!

Check us out at:

1. <http://www.emsisd.com/schools/wayside-middle-school/fine-arts/band/>
2. Twitter: @WaysideBands
3. Remind: You are all pre-loaded into our Band Remind!

Terms to Know:

Beginner Band (BB) - any student who is a first-year player or who cannot read music, regardless of grade. Beginner musicians are grouped in like-instrument classes. No prior musical experience or knowledge is required to be in BB. We will learn to play our instruments and work on developing personal responsibility, musical skills, and teamwork!

Advanced Band- all seventh and eighth students that are members of Honor Band, Symphonic Band, or Concert Band are members of the Advanced Band. All Advanced Band students have prior musical experience. Students are expected to maintain passing grades in all classes, display excellent behavior at all times, and are required to participate in all yearly performance opportunities.

Concert Band (CB) – In addition to the requirements listed of Advanced Band students, CB members are required to perform at both the Holiday and Spring Concerts in addition to the Spring Band Contest (each for a major participation and preparation grade).

Symphonic Band (SB) – In addition to the requirements listed of Advanced Band students, SB members are required to perform in the Holiday and Spring Concerts, attend weekly UIL sectionals, the Pre-UIL contest, and the UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest (major participation/preparation grade). SB students are not required to participate in the All-City and All-Region Band auditions or the Solo and Ensemble Competition but may choose to do so. Students in this band are encouraged to take private lessons. Admission to this band is at the discretion of the head band director.

Honor Band (HB)- In addition to the requirements listed of Advanced Band students, HB members are required to perform in the Holiday and Spring Concerts and participate in both the All-City/All-Region Band Auditions and the Solo and Ensemble Competition. These students are

also expected to attend weekly UIL sectionals, the Pre-UIL contest, and the UIL Concert and Sightreading Contest (major participation/preparation grade). HB students often take private lessons, perform at a very high level, and see music as a very important part of their school experience.

Music Citizenship - our students receive a Music Citizenship grade every six weeks. Music Citizenship includes doing your best, helping other students, assisting the directors with setting up our classroom and keeping our area clean. Good deeds and good behavior can earn Music Citizenship credit. There are a many ways to earn a Satisfactory for this very important grade. Directors are always watching to see who has Wayside Middle School Band Music Leadership qualities.

In Good Standing - This means you are responsible for:

- Having your instrument and supplies every day
- Doing your best
- Following all school and BAND rules
- Passing ALL classes
- Having excellent citizenship marks in all classes
- Having all fees and fines paid –

Students who are NOT in Good Standing may not attend parties, events, contests or other fun activities with the band. Directors will work very hard with anyone who is not in good standing so that they may enjoy all the benefits of being a member of the Wayside Middle School Band.

Non Band Person (NBP)- This is someone in the band hall who is not in band. NBP's are not allowed in the band hall without the permission of a band director. The band hall is just for band members.

Rules and Procedures

A. *INSTRUMENT DROP OFF / STORAGE*

1. The band hall will open at 7:45 am each day. All Wildcat Band students may enter the band hall to put instruments in their band locker prior to going to their first period class.
2. Students who practice sports in the morning should take their instrument to the coach's office until the end of first period, then bring it quickly to the band hall. Those who practice after school should take their instrument to the coach's office before practice begins.
3. During school hours, students should store instrument in the correct storage slot with the case securely closed. ***PLEASE NOTE***: Students are NOT permitted to take their instrument to other classrooms. (Directors are not responsible for instruments left anywhere outside of the band hall)

B. *ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, AND ELIGIBILITY*

1. Students are **required** to be at all sectional rehearsals, extra rehearsals, and concerts that are required of their class.
2. ***Students who are in athletics: You **MUST** communicate with the band directors AND coaches. You are to split before or after school rehearsal times (talk to Dr. Shaffer or Miss Gaskins a few days before this occurs). This means you go to practice for 25 min. and Band rehearsal/sectionals for the other 25 min. You may come in your athletic clothing. If you have a band concert and an athletic practice, you attend the **BAND CONCERT!** If you have a game, you attend the game.
3. Any student who is going to be absent from an outside school rehearsal or performance is expected to notify Dr. Shaffer **BEFORE** the absence by email (preferred method) - bshaffer@ems-isd.net or by dialing 232-0541 (Wayside phone).
4. If band students will be absent from an academic class because of a band activity, please inform the teacher in advance to obtain assignments before the absence occurs. Students are expected to make up any missed work within the guidelines set forth in the student handbook.
5. Students who have an early dismissal for any reason, should come to the band hall to pick up instruments and music before

leaving.

6. Students must pass all courses and band with at least a 70% to be eligible for off-campus band activities (not including UIL). It is very important to remain eligible in all courses.
7. COVID-19 ADDENDUM: Due to Covid-19, students are **NOT** permitted to enter the band hall doors prior to and during school hours. They are, however, encouraged to leave through the band hall doors (#15) after school to pick up their instruments before leaving campus via bus or parent pick-up.

C. *AFTER SCHOOL*

1. Students should pick up instruments by 3:45 PM, before going home. We randomly check for forgotten instruments and issue a "Locker Check Grade." Take your instrument home every day unless you have been instructed to leave it in the band hall.
PRACTICE EVERY DAY YOU EAT OR THAT ENDS IN 'Y.'
2. Use of the band hall telephone is limited to after band trips or other circumstances approved by the director. On normal school days you should plan to get home after school **IN ADVANCE**, without having to make a call home.
3. Do not rearrange chairs or stands in any part of the band hall without director permission.
4. At the end of the day, students who are not attending sectional rehearsals or who do not have permission to stay for after school practice should leave the band hall by 3:45 PM.
5. Whenever a student stays after school for a band event, parents should pick their student(s) up at the band hall (Door #15). Please do not pick student up at the front of the school. This is for student safety. If a student leaves our area, we cannot be assured they have safely left campus.
6. Students are encouraged **TO LEAVE THE BAND HALL DOORS (#15) AFTER SCHOOL** to pick up their instruments and get on their bus or walk to the front of the school for parent pick up.

D. *BAND HALL POLICIES*

1. Each student will be assigned an instrument storage locker in the

- band hall. The storage locker should be used for band equipment only. School books, athletic clothing, and food should not be kept in storage lockers.
2. Food, gum, and soft drinks are NOT allowed in the band hall.
 3. Each person is expected to treat the band hall with great care. Each person is responsible for keeping his/her area clean as well as for the general upkeep of the band hall. We will have band hall cleanup days several times this year. All students will be expected to actively participate during cleanup.
 4. Running, throwing objects (balls, books, paper, etc.), and horseplay are not appropriate in the Fine Arts building.
 5. Acts of vandalism, tampering with the equipment of other students or staff, swearing, cheating or stealing will not be tolerated. Students who engage in this type of activity will not remain in the band program!

E. *BAND TRIPS*

1. Students are allowed to go on band trips if they are In Good Standing with the program. The final decision on who attends trips is at the discretion of the band directors.
2. All students are required to ride on a band bus to band functions. Students may ride home with parents after band functions only when written permission is given to the director in advance AND if parents are waiting at the bus before departure.
3. Bus trips may have assigned seating.
4. No smoking, under-age drinking, theft, or other illegal actions are allowed. Directors should be made aware of any prescription drugs that a student may need to take while on a trip. Wildcat Band members should remember that they represent the very best that Wayside Middle School has to offer. All members are expected to behave with dignity and respect for others. Nothing else will be tolerated.

F. *CONFLICT vs. DEDICATION*

1. Conflicts with other school functions should be avoided when possible. We encourage students to take part in all school sponsored activities including sports, cheer leading, choir,

- academic meets/clubs, field trips, etc. We also expect band members to demonstrate a measure of dedication and loyalty to the band program.
2. **Do not miss sectional rehearsals, dress rehearsals or performances** without speaking to a director FIRST! We try to compromise on most activities when appropriate (NOT including major band performances). **Notes from home are seldom accepted after an activity has taken place.** To be safe, notify us beforehand.
 - a. Students who miss scheduled band activities will receive reduced grades, demotion, loss of privileges or be removed from the program.
 3. Schedule doctor, dentist, and etc. appointments around band activities. If unavoidable conflicts are brought to the director's attention in advance, excuses may be granted. However, during the time directly preceding a public performance (see required performances) i.e. -UIL/Band contests, holiday concert, spring concert, etc.; absences may result in the student's chair placement being lowered and/or lower grade or demotion/removal from the band. Students who miss section rehearsals will be required to make them up to remain in good standing in the band program.

G. GRADING

Standards for grading students in band classes at Wayside Middle School are different than some other school subjects. This is because band is known as a "co-curricular" subject, that is, both "extracurricular" and "curricular."

1. **Performance Tests (Live and/or Video Recordings)/Chair Tests**
 - a. Students will be evaluated by a rubric for a grade on individual performance tests. Playing tests may be held before/after school or in class. All students are expected to perform these tests to the best of their ability. Students will have adequate preparation time on tested music that requires advanced student practice.
2. **Daily Preparation/Participation Grade**
 - a. Students are expected to have music, pencils, name tags, appropriate cleaning supplies, reeds and/or oil every

day. Periodic checks will be made, and a grade given for these items.

3. Evidence of Outside Practice

- a. The 'Wildcat Band' can only perform as well as the individual members prepare their music through regular home practice. Students should be prepared to play alone or in class for their chair positions, or grade, every day. Daily practice includes a careful warm-up, scale & etude drills, current band music/memorization and chair test materials. Parents should encourage their student to practice.

4. Practice Records

- a. All members of Beginner Band will turn in a weekly practice record. Records are due on Monday at the beginning of class. These will be on a 6-week compilation of practice records, though weekly grades will be recorded. This is an official record of the student's work outside of class and a parent signature is required to receive credit.
- b. Section rehearsal, after school concerts, clinics, etc. do not count towards practice record totals.
- c. Students who take private lessons may count lesson time towards their total.
- d. In order to receive top grade students must practice at least 120 minutes per week to receive a 100% (see practice record grade break down). In addition to a weekly grade, chair position, and band assignments will be made based on the practice record.

5. Section Rehearsal Attendance

- a. Advanced Band members will be scheduled for one rehearsal each week in a like-instrument groups. Section rehearsals will normally occur before or after school. These rehearsals are very important and must be attended as part of the course of study for honor band members. As contest time nears Symphonic Band (SB) students will be assigned required sectional rehearsals.
- b. While not a requirement, members of Concert Band (CB) may attend Symphonic Band section rehearsals if they

wish.

6. Public Performance Participation

- a. Public performances are announced several weeks before each event. Band students are expected to prepare for each event and participate.

H. *PUBLIC PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE*

1. All band students are required to attend public performances. Failure to participate in a required performance without an excused absence will result in the student failing the six weeks period and/or being demoted from the performing band and/or removed from the program.

I. *CONCERT PERFORMANCE DRESS*

1. Advanced Band Concert Uniform (all genders):
 - a. Wayside Band polo shirt
 - b. Black pants (no leggings or track pants)
 - c. Black socks (no logos or patterns)
 - d. Black dress shoes
2. Beginner Band Concert Uniform:
 - a. Wayside Band t-shirt
 - b. Blue jeans (no holes)
 - c. Closed-toe shoes
 - d. Optional: fun socks!

Please note that flip-flops are not acceptable shoes for concerts.

J. *CLASS CONDUCT RULES*

When students are involved in band activities, regardless of location, all school and music department policies concerning student conduct will be in effect. During these activities, the director establishes additional or more stringent rules governing the behavior of band members. Failure to follow instructions, to demonstrate respect, and common courtesy towards others will result in appropriate disciplinary actions.

Remember these rules of conduct:

1. Students may not interfere with the teaching or the learning of the class. Students are expected to follow directions from the directors from day one!
2. Students are reminded to keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
3. No food, gum, candy, or drinks in the band room (exceptions: special occasions approved by the director).
4. Students are expected to remain quiet upon entering the band hall.

Consequences for inappropriate behavior:

Detention assignments will be given for serious or frequent failure to abide by class conduct rules. Parents will be notified if problems cannot be easily or quickly resolved between the student and director.

Detention assignments may include:

- Writing assignments
- After school cleanup detail
- Band hall detention
- Lunch room detention
- Loss of privileges (i.e.: trips to concerts, band festivals, band parties, or other special events.)
- Chair demotion or band demotion
- Required attendance in SAC.

Students will usually be given a choice of detention assignments for minor infractions. Stealing, lying, swearing, or fighting will be considered serious behavior problems and will not be tolerated! These will be turned over to administration for further discipline. Severe or recurrent problems will result in removal from the program.

K. *EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES*

1. Students are expected to furnish their own instruments (except for oboe, bassoon, bass clarinet, tenor sax, baritone sax, French

- horn, euphonium, and tuba). Regardless of where your student's instrument comes from, students are expected to treat all instruments with great care.
2. Students who play EMS-ISD instruments are expected to provide a mouthpiece (brass) or reeds (woodwinds). Students using school equipment are responsible for a one-time maintenance fee of \$100.00 (set by district).
 - a. Excessive wear or damage to an EMSISD owned instrument will become the responsibility of the parent/student.
 - b. School owned instruments must be returned to the director upon request.
 - c. In case of fire or theft, parents are responsible for the replacement of school owned instruments.
 3. Students should have a music stand, a metronome, and a tuner for proper home practice. Inexpensive wire music stands and small metronomes may be purchased at local music stores or at school while supplies last. There are great FREE metronome and tuner apps for all devices!!!
 4. Students will be issued sheet music throughout the year. The music we issue is very expensive. Music that is lost or mutilated will be the responsibility of the student to replace. This is included in your band fee. Additionally, chair placement, band placement and/or grades will be lowered for students who habitually come to class without music or other supplies. Replacement binders are \$15.00.
 5. Students must bring and use a pencil at every rehearsal (bag and pencils included in band fee). Pencils **MUST** be on the music stand for ready access, not in the case or student's book bag. This is an important part of being prepared for class and will be a part of the student's grade.
 6. Students should bring all music and their instrument to rehearsal every day. Failure to do so will affect student grades, as well as band standing.
 7. Students must have their name clearly marked on their instrument case. We recommend that you use a luggage tag. Students have the choice of using a tag of their own choosing or we will use

- duct tape to ensure that everyone's instrument can be identified.
8. All clarinet and saxophone players must have 4 playable reeds at all times, plus cork grease and swabs, (or pad savers). All oboe and bassoon students must have 3 playable reeds at all times. Flute students will need to have a soft polish cloth and a swab.
 9. All brass students are expected to have valve oil, (cornets, baritones, tubas), rotary valve oil (french horn, some tubas), slide cream (trombone), water bottle (trombone), tuning slide grease, a soft polish cloth, an old rag for cleaning valves and slides, a flexible cleaning brush (snake), and a mouthpiece cleaning brush. Instruments and the items for proper maintenance of them will be periodically checked and a grade given.
 10. All percussion students should own a practice pad, snare stand, and rent a practice marimba. Percussionist's should also own snare sticks, soft and hard keyboard mallets, timpani sticks, a stick bag and metronome. All equipment must be clearly marked with the student's name. Percussion students are expected to take their equipment home every day, just like all other members of the band!
 11. ALL students must own a metronome (or have downloaded a free metronome app).
 12. ALL brass and woodwind students must own a tuner (or have downloaded a free tuner app).

L. *HOME PRACTICE*

1. Parents should encourage their students to practice daily. Parental support is ***THE*** most important factor in how well students perform.
2. Practice in a place that is well lit and free from noise or distractions. Use a music stand, metronome, and tuner to get the most out of practice.
3. Try to practice at approximately the same time each day. Daily practice is more effective than 'once a week marathons.'
4. In addition to being a great mental challenge, performing on a musical instrument requires physical strength and stamina. Physical activity is an excellent way to develop the

skills all musicians use every time they perform.

M. *MOVING UP OR DOWN*

1. Students who are new to the Wildcat Band will have an opportunity to move up to the Honor Band at the beginning of the next semester. Students who wish to try out for the Honor Band should request tryout materials four weeks before the end of the semester.
 - a. Some factors in band placement include musicianship, scholarship, adaptability, behavior, prior ensemble experience, the instrumentation needs of the organization.
 - b. Band placement is at the discretion of the band directors.
2. Students who previously were enrolled in a Wildcat band will have the opportunity to move up or down after the fall semester. This will be done at the discretion of the director. Consideration will be given on the basis of merit (on the student's part) and need. It is vital to our program that we maintain proper instrumentation to ensure the success of all our bands at Wayside. Students may be demoted to a lower band or removed from the program for the following reasons:
 - a. Failing band class for one or more grading periods (six weeks).
 - b. Receiving an F in conduct
 - c. Poor practice habits or a lack of evidence of progress.
 - d. Missing concerts or required rehearsals without a valid reason.
 - e. Stealing, lying, cheating, cursing, fighting, acts of vandalism, or other major disciplinary infractions.

N. *BAND BINDER*

1. Each band student is required to keep all music in their band binder (part of your band supply fees). All students are required to supply their own sharpened number two pencil for use during band class (part of band fee). Students should also purchase additional clear sheet protectors for their music (initial sheets part of band fee). Students must maintain their pencil bag that was be

- placed inside their binder (part of band fee).
2. Students are expected to keep up with their binders. Music is very expensive and we have found that by using a binder, our students do not misplace their music as often. We will have **graded** binder/pencil bag/pencil checks throughout the year.

A Note to Parents

Parent involvement and interest in their student's musical growth can be the single most important factor in their total musical education. When parents are actively involved in their student's musical endeavors, the chances for success are exponentially greater than for the student whose parents show little or no interest at all. Students are learning more in the band hall than how to play an instrument or beat a drum. They are developing skills like discipline, teamwork, responsibility, self-confidence, social skills, time management, and critical thinking that are applicable both inside and outside the band hall. It is our goal to help each student grow and we know if we work with you as a team we can be successful.

Many times, parents say things like, "The only thing I ever learned to play was a radio," or "I couldn't carry a tune in a bucket!" For those of you who feel you fit into this category, here's some good news. It doesn't matter! *Musical skill is not "inherited."*

What is important is that through your actions, you can show your child that you care about their musical development. You can show your support by attending concerts, contests, civic, community or professional performances with your child. Purchasing good quality recordings can inspire young musicians a great deal. Ask your child how things are going in band class and have them play for you. You do not need any prior musical experience in order to effectively support their child's development. As much as possible, provide the equipment and accessories that are needed. You are investing in your child's overall education and learning. Give them a productive place in which to practice. Praise your child when they practice regularly and offer

positive reinforcement when they don't. Avoid negative comments.

Remember that it will take time for young students to master the many challenging aspects of performing on an instrument (we all make mistakes-it's how we learn). By offering your approval and encouragement, you will help your student progress at a faster pace. Parents are the most important figures in a child's musical growth. Thank you in advance for supporting your child through our band program. If we work together, we can make your child's musical experience at Wayside a GREAT success!

Statement on Band Fees:

Fees are collected from every member of the band to help defray the costs of operating the program. The money collected is used to purchase necessary supplies, equipment, music, etc. for our students. Money is also used for certain entry fees and transportation costs not covered by the school district. Fees allow us access to additional teaching staff and offer students a wide variety of musical and social experiences. We will also be doing one fundraiser with SnapRaise! ALL members are encouraged to participate!!! Fees are collected at the beginning of the school year. Student band fees are \$25.00 per student. Fees may be paid in full or in installments.

Band fees are due on Friday, September 18, 2020 during your student's band class period. Please contact Dr. Shaffer if you have a concern. >bshaffer@ems-isd.net<

Statement on Instrument Usage Fees:

Please note that this statement only applies to students using school-owned instruments.

Due to the extremely high costs of some of our larger or specialty band

instruments, the Wayside Band provides these instruments for our students. Examples of these instruments include:

- Oboe (\$2500-\$5000+)
- Bassoon (\$6000+)
- Bass Clarinet (\$1800-\$6000)
- Tenor Saxophone (\$2200+)
- Baritone Saxophone (\$4500+)
- French Horn (\$2500-\$5000+)
- Euphonium (\$4500+)
- Tuba (\$2500-\$6000+)
- Concert Grand Marimba (\$25,000)

School issued instruments are in limited supply and are issued based on student aptitude, natural ability, and availability. There is a school-owned instrument fee of \$100 per school year. This fee is collected to offset the cost of repairing and servicing these instruments. Please note that this fee is separate from the band fee. Your student will receive an Instrument Usage Contract when their instrument comes home. Please return this form promptly.

Instrument Usage fees are due in Full (\$100.00) on Monday, October 5, 2020. If you have any concerns or would like to set up a payment plan, please speak to Miss Gaskins.

>tgaskins@ems-isd.net<