

The Ed Willkie Middle School Band

Introduction

Welcome to the Ed Willkie Middle School Band! Learning to play an instrument can be a rewarding and enriching experience. The purpose of this handbook is to provide a written policy on the organization and operation of our band program. Band is a group activity that depends upon the collaborative work of many individuals. The actions of one person will have an effect, either positive or negative, on the entire group. For this reason, we have guidelines that everyone must follow so that each student may grow as an individual musician and also make a positive contribution to the entire group. It is the goal of the EWMS Band Staff to provide every student the opportunity for musical growth through the learning and creating of music. **We also expect our students to achieve superiority, not only in band, but also in academics and daily life.**

THE BANDS

HONORS BAND

The Honors Band is the top-performing ensemble at Ed Willkie Middle School consisting of students in the 7th and 8th grades. Students obtain membership in this band through a placement audition with the band directors. The Honors Band gives over five performances each year, including Pep Rallies, Winter and Spring Concerts, UIL Contest, and a Spring Trip. Members of the Honors Band are expected to audition for the All-Region/All-District Band and participate in Solo/Ensemble Contest. There are also before and after school rehearsals in the Fall and Spring to prepare for competitions. Students in the Honors Band are held to achieving high standards in the classroom and performance venues.

SYMPHONIC BAND

The Symphonic Band consists of students in the 7th and 8th grades who have obtained membership in this band through a placement audition with the band directors. The Symphonic Band gives four performances each year including Pep Rallies, Winter, and Spring Concerts, UIL Contest and a Spring Trip. Members of the Symphonic Band are expected to participate in Solo/Ensemble Contest and sectionals for UIL in the Spring.

CONCERT BAND

The Concert Band consists of students in the 7th and 8th grade who have obtained membership in this band through a placement audition with the band directors. The Concert Band gives three or four performances each year including Pep Rallies, Winter and Spring Concerts and a Spring Reward Trip. Members of Concert Band are expected to participate in Solo/Ensemble Concert.

BEGINNING BAND

The Beginning Band is made up of students in the Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Double Reed, Cornet, French horn, Trombone, Euphonium/Tuba, and Percussion classes and consists of students primarily in the 6th grade. Students obtain membership in this band after a placement audition and interview with the band directors. The Beginning Band gives three performances throughout the year including Fall and Spring Concerts and the Spring Band Competition. Members of the Beginning Band are expected to participate in the Solo and Ensemble Contest.

Ed Willkie Middle School Band

Master Schedule:

- Period 1: Trumpet – Mrs. Shaffer (Band Hall)
Saxophone – Mrs. Boyd (Ensemble Room)
- Period 2: Concert Band – Mrs. Shaffer (Band Hall/Ensemble Room)
- Period 3: Symphonic Band – Mrs. Boyd (Band Hall/Ensemble Room)
- Period 4: Clarinet – Mrs. Boyd (Band Hall)
French Horns – Mrs. Shaffer (ensemble room)
- Period 5: Trombone/Baritone/Tuba – Mrs. Shaffer (Band Hall)
- Period 6: Oboe/Bassoon – Mrs. Boyd (Ensemble Room)
- Period 7: Honors Band – Mrs. Shaffer (Band Hall/Ensemble Room)
- Period 8: Flute – Mrs. Boyd (Ensemble Room)
Percussion – Mr. Miller (Band Hall)

HOW TO CONTACT THE DIRECTORS

By MAIL

Ed Willkie Middle School Band
6129 Texas Shiner Road
Fort Worth, Texas 76179

By EMAIL

Mrs. Shaffer email: cshaffer@ems-isd.net
Mrs. Boyd email: kboyd@ems-isd.net
Mr. Miller email: rmiller@ems-isd.net

By PHONE

EWMS Band Hall
817.237.9631 Ext. 5570

By STUDENT

You are always welcome to send a note with your child.
Please include a phone number or email address where you can be reached.

We want to hear from you. Please let us know when we can assist you and your child.

EMAIL IS THE BEST WAY TO REACH A BAND DIRECTOR

BAND MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

The EWMS Band Staff believes that hard work, dedication, and discipline lead to superior performance and pride. In turn, we have one general guideline under which the program operates:

If you need to be shown on a piece of paper how to act and what is expected of your behavior while in this class – BAND may not be the place for you!

However, we do have some general expectations for band students:

1. Enter the band hall silently and read the screen for instructions.
2. Be in your seat in ready position with all necessary supplies *when the band hall timer hits zero.*
3. Listen and Follow Directions.
4. Return your materials to their appropriate place and leave the band hall in an orderly fashion when dismissed by the director.
5. Absolutely no gum, food, candy, or drinks allowed in the band hall.
6. Any class books, library books, clothing, etc. that is left will be placed in the school lost and found. *The Band Hall is not your school locker.*
7. No one shall play, hold, or otherwise operate or handle another person's instrument. This includes all electronic and percussion equipment around the Band Hall. **If it is not yours, do not touch it!! In addition, you are to NEVER use a musical instrument on a bus or outside unless under DIRECT SUPERVISION of a BAND DIRECTOR.**
8. Absolutely no running or horseplay in the band hall. Do not handle any equipment without a director's permission.
9. Only band students are allowed in the band hall.
10. No Cell Phones visible or audible in after school or before school sectionals/rehearsals. Cell Phone Policy during the school day will follow EMSISD standards set in the student handbook. We do allow students to use cell phones for use of tuners.

Consequences for Negative Behavior

1st Offense – Verbal warning. Students will be offered the chance to correct their behavior.
Students will not earn all possible points for class participation.

2nd Offense – Verbal warning / Parent Contact by telephone or email

3rd Offense – Parent Contact/Classroom Isolation. The director will call or conference with the student's parents in order to correct the behavior. A band or school detention may be given at this time. Students will not be credited full class participation points.

4th Offense – Parent Contact/Possible Office Referral - This is a **LAST RESORT** which may result in loss of band trips and/or demotion in band class.

Performance Expectations

Band is a performance-based class and, therefore, all performances and rehearsals are **mandatory** and **graded**. The student's only opportunity to showcase their knowledge, skills, and talent gained through band is through the performance and concert setting. Occasionally, extra rehearsals and performance opportunities are required in order to enhance a student's knowledge and skills. Please mark the dates listed in the band calendar on your family calendar. This will ensure that you will not schedule conflicts with a **required event**. Students and parents must follow proper procedures in order to be excused from any sectional, rehearsal, or performance.

Sectionals

Students in the Honors Band will be required to attend weekly sectionals in the Fall/Spring semesters to prepare for All Region/U.I.L. Students in the Symphonic Band will be required to attend Spring Sectionals in preparation for their UIL and/or festival. Students in the Honor Band and Symphonic Band may be required to attend a sectional if advance notice is given. Students will be graded on their timeliness, attendance, and attitude at all sectionals. **Failure to make extra sectionals and/or rehearsals may affect your placement in band and/or your eligibility to attend band trips/events. This is at the band director's discretion.**

Rehearsals

Band directors will often use the term "rehearsal" in describing our regular class. Rehearsals are also defined as extra sessions outside of the school day that are required and graded. Honor Band and Symphonic Band members have some outside rehearsals. These are usually before a major performance such as U.I.L. Students will not be required to attend any extra rehearsals not currently listed on the band calendar unless they are given one-week advance notice. Students will be graded on their attendance, timeliness, attitude, and work during rehearsals.

Failure to make extra sectionals and/or rehearsals may affect your placement in band and/or your eligibility to attend band trips/events. This is at the band director's discretion.

Pep Rallies

Pep Rallies are required performances for all members of the Honors, Symphonic and Concert Bands. All members of these ensembles, including athletes will perform at every Pep Rally unless excused by a band director. Cheerleaders should cheer and perform with the band when able. We will wear band t-shirts for pep rallies. Students may be denied the opportunity to play with the band for not being dressed appropriately and/or progress report.

Concerts

All concerts are required performances. These performances are marked with an asterisk on the band calendar. Students will not be required to attend any extra performances not listed on the Calendar unless they are given advance notice. Students will be graded on their:

- ✓ Attendance and Timeliness. Students will not be excused from a performance unless they follow proper procedure.
- ✓ Etiquette. Students are expected to behave appropriately during a concert whether they are performing or not. Rules for Concert Etiquette can be found in this handbook. We take behavior at concerts VERY SERIOUSLY.
- ✓ Uniform. It is imperative that students dress appropriately for all concerts. Uniformity is a judged aspect of contests and adds professionalism to every concert. Details on appropriate uniform for all band members can be found in this handbook.

All-Region Band Auditions

Every fall, band students across the state prepare for the All-Region Band Audition. Members of the Honors Band are encouraged to prepare the music for this audition, and Symphonic Band members are encouraged to do the same. Students auditioning for this prestigious honor are expected to fulfill the commitments attached to it, including the Clinic/Concert.

Solo/ Ensemble Contest

Solo and Ensemble affords every member of the EWMS Band the opportunity to individually prepare a piece of music to perform for a judge. Students are given a rating and critique of their performance. Because of the great benefits this Contest gives our students, it is a requirement that all members of the EWMS Band prepare and perform at this contest.

Band Placement Audition

At the end of the year, each returning Middle School Band student will be required to audition for placement the next years' bands. The band staff will assign material to be performed for the audition. Each student will be scored and ranked based on that performance and points earned throughout the year by participating in the following:

- All-Region Band /All-District Band
- Solo/Ensemble
- Points may be deducted for eligibility status and poor discipline record (ie, SAC or alternative school)
- We do take into factor performance and behavior all year long.

End of year auditions will also count as a final exam grade for the year. Students who do not wish to take band the following year will still complete the playing material as a graded final exam.

Procedure To Be Excused From an Extra Rehearsal or a Required Performance

It is very important that every member of an ensemble be present for every rehearsal and performance. The directors realize that from time to time, a student may be unable to attend a rehearsal or performance. Excusable absences include student illness or death in the family. Unforeseeable family emergencies will be excused on a case-by-case basis.

EMAIL is the best way to contact a band director in case of an absence! Band directors do not hear the phone ringing in the band office all the time, so email is the preferred way of communication.

Please remember that since band is a performance class, **ALL PERFORMANCES ARE REQUIRED**. Students missing a performance are subject to a grade reduction, reassignment in the band or instrument section, restriction from band trips, and possible removal from the band program. *Students that are excused from a performance must complete a make-up assignment to earn partial credit for the missed performance.* The director will assign make-up assignments for partial credit to be received.

Students missing school due to illness, death in the family, or other excusable incident must follow the P.E.N. procedure to be excused from band class, rehearsals, and performances.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

Importance

Academic performance is the priority of all EMSISD faculty and administration. Students must achieve high standards in the classroom in order to be successful, as they become adults. Because the band staff shares a belief in high academic standards, we consistently monitor the academic achievement of our students. The band staff also encourages parents to monitor their child's academic performance throughout the year by reviewing progress reports, report cards, and by contacting your child's teachers.

No Pass/No Play

While band is considered a curricular activity by the Texas Education Agency, there are occasions when a band event may be considered Extra-Curricular. Curricular activities are not subject to "No Pass/No Play" rules. They are treated as an extension of the classroom and are part of the curriculum as set forth by the state. Examples of curricular activities include sectionals, all rehearsals, Winter and Spring Concerts.

Extra-Curricular activities are subject to "**No Pass/No Play**" rules. Participation in extra-curricular activities requires that a student pass all subjects in the previous grading period. Examples of extra-curricular activities include U.I.L., Solo Festivals and Spring Trips. **Students should understand that their grades have a direct influence on other students as well as themselves.** *Every individual in the band plays a vital role as a link in our chain, consequently, when a link is missing – the chain breaks.* Any one individual has the ability to prevent an entire band from performing to its full potential. It is the goal of the Band Staff for every band member to maintain academic eligibility.

SOUND ADVICE FOR PASSING GRADES

Each student should develop structure and discipline in their study habits. Here are some common sense ideas to help you maintain good standing in all classes.

1. **DO ALL HOMEWORK AND HAND IT IN ON TIME:** The most frequent reason why students fail a class is the failure to turn in assigned work. This is the easiest thing to fix. Do not miss deadlines.
2. **PAY ATTENTION:** Do everything you can to try to discover just what it is the teacher is attempting to get across to you. Take notes, follow along in the text, ask pertinent questions, and avoid distractions.
3. **REVIEW DAILY:** Make a habit of reviewing notes on a daily basis to solidify material covered in class. If you do not understand material being taught, make arrangements with the teacher to get one-on-one help.
4. **FAILING TO PREPARE IS PREPARING TO FAIL:** Prepare for all tests and projects in a timely manner. In comparison, you wouldn't wait until the night before a major performance or audition to begin practicing. By the same token, you shouldn't wait until the night before a test or project deadline to begin the work.
5. **COURTESY:** Treat all teachers with the same respect that you expect from them. A few simple courtesies will go a long way. Paying attention in class will help your relationship with the teacher. Be careful not to draw negative attention to yourself and follow all classroom rules. Ask for extra help and extra credit work. Make the first move towards this, don't wait.
6. **FOLLOW UP:** If you have a failing grade at the 3 weeks reporting period, make every effort to resolve every grade in question.

Fees, Supplies, Uniforms and Equipment

Please make all checks to: Ed Willkie Middle School.

Please refrain from making checks out to the band directors personally or leaving the checks blank. Students sometimes drop checks on the floor-it helps to write band in the memo portion of your check. That way it can be assured to make it to a band director.

For special needs or payment plans, please contact Mrs. Shaffer: cshaffer@ems-isd.net

Equipment

Students are responsible for acquiring and maintaining their own quality instrument. All students are responsible for the loss, damage or theft of any instrument in their care.

Fees

Every band student is required to have certain items that must be purchased through the band department. **Fees do not include the instrument, mouthpiece, reeds, oil, or other needed instrument supplies.**

Beginner materials include an instrument, supplies (such as reeds, valve oil, slide grease, cleaning swabs, etc.) and the Essential Elements Beginner Band Book. Percussion Books are a different price than other instrument books.

Honors, Symphonic and Concert Band materials include an instrument, supplies and a tuner/cable.

Supplies

Students are responsible for having all necessary accessory supplies everyday in class. These include reeds, valve oil, slide grease and creams, cork grease, sticks, swabs, etc. Most of these items are can be purchased at the local music store. Sometimes items can be purchased through the band hall office. Purchases can be made on a cash/check basis or purchased at a local music store.

Uniforms

The Beginning Band will dress up in dress clothes or "Sunday's Best" for most our performances. Other times we will use our band t-shirt, along with blue jeans and tennis shoes as our uniform. It is the responsibility of all band students to keep their shirt clean and ready for band events.

Honors, Symphonic and Concert Bands will be issued a Tuxedo to use as their uniform for the year. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the uniform clean. Students will need to provide black socks and black dress shoes to wear with their uniform. Uniforms will need to be dry-cleaned before turning them in at the conclusion of each school year.

Refunds

Any payments for band fees are non-refundable. Any trip payments may not be refunded after the final payment due date for that trip. Refunds are also not given due to student eligibility.

Instrument Repair

Students' instruments must be in working condition in order for appropriate band participation. It is the responsibility of the student/parents to take care of any repair issues. Sometimes instrument repairs can be fixed by the band directors. Other times the instruments will need to be taken to the music store to be repaired. We recommend using local music store, Music & Arts, for all instrument repair. You can contact them at: **Music & Arts 1428 West Pipeline Road Hurst, TX 76053**

(817) 595 - 1511

Course Objectives

By the end of the school year, each Ed Willkie Middle School Band member will be able to:

- Demonstrate proper social development through large group interaction.
- Demonstrate personal and social self-discipline.
- Demonstrate the proper assembly and maintenance techniques of their instrument.
- Demonstrate the proper posture for playing an instrument.
- Demonstrate the proper embouchure for playing his or her specific instrument.
- Demonstrate the correct method of breathing to play a wind instrument.
- Demonstrate the use of proper hand position on his or her specific instrument.
- Demonstrate the ability to produce a good characteristic tone on their specific instrument.
- Identify and demonstrate proper use of various articulation markings.
- Demonstrate a working knowledge of rhythms and rhythmic structure.
- Identify and define various musical terminologies.
- Demonstrate an enhancement in discriminatory listening skills.
- Demonstrate the ability to interact responsibly and appropriately within a large group.
- Demonstrate characteristics of good self-discipline as it relates to classroom structure and practice habits.
- Demonstrate the ability to tune his or her specific instrument by use of electronic tuner AND by aural recognition.
- Demonstrate the physical coordination necessary to facilitate technical passages of music.
- Perform a solo.
- Evaluate the quality of a music performance.

Grading Policy

Band is largely a participatory class. If your child does not participate it is hard for us to give them a grade. We do have supply checks and written tests in band. Grades should be seen as a way to gauge your progress and foster growth. We have major and minor grades in band. Minor grades constitute 50% and Major 50%. Examples of Minor/Major grades are:

Minor Grades: Participation, Practice Records, Supply Checks, Graded assignments, etc.

Major Grades: Performances, Sectional attendance, Playing Tests, Written Tests, etc.

A note on practice records: Practice records are very important in band. It is just like homework that a student is to complete in other classes. While the paper is not needed to tell if a student practices it is an important lesson in responsibility. Setting time aside daily to practice is how your student not only becomes a better musician but a disciplined individual.

YOU ARE ENCOURAGED to be logged in on skyward parent connection to be able to get updates on your child's averages not only in band, but other classes as well. The gradebook is updated weekly.

Miscellaneous

Bus Trips and Behavior

Transporting a large band from one place to another is not an easy task. It is imperative that students abide by all school and band rules in order to make each trip a pleasant experience for everyone involved. It is very important to maintain a positive image at all times because you not only represent the band, but also the faculty and student body at Ed Willkie Middle School. As ambassadors for our school, strive to behave like good ladies and gentleman at all times. **You will never get a second chance to make a good first impression.** In general, students will be given guidelines and procedures to follow before any trips are made.

Private Lessons

Private Lessons are opportunities for students to receive extra instruction from a person who has extensive knowledge of their specific instrument. The band staff tries to make these available to any student wishing to gain more knowledge and skills. Students interested in taking private lesson can pick up a Private Lesson Information Packet in the band office. This packet will include information on the cost of lessons, how to obtain a scholarship (if available), and other details.

Instrument Lockers

Band Lockers will be checked periodically for a daily grade. The only item that should be in the band locker is the instrument and their music binder. A combination lock is provided for each band instrument locker. It is the student's responsibility to learn and remember the combination to their lock. Toying with another student's lock or their instrument locker can result in a referral to the office. The only locker you should be using is your own.

Practice Tips

1. Have a plan. Know what you are going to practice and how long you will spend on each item.
2. Avoid distractions. Practice in a quiet place so you can focus.
3. When and for how long? Practice time should be at least 25 min per session and at least one session per day, even on weekends. If you are still not tired after your minimum time, push yourself and see how long you can go.

Other suggestions: Always use correct posture; use a mirror; have your written plan nearby; use a metronome; when your facial muscles are hurting, do not be afraid to take a short rest before you continue your practice session.

What to practice? After a good warm-up of long-tone scales, work challenging passages of your band music, breaking it down into small segments and putting them together into longer pieces as you can play it successfully. **DO NOT** practice music incorrectly or with an instrument that is not functioning properly. Practicing bad habits teaches bad habits. Additional practice time should be dedicated to fundamental repetition of scales, arpeggios, and other technical elements that train your eyes, mind, and fingers for good muscle memory. Check in the band office for information on approved and appropriate literature for each instrument. Finally, practice practicing! Get into a good habit of playing everyday by playing every day! Professional musicians did not become professional overnight...it takes years to develop musicianship. Even professional musicians are constantly working to make their best better.