

**Dutchtown Middle School Band**  
**Beginning Band Syllabus**  
**2009-10 School Year**  
Richard Bresowar, Band Director

**Introduction**

This syllabus will serve for the 2009-10 school year for members of the Dutchtown Middle School Beginning Band. This syllabus has dates, rules and regulations, grading policies, required performances, uniform requirements, instrument checkout procedures, goals for the band, and other information related to band membership. It is designed to be a reference for any band events or policies that may come up during the year. **IT IS STRONGLY ADVISED THAT EACH STUDENT AND PARENT FAMILIARIZE THEMSELVES WITH THIS SYLLABUS.** Please keep a copy of the syllabus to refer to during the year.

**Web Site**

The Dutchtown Middle School Band maintains a web site that has all the information needed for participation in the band. This is a very convenient resource if you have misplaced this syllabus, or other letters that have been passed out in band during the year. The web address is [www.dmsband.org](http://www.dmsband.org). Please go there regularly to get information on the band.

**Band Fee**

There is a fee of \$20.00 that all beginning students will pay at the beginning of the year. This covers the cost of the band book, and a band T-shirt that is required for the concerts. This fee is due by September 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Goals and General Information**

The Dutchtown Middle School Band program has a long history of excellence. By joining the band you have committed yourself to continuing that pursuit of excellence in musical performance. The goals of the band each year are to attain a high level of musical performance and understanding by its members, to have its members acquire the skills needed to perform in the Dutchtown High School Band, or other high school band program, to have a large number of our students qualify for District Honor Band, and to perform high quality musical selections at a level that is appropriate for the State Band Festival. To achieve these goals, band members must be committed to working for excellence. The band expects certain things from its members and offers much in return. To this end, certain basic requirements are expected of the band members. This syllabus will enumerate these requirements.

The beginning band performs only at the Christmas Concert and the Spring Concert. If you cannot attend these performances, you should consider taking a different elective, because you are doing an injustice to not only yourself, but your fellow students as well. You are expected to be on time for all performances. The extra time allotted prior to performances is to allow adequate preparation for the performance and it is necessary that you be there. Please check the dates in this syllabus and make sure you do not have conflicts with any required performances.

### **Classroom grading system and rules**

The band grade is given to give parents an idea of their child's progress in band class. The grade that each student receives in band is made up of three elements. The first element is weekly test grades, the second element is in-class participation and the third element is home practice. The elements are weighted as follows: Tests are 55% of the grade, Participation is 45% and home practice is 10%. The participation grade represents daily participation in class. For the test grades, the students will be given an assignment and several days to practice for the test. The tests will usually be from music that the band is working on in class, or scales. Occasionally written tests may be given on musical concepts needed to perform music properly. These grades will all be 100 points possible.

Classroom participation will be accounted for in the following way. There will be a weekly participation grade that reflects the student's participation. If a student has an instrument and is participating appropriately each day of the week, the grade will be an A for that week. If not, the grade will be lowered appropriately for that week.

In the case of a student not participating properly, a warning will be given by the teacher, explaining what the student needs to do to correct the problem. If after the warning the problem persists, the student will be marked as non-participating for that class period and given a written assignment. Any student disturbing the class after being marked as non-participating will be sent to the ISSP coordinator for disciplinary action.

### **Home Practice**

For the band to succeed and for each student to have the best chance to make honor band and receive other honors, home practice is absolutely essential. Home practice is the main element of the practice grade and is measured by how many practice charts are turned in each 4 weeks. Practice charts are home practice reports that are done weekly. Students should pick up a new practice chart each Monday. Each week the students should practice a minimum of 150 minutes. It is recommended that the student practice 30 minutes a day for 5 days each week, but the student may break it up differently if desired. By Monday of the next week the practice chart must be turned in **signed by the parent**. Unsigned practice charts do not count. You will see a practice chart grade twice each nine weeks that represents 4 practice charts that should have been turned in during that 4 week period. If your grade for that period is 4 then all 4 charts have been turned in. If only 3 charts were turned in, the grade would be 3 and so on.

### **Required Performances**

In the first year of band there are only two performances, the first being the Christmas Concert, and the second the Spring Concert. Required performances will not be graded the first year, but are very important so please make plans to attend.

## **Uniform Requirements**

Each student is required to have a band shirt in order to participate in band concerts and other events. Concert uniform for beginners will be the band shirt, school uniform khaki bottoms, and school shoes. Band shirts will be sold at the beginning of the year. This cost is included in the band supply fee. Additional shirts can be purchased from the band director for \$10.00.

## **Band Instrument and Book**

Each student in beginning band will typically own his or her own instrument. School owned instruments are not provided unless the student has been selected by the director to play a large or unusual instrument that is not typically owned by individual students, such as Tuba or Bassoon. Each student must have a copy of The Standard of Excellence band method book for his or her instrument. This book is provided as part of the band fee. If lost another book may be purchased for 10.00.

If you do not have an instrument yet this is a very important decision and you should consider price as only one element in the equation. Many times the least expensive instrument available is not the most cost effective. I strongly recommend buying a first line US or Japanese made band instrument. When used instruments are available there are a few things to be concerned about and not all these things are easily determined by people not familiar with band instruments. If at all possible, let me evaluate any instrument you are considering purchasing before you put any money on it. I have had some real horror stories with buying used instruments, so please make sure any instrument is guaranteed and can be returned if defective. If you are considering a pawnshop, you should be aware that usually they do not repair the instruments before selling them, and the repair bill on a saxophone can run over \$300.00. It is a very high risk purchasing clarinets, saxophones, or flutes from pawnshops or used without having the instruments checked by a professional. A last warning: You will see advertised in department store catalogs, wholesale clubs, large retailers, online auction sites, and some pawnshops, brand new instruments for around \$200.00 or less. Buyers beware. These are made in third world countries, and usually do not last the first year of band. Frequently they don't play at all. Please talk to me before going this way. Below is a list of first line brands that are of acceptable quality. The instruments I prefer are listed first. These are what most of the beginner band students will have and the band will sound better if the brand of instruments is the same.

**Flute.** Gemienhardt 22SP. Also acceptable are Armstrong, Artley, Selmer and Yamaha.

**Clarinet.** Selmer 1401. Also acceptable are Vito, Leblanc, Buffett, Yamaha, Artley, and Armstrong.

**Saxophone.** Yamaha YAS-23, or Cannonball.

**Trumpet.** Yamaha YTR-2320. Also acceptable are Bach, Holton, Conn, or King.

**Trombone.** Bach TB-300. Also acceptable are Yamaha, Holton, Conn, or King.

**Percussion.** Students will need to purchase a Bell Kit. This will include a practice set of bells and a snare drum practice pad with sticks for each. Mapex or Pearl are good brands. Most other brands are acceptable.

## Supplies

Once you have an instrument, the next thing is making sure you have the supplies you will need. When you buy a new instrument most of this will be included. For the following listed instruments, I will give the supplies needed. Many items such as reeds and oils will need to be replenished during the year. I sell limited quantities of some of these items for emergencies, but normally you should purchase these things at a music store. Most items will be available at Zeagler Music in Baton Rouge, or Allison's World of Music in Prairieville. Please make sure you have the following supplies at all times.

**Everyone** A name tag or some permanent way to identify your instrument on the outside of the case.

**Flute.** A Silver polish cloth or soft cotton cloth. A cleaning rod.

**Clarinets.** At least 4 working reeds at all times. You will need a reedguard for 4 reeds. Reeds should be Rico 2 ½ strength at least. A cleaning swab.

Mouthpiece cap.

**Saxophones.** At least 4 working reeds at all times. You will need a reedguard for 4 reeds. Reeds should be Rico 2 ½ strength. A cleaning swab. Mouthpiece cap and end plug. Neck Strap.

**Trumpets, French Horns, Baritones and Tubas.** One bottle of valve oil. A container of Tuning slide grease (I find the best is Selmer Tuning slide grease.) A soft cloth to wipe fingerprints.

**Trombones.** One container of Slide Cream or Slide Oil. Slide Cream is preferable and works better. It is also more economical. If you are using slide cream, you will need a water spray bottle ( like a hair spray mist bottle.) Tuning slide grease.

**Percussion.** A pair of M-4 Bell mallets or equivalent. All percussionists must own a Bell Kit. In the first year, drum sticks are not really used so if you have them keep them at home.

## Dates for 2009-10 School Year

Following are the performance dates for the year. In this list the performance time is the actual time of performance. Students will usually be expected to arrive 30 minutes to 1 hour before the performance to prepare. This will be announced during the week of the performance.

**September 16<sup>th</sup>,** Cookie Dough fundraiser starts. Details to follow.

**December 1<sup>st</sup>.** 6:30 PM Christmas Concert. All Bands required to attend.

Location Dutchtown Middle Gym.

**May 8<sup>th</sup>** Solo and Ensemble Festival. Optional participation, this will be explained during the year.

**May 17<sup>th</sup>.** 6:30 PM. Spring Concert and awards night. Location Dutchtown High School Cafetorium.

**Please sign and return this page and attach your \$20.00 band fee. Please staple the check to this form or enclose in an envelope.**

Student Information Form

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Email address \_\_\_\_\_

I have received the band syllabus and I fully understand the content within. By signing this form I agree to follow the rules stated and fulfill the duties required of me.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_