

Dutchtown Middle School Band
Symphonic Band Handbook
2007-08 School Year
Richard Bresowar, Band Director

Introduction

This handbook will serve for the 2007-08 school year for members of the Dutchtown Middle School Symphonic Bands. This handbook has dates, rules and regulations, grading policies, required performances, uniform requirements, instrument checkout procedures, goals for the band, information on after school rehearsals, 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 HANDBOOK. Please keep a copy of the handbook 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 handbook, or other letters that have been passed out in band during the year. The web address is www.dmsband.org.

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 handbook will enumerate these requirements.

You will be notified well in advance of all performances and after school rehearsals, and your attendance is required. If you cannot attend these performances or rehearsals, you should consider taking a different elective, or ask to be put in the Concert Band, 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 and rehearsals. Be aware that football team members, Eaglettes, and cheerleaders are not required to perform with the band at home football games. Typically, all Symphonic band members perform at home games with the exception of the above. **Please check the dates in this handbook and make sure you do not have conflicts with any required performances.**

Bands

There are two possible band assignments for students in the 7th and 8th grades. The highest level is the Symphonic Band. This group is made up of the top students that can schedule the class, and has the highest level of responsibility for its members. Symphonic Band has more required performances and after-school rehearsals than the other groups.

Physical Exams

Ascension Parish policy now requires that performing band students in middle school must have a physical exam form on file. Effectively, this means that all 7th and 8th grade band members must have a physical. If you have not done this yet, the deadline is September 28th, 2007. If you do not have the form in, you may not be allowed to participate in some events, which could affect your grade. Forms are available from the band director, and are on the band web site.

Band Parents Organization

We have been doing reasonably well without an official band parent's organization, but there are many events that will need parent involvement for the band to have success. We will have a band parents meeting during the first month of school to outline these events. This meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 11th, in the Bandroom. At this meeting we will be discussing fund raising activities and other events for the year. Unless unusual events take place, this is the only full band parent's meeting that we have each year so please make plans to attend.

Classroom grading system and rules

The band grade is given to give parents an idea of their child's progress in band class. In the Symphonic Band, the grade is based on performance, as the class is also a performing group. The grade will consist of taped tests on music that is assigned in class, attendance at required after school rehearsals and concerts, and practice charts. Each of these elements will be averaged together and weighted accordingly. Test grades are 55% of the total grade, participation grades, such as concerts and after school rehearsals are 45% and practice charts are 10%. Students need to be aware that after school events are absolutely required as part of membership in the Symphonic Bands. Continued membership in the Symphonic Band as well as your class grade is at risk if you do not fulfill your responsibilities to the band. If you would rather not have after school events count toward your grade, you need to schedule Concert Band or a different elective. Symphonic band members can expect to have one after school rehearsal per week beginning at the end of football season, and continuing through state band festival. These are 100 points each just like a test grade. Concerts and other required performances are equal to two test grades. Missed events will be excused at the discretion of the director.

Symphonic band members will be required to turn in taped tests. For the taped test grades, the students will be given an assignment and several days to practice for the test. The assignment will usually be from music that the band is working on in class, honor band pieces, or scales. Occasionally written tests may be given on musical concepts needed to perform music properly. These grades will all be 100 points. Students are responsible for taping their own tests at home or after school at the band room. Each band member should purchase a tape recorder to record these tests. Tape recorders are available at Wal-Mart for about \$20.00. Students should state their name and what they are playing before taping the test. Please rewind the tape to where your test starts before turning it in. You should start the year with a fresh new blank cassette tape. Other formats acceptable are VHS, mini disc, CD or micro-cassette.

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. 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 or "A" then all 4 charts have been turned in. If only 3 charts were turned in, the grade would be 3, which is a "B" and so on.

Uniform Requirements

Each student is required to purchase the following in order to participate in band concerts and other events: One pair of white pants or jeans, white tennis shoes, a band T-Shirt, and white socks. **Socks must be full length.** Pants must be regular fit (no baggy jeans, capris, cargo pants, or shorts.) Tennis shoes must be ALL WHITE. This means no colors. For football games, the students will wear school uniform bottoms, tennis shoes, and the band shirt. Band shirts and white pants will go on sale at the beginning of school. Shirts and White pants can be ordered through the band. Shirts will cost \$10.00. Pants will cost \$25.00.

Instrument Checkout

Those students who will be using a school owned instrument will be required to maintain the instrument properly and will be responsible for damage that is caused by them. Normal maintenance will be taken care of by the band. The band director will assign a specific instrument to each student as needed. If you are using a school owned instrument it is strongly recommended that you purchase your own personal mouthpiece.

Also each student should have the supplies needed to take care of that instrument, such as valve oil, reeds, mouthpiece pouch or cap, or other items appropriate to the specific instrument. No one is to play on or touch instruments that are not checked out to you or do not belong to you. THIS MEANS YOU. Instruments must be stored on the designated shelves when they are left in the band room.

Student Owned Instruments

Clearly, the band will not be able to reach its goals if the instruments that the students perform on are not working properly or are of poor quality. Students are responsible for making sure that their instruments are cared for and in proper working order at all times. Make sure that there is always a tag or some way on the outside of the case to identify the instrument as belonging to you. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE ANY STUDENTS TO PLAY INSTRUMENTS THAT DO NOT BELONG TO THEM OR ARE NOT CHECKED OUT TO THEM.** Violations of this will be dealt with severely. I strongly recommend that parents keep a record somewhere of the serial number of your instrument. It is also a good idea to check your homeowners insurance to make sure you are covered if the instrument is stolen. The school board does not have insurance to cover loss of band instruments. I will do the best I can to make sure the band room is as secure as possible, but the band can assume no responsibility for lost or stolen instruments. If you don't have adequate insurance, the music stores should have information on insurance policies that are available. Please make sure that you have a high quality mouthpiece that is in good condition. This is the best and most cost effective investment you can make if you want to be a good player.

Band Dates for 2007-2008 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. **You might want to take this page out and put it on your fridge.**

September 11th, 6:30 PM. Band Parents Meeting. All parents should plan to attend. No students please.

September 17th Cookie Dough fundraiser starts. Details to follow.

Football Games Symphonic and Concert Band members are required to perform at home football games, unless on the school team or on the school cheerleading squad or dance team. Students should be at school by 4:30 PM on game days and will be released at approximately 7:00 PM.

Dates of home games will be announced and posted on the band website.

October 23rd tentative date. Ascension Parish Band Night. At Spartan Stadium and required for Concert and Symphonic band members

December 4th. 6:30 PM Christmas Concert. All Bands required to attend. Concert location Dutchtown Middle School Gym.

December 8th. All day. District IV Honor Band Tryouts. Location EA High. All students in Symphonic band are required to tryout.

December 9th. Christmas Parade. Bands meet at DMS and will be bussed to the parade. Time will be announced. All Symphonic and Concert band members are required to attend.

January 12th. 8:30 AM to noon. Honor Band Reading Session. Required for those that have made honor band.

January 17-19th. Honor Band Weekend and performance at Southeastern. Required for those that have made honor band.

March 4th. 6:30 PM. Pre-festival Concert. All Symphonic and Concert band members are required to attend. Location will be DMS Gym.

March 17th. District IV Festival. Students will be transported from school. All students in Concert and Symphonic Bands are required to attend.

April 28-30. State Festival. All students in Symphonic Band will attend.

May 19th. 6:30 PM. Spring Concert and Awards Night. Location DTHS Cafeteria. All students required to attend.

Any alterations to these dates will be posted at the band web site, and a letter will be sent out at least a month in advance. You are responsible for being at all required performances.

Please detach, sign and return this and the next page.

Student Information Form

Student Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's work phone(s) _____

Cell _____

Parent's Email address _____

I have received the band handbook 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, including attending all required performances.

Parent Signature _____

Student Signature _____