

# Marshall Middle School

## Band Handbook



**2011-2012**

Jeremy S. Root,  
Director of Bands  
Marshall Public Schools

Trisha L. Hongisto,  
Assistant Director of Bands  
Marshall Public Schools

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Marshall Middle School Band program. We are excited to have you as a part of our program this year!

Please take some time to read over the Band Handbook. This will prepare you for your work and responsibilities as a member of the Band. If a problem should arise, consult the handbook first. If you still cannot find the answer, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Students that take part in the Band program in Marshall are challenged to grow musically and encouraged to achieve their highest potential. In order for this to occur, students must respect their director, their fellow musicians, their instruments, the music they perform, any guests, and all of the work that each person puts into the Band.

If you follow the rules as laid out in this handbook, your reward will be like nothing you have experienced before. You will feel pride, a sense of accomplishment, self-satisfaction, and FUN!!!!

We can't wait to work and grow with you. Let's have a fantastic year!

Sincerely,

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Marshall Public Schools  
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**Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail us should you have any questions.**

## Band Mission Statement/Philosophy

The mission of the Marshall Middle School Bands is to team with parents, students, and the school to provide an atmosphere where students can be successful in learning and performing on musical instruments, both individually and in a large ensemble. We believe strongly that music is a part of a student's comprehensive education. We aim to uphold the traditions of the past while maintaining a commitment to excellence within each student.

**"We are what we repeatedly do! Excellence then is not an act, but a habit!"**

- Aristotle

This excellence must begin with an attitude of success. As teachers, parents, and administrators, all of our actions must be geared towards creating a positive experience for these young students. A positive experience must begin with an understanding of the expectations for those who participate in the MMS Band Program. This handbook will help explain those expectations.

## Band Expectations

1. Be On Time
2. Have Your Materials
  - a. Instrument/Supplies
  - b. Book/Music
  - c. Pencil
3. Do Your Best

# 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Grading Procedures

A student's grade in band is a balanced reflection of musical achievement, technical skill on an instrument, participation in band activities, and effort both within class and at home. The grade is made up of four different factors: Rehearsal Grades, Playing Tests and Quizzes, Performances, and Practice Charts.

## Rehearsal Grade

Each week you will receive a rehearsal grade that is based on the following:

1. **You are prepared: you have your instrument, music, pencil, book, and you have practiced your music**
2. **You participate appropriately**
3. **You are in class and in your seat for tuning**

## Playing Tests and Quizzes

Playing tests will consist of students playing music on their respective instruments for grades.

These are done in order to chart students' musical progress on their instruments. There will be an average of **4 major playing tests during each marking period.**

Several written quizzes and tests will also be given periodically throughout each semester in order to test students' understanding of musical concepts, vocabulary, and rules.

## Performance Points

Concerts constitute up to 25% of students' grades. **Students will be graded on how well they are able to play their concert music.** There will be more on this subject later in the handbook.

## Practice Charts

Practicing is the most important thing you can do to improve your musicianship. Through practice, you will gain confidence, learn the importance of self-discipline, and eliminate weaknesses in your playing. Practicing is a necessary part in the development of our Band. Students who take private lessons and turn in a Private Lesson Verification form will have their practice chart requirement waived for that marking period.

## Practice Chart Requirements

**6th Grade** - Each student needs to practice 5 times per week for a minimum of 10 minutes per day to earn an A. **The *frequency* of practice is more important than the number of minutes practiced.** Practice chart grading for 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be based on the number of times practiced per week (for at least 10 minutes), and will break down as follows:

More than 5 times per week = A +

5 times per week = A

4 times per week = B

3 times per week = C

2 times per week = D

Less than 2 times per week = E

**Practice charts will be checked twice per marking period. Students may hand in their practice chart at any time during the week designated. Each practice chart must have a parent's or guardian's signature on it for it to be accepted.**

On the third to last page of this handbook, you will find a copy of the practice chart for the first marking period of the school year, which you are more than welcome to use. Students fill out the number of minutes practiced each day and write down the total for each week.

## 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Grading Procedures

A student's grade in band is a balanced reflection of musical achievement, technical skill on an instrument, participation in band activities, and effort both within class and at home. The grade is made up of four different factors: Rehearsal Grades, Playing Tests, Quizzes, and Performances.

### Rehearsal Grade

Each week you will receive a rehearsal grade that is based on the following:

- 1. You are prepared: you have your instrument, music, pencil, book, and you have practiced your music**
- 2. You participate appropriately**
- 3. You are in class and in your seat for tuning**

## Tests and Quizzes

Playing tests will consist of students playing music on their respective instruments for grades. These are done in order to chart students' musical progress on their instruments. **There will be at least four major playing tests per marking period.**

Several written/playing quizzes will also be given periodically throughout each semester in order to test students' understanding of musical concepts, vocabulary, and rules.

## Performance Points

Concerts constitute up to 25% of students' grades. **Students will be graded on how well they are able to play their concert music.** There will be more on this subject later in the handbook.

# Concert Procedures

## ALL BAND CONCERTS ARE MANDATORY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Concerts constitute up to 25% of your grade and they are one of the most fun and rewarding experiences you will have in Band. Performances at the Middle School are a culmination of what is learned in class, just like taking a test at the end of a unit in math or science.

## Concert Absences

There are two types of absences for a concert: Unexcused and Excused.

- ***Unexcused Absences:***
  - An unexcused absence is when Mr. Root or Ms. Hongisto does not have at least **four weeks** prior notice. Excuses such as "I had to baby-sit," "I could not find a ride," "I lost my polo shirt," "I forgot," etc. will not be tolerated.
  - **Points lost due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up.** This loss in points will result in a *significant* reduction in a student's grade
  - It will count as an unexcused absence if you do not stay for the duration of the concert. Remember it is important that we support each other! Please plan ahead to stay for the entire concert.

- **Excused Absences**

- Excused absences occur when there is an illness, death in the immediate family, or emergency situation. In those cases, please contact your child's director prior to the concert.
- In the event of an excused absence, points will be made up through a "make-up" assignment that will be handed out in class. **It is the student's responsibility to see the teacher for make-up work.** Work must be turned in one week after the assignment is given.

**Please look over the concert dates now for any possible conflicts.**

Should there be any conflicts, please let Mr. Root or Ms. Hongisto know as least four weeks prior to the event.

### Concert Dress

**Boys:** Khaki pants (no jeans or shorts)

(6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grades) MMS Music Department black polo shirt (from separate order form)

(8<sup>th</sup> Grade) MMS Music Department blue polo shirt

Black or brown shoes (no open-toed sandals or tennis shoes)

**Girls:** Khaki pants (no jeans or shorts), or skirt (must be longer than knee-length)

(6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grades) MMS Music Department black polo shirt (from separate order form)

(8<sup>th</sup> Grade) MMS Music Department blue polo shirt

Black or brown shoes (no open-toed sandals or tennis shoes)

There will be a separate order form for the new black polo shirts handed out at a later date.

-If purchasing the MMS Music Department blue polo shirt and khaki pants/skirt are a problem, have your parent/guardian contact Mr. Root or Ms. Hongisto.

If you wear something inappropriate to a performance you will lose points and may be asked not to perform.

### Concert Etiquette

We will have lessons in proper concert behavior and etiquette. It is up to you to behave correctly when you are on and off the stage. Please remember that you lead the entire audience by your example. If you behave inappropriately at a concert you may be asked to leave.

## Outside Activities

**Solo & Ensemble** is mandatory for 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Students may choose to either play a solo for a judge, or write a critique of several performances throughout the evening. Judges offers constructive criticism and advice to help students improve. 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Solo & Ensemble will be held after school.

**Festival** is mandatory for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Students travel to an area school and perform as a Band for 4 judges. The specific dates are not solidified until a few weeks before the event, so please keep both days open.

**Extra Credit** is available by going to other concerts and/or playing in other ensembles outside of school, including HS and MS Band, Choir, or Orchestra concerts that your child does not participate in.

## Private Lessons

We are very excited to announce that the Music Center of South Central Michigan will be offering lessons in Marshall this year. They will offer teachers for every band instrument and have scholarships available. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to take inexpensive lessons on your instrument right in your own town. Please contact them at (269) 781-8256 or at [www.musiccenterscmi.com](http://www.musiccenterscmi.com). Don't let this opportunity pass you by! **7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who take private lessons will receive extra credit! 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who take private lesson can be exempt from practice charts by filling out the Private Lesson Verification form found on the bottom portion of this page and returning it to their director.** To ensure accurate grading, verification forms must be turned in at the start of each marking period to your child's director.

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### Private Lesson Verification Form

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is taking private lessons on their band  
(Student's Name)  
instrument from \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Private Lesson Instructor's Name)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Private Lesson Instructor Signature

# Supplies

Student instrument supplies can be purchased in one of the two following ways:

1. Calling Meyer Music ((616) 396-6583 or 1-888-792-0123)
  - When you order please inform them your order will need to be delivered to Marshall Middle School. Payments can be made over the phone through Meyer Music or given to Mr. Root or Miss Hongisto (please make checks payable to Meyer Music).
2. Contacting Miss Hongisto (by phone or e-mail)
  - When placing your order please include what grade your child is in. If you order through Miss Hongisto please make checks payable to Marshall Middle School Bands.

*Please note that orders will be received the week following the placement of the order as the Meyer Music representative visits Marshall once a week.*

# Instruments

Instruments can be rented or bought at local music stores such as Meyer Music. Your director can provide contact information for these stores if needed. *Please do not purchase instruments from web-sites like E-bay. The quality of the instrument is questionable and there is no support should the instrument break.*

There are a few school-owned instruments for students to use should they forget to bring their instrument to school that day. A few instruments may be available for families with financial concerns.

# Percussion

Percussionists will be required to provide their own snare sticks, mallets and a stick bag. A \$30 yearly fee will be assessed for the use of school percussion equipment as well as to cover the cost of new heads and mallets.



# Marshall MS Band Schedule 2011-2012

Please put these dates on your home calendar, and check to see if there are any conflicts. Remember that attendance at Band concerts is mandatory and points will be lost if you do not participate. Should any dates or times change, you will be notified as soon as possible.

**All concerts are in the MMS Auditorium and begin at 7:00 PM unless noted.**

9/26 – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band – rehearsal with HS Band – HS Band Room – 7:00 – 8:30 PM

9/30 – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band performs with MHS Band at MHS Football game – 5:30 PM – MHS Band Room

11/3 – Music Department Spaghetti Dinner-All Bands – MHS Cafeteria \* - Schedule to be handed out in October

11/8??? – MS Honors Band - @ Vicksburg HS (Selected 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade students gone all day)\*

11/28 – Marshall Holiday Parade (8<sup>th</sup> Grade only) – TBA

12/8 – MS Bands Holiday Concert (Grades 6-8) – MHS Auditorium\*

3/22 – MS Band Solo and Ensemble – 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only  
-Schedule to be announced at the beginning of March

March – Michigan Wind and Percussion Festival 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade only – Date to be determined

5/22 – MS Band Spring Concert (Grades 6-8)

\* = does not start at 7:00pm

We have some big plans for the Marshall Middle School Bands this year, and we are really looking forward to helping you achieve your best in Band. We hope we all get to have a lot of fun while working hard.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us by phone at:

(269) 781-1251, ext. 1133

(269) 781-1251, ext. 1134

or by e-mail at:

[jroot@marshall.k12.mi.us](mailto:jroot@marshall.k12.mi.us)

[thongisto@marshall.k12.mi.us](mailto:thongisto@marshall.k12.mi.us)

**Your first assignment in Band class is to read through this hand book with your parent(s)/guardian(s), sign the agreement below, and hand it back in to your director by Friday!**

-----tear here-----

We have read the policies and concert dates in this book. We understand them and agree to their terms and conditions.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(parent/guardian signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(student signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(home phone #)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(work phone #)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(e-mail)

*\*Please provide a working e-mail address if possible as we will be using them for communication purposes. Thank you!*