

Mona Shores Middle School Band

Syllabus



Purpose:

The Mona Shores Middle School Band program commits to maintaining high musical excellence through meaningful instruction while providing a supportive and positive community for all members.

Grading Policy:

The grading policy for the Mona Shores band is the same one that is used for the middle school band and orchestra, as well as the high school band, choir and orchestra programs. Students begin each new term with a total of 100 points, and final grades are awarded using the following scale:

A	93-100	C	73-77
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	88-89	D+	68-69
B	83-87	D	63-67
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	78-79	F	59 and below

Deductions of points (per infraction) will occur in the following situations:

Unprepared for Class (no instrument, pencil, music, book, etc.) <i>more than once/tri</i>	-2
Inappropriate Behavior (per incident)	-2
Lack of effort	-2
Late turning in assignments (per day, up to 5 days)	-1
<i>Missing assignments - late by more than 5 days</i>	
Violating uniform guidelines for performances	-6
Tardy to a rehearsal outside of the school day	-2
Tardy to a performance	-4
Unexcused absence to a rehearsal outside of school day	-10
<i>See below for guidelines for what constitutes an excused absence</i>	
Unexcused absence to a performance	-20
Inappropriate concert behavior	-50

Gaining of Points:

Participation in extra performances (director approved)	Variable
Make-up assignments/playing tests	Variable
Participation in Solo and Ensemble	+5
Rating of II of higher	+5
Other volunteer service at discretion of director	Variable
Attendance of other concerts/performances	+5
Students must write/type at least 3-5 sentences of reflection along with the program and/or ticket attached with a parent/guardian signature confirming their attendance	

No students may make up points for an unexcused absence to a performance.

Attendance:

Attendance is the MINIMUM level of expectation to receive a favorable grade. Band (and any ensemble music making) is an experiential art form, meaning one must actually be present as part of the ensemble to experience it. For this reason, performance and rehearsal attendance is vital to the curriculum, and unexcused absences are very detrimental not only to the band program, but to an individual student's grade in the course. Few things outside of a family emergency or significant illness on the part of the student constitute an excused absence. In order for an absence to be excused, the following steps must be taken:

1. Communication must be sent by a parent/guardian **in advance** to the director of the ensemble. This communication must include detailed information of what the absence is due to.
2. **Absences are excused only at the discretion of the director.** Directors reserve the right to cap the number of people excused from particular performances.
3. Absences due to a significant medical problem should be communicated with a director **PRIOR to the event.**
4. **Make-up work will be assigned for EXCUSED ABSENCES ONLY** (unexcused absences will count against one's grade with no opportunity for make-up work). All make-up work must be completed by the date specified on the make-up work assignment, and at the very latest, the last day of the term in which the absence occurred. **No late work will be accepted.** The student's grade will reflect the missed performance/rehearsal until the make-up work is turned in.
5. Resolutions for conflicts due to **MONA SHORES MS SPORTS OR CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** will be negotiated by the director and the coach/sponsor of the conflicting activity if necessary. It is necessary to approve conflicts **in advance** with your director.

Calendar:

Refer to the calendar of events that was sent out before school started. Please review and take note of all dates that pertain to your student. Make sure to contact Ms. Sanford as soon as possible if there is a conflict. In band, EVERY student matters in the ensemble. Please do your best to ensure that your child is at these events. We work to balance the busy lives of students while also making sure to provide the best possible musical experience.

Musical Tests/Quizzes/Assignments:

Throughout the year, students will have various playing or written tests. Some playing tests will be in front of the directors and others will be in small groups. Students always have the option of re-doing an assignment before the end of the trimester. If they would like to redo a playing quiz, they must schedule a time with a director **in advance** before the end of the trimester.

Concert Dress:

Students will dress in “Concert Black” for all events unless otherwise told by a director. All clothing should be appropriate for school and for wear on stage. Exceptions to the uniform may be made at the discretion of the director and will be communicated in a timely manner. Examples include:

Black Shoes: dress shoes & black socks, flats

**no sandals, sneakers, white/patterned socks*

Black Bottoms: dress pants, long skirt/long dress (knee length or below)

**no shorts, jeans, sweatpants, leggings (unless underneath a skirt/dress)*

Black Top: dress shirt, sweater, suit coat

**please avoid thin strapped tank tops or t-shirts unless you are wearing a sport coat or other sleeved top*

Accessories: moderate jewelry, black belts, black scarves, black ties, black hair bows, etc. may be worn as long as they do not interfere with the student’s ability to play their instrument

Our hope is that students can wear something that makes them feel comfortable, looks great and projects how seriously we take our opportunity to perform for others. Students may use clothes they already own, purchase them from a store of your choice or a combination of the two. This uniform is also consistent with the high school concert uniforms so your investment in their clothing will carry over throughout their band career. *Please let a director know if you need assistance with gathering these items and we would be happy to help!*

Band Lockers, School Owned Equipment, and Music:

Band lockers are the property of the school, and are subject to the same handbook policies as our school lockers. Equipment, uniforms and music checked out to students become their responsibility until turned in. Students will be fined for the replacement/repair value if music, or equipment are lost, damaged or stolen.

Mona Shores Code of Conduct and Student Handbook:

All Mona Shores policies outlined in the student handbook (see agenda book) are in effect during all band activities, whether on-/off-campus or during/outside of the school day.

Communication:Email:

You will receive general emails from Ms. Sanford regarding the MSMS Band program and its activities. Ms. Sanford leads the 6th, 7th & 8th grade bands and will provide students and their families with up-to-date information regarding all of the bands’

events. Additionally, you will receive information from the band director that teaches the instrument that your child plays.

- Ms. Sanford - All Middle School Bands, 6th Grade Trumpet & Trombone
- Mr. Boyden - 6th grade percussion & saxophone
- Mr. Sarns - 6th grade flute & clarinet, 7th & 8th grade percussion, MS Drumline
- Mr. Mosley - 6th grade music literacy

Website:

The MSMS Band has a website that contains information, updates, and resources. This is a great place to check in for general questions.

You can find it at: <https://www.monashoresbands.org/middle-school>

Contact information:

Nikki Sanford sanfordn@monashores.net (231) 332-8541	Jason Boyden boydenj@monashores.net (231) 332-8328
Justin Sarns sarnsj@monashores.net (231) 332-8329	Nick Mosley mosleyn@monashores.net (231) 332-8544

FAQS (Frequently Asked Questions)

What if my student forgets their instrument at home?

If a student comes to class without their instrument, I still expect them to participate in classroom activity and instruction. Students will complete a written analysis of the rehearsal. If a student forgets their instrument, music, pencil, etc. more than once/tri, the student will lose points and a parent/guardian will be notified to help create a plan to assist the student.

Should my child take private lessons?

YES! I highly recommend private lessons for every student, though they are never required. Private lessons are SO valuable for any student at any level of progress and ability. They serve to supplement and enhance the learning your child is already engaged in. While students will receive some individual attention during band class, a weekly meeting with a private instructor is extremely beneficial in supplementing what is being learned in the classroom. Studying privately often helps students to reinforce concepts, move along at a quicker pace, and learn solo repertoire that might not otherwise be learned in school. If you are interested in private lessons, please contact

me for a teacher recommendation best suited for your child.

How often should my child practice their instrument?

Today's students are BUSY! No, I don't expect your child to practice their instrument everyday (although if they do, that's AWESOME!). I expect your child to carve out practice time throughout the week, when it is available. Setting a routine for practice days is especially helpful. **I am also available EVERYDAY before school, starting at 7:10am (arrange in advance).** Your student can come in to practice their instrument, practice with friends, or work with me. I am realistic about practice commitments to band, but if I feel that your child is getting significantly behind, I will communicate any concerns with you.

Additional thoughts on practice:

The process of learning an instrument involves training the body and the mind together. In order to reinforce skills and turn them into habits, the skills must be practiced consistently. When students practice the materials that they are learning, class is able to keep a forward momentum. If students do not practice, progress is significantly stifled. In the early stages of musical doing and thinking, motivation is directly related to success. When students feel successful, their motivation increases. Conversely, when they do not feel successful, their motivation decreases. The best and easiest way for students to feel successful and motivated is to get them practicing on a regular basis.

Tools For Success: A Music Parent's Guide To Being Involved

1. Help to facilitate regular practice habits. Establishing a regular time for practice will help students be more consistent in their practice efforts.
2. Simply playing through familiar songs over and over again is NOT practice. Have your child set specific goals that are both challenging and attainable for each practice session. Good "practice-ers" know how to choose small 'chunks' of music that need work. Through several repetitions, they isolate and try to improve one thing at a time (pitch, rhythm, bowing, dynamics, fingerings, tempo).
3. Consistent practice over time (short sessions almost every day) works much better than one marathon practice session every week!
4. Provide a suitable practice environment at home- free of noise and distraction.
5. Make sure your child is practicing with a music stand! Music stands help develop proper posture.
6. Be a cheerleader! Learning an instrument can be challenging. Give positive comments and praise for your child's efforts. Your child cares what you think- showing your interest and enthusiasm is a great motivation boost!

7. Musical learning is a layering process that is ongoing and involves refinement of the physical, aural, and intellectual skills. Be patient and know that it will take time.

8. Emphasize the importance of personal responsibility to your child. Students **MUST** bring their instrument on “orchestra days”. Encouraging personal responsibility and ownership early on will help to set them up for success in high school and beyond!

9. Request to hear a mini concert of the music that your child is currently learning in class.

Instrument Maintenance:

Flute

- a tuning/cleaning rod
- a bandana and a cleaning cloth

Oboe

- at least 3 medium-soft or medium strength reeds (reeds will wear out and need to be replaced periodically)
- a silk swab
- cork grease

Clarinet

- an upgrade to one of the following mouthpieces: Vandoren 5RV Lyre or Vandoren B45. This is highly recommended for our 7th & 8th grade students.
- 4 Vandoren or Mitchell Lurie strength 2 ½ reeds for 6th grade and strength 3 for 7th & 8th grade. Reeds will wear out and need to be replaced periodically. As the clarinetist develops they will also need a harder strength reed. LaVoz or Rico Royal reeds are also acceptable. As a general rule, buying the most cost-effective reeds will not provide you the best “bang-for-your-buck”.
- a cotton or silk pull-through swab (not felt)
- other cleaning supplies: mouthpiece brush, polishing cloth & cork grease
- a 4 reed capacity “Reed Guard”

Alto Saxophone

- an upgrade to the following mouthpiece: Selmer C-star.
- 4 Vandoren strength 2 ½ reeds. Reeds will wear out and need to be replaced periodically. LaVoz, Mitchell Lurie, and Rico Royal are also acceptable. As a general rule, buying the most cost-effective reeds will not provide you the best “bang-for-your-buck”.
- a cotton or silk pull-through swab (not felt)
- other cleaning supplies – mouthpiece brush, polishing cloth & cork grease

- a 4 reed capacity “Reed Guard”

Trumpet

- an upgrade to the following mouthpiece: Bach 5C or 7C. This may have come with your instrument if you’re renting to own or buying it new.
- cleaning supplies: mouthpiece brush, snake brush, slide grease, brass polishing cloth.
- valve oil

French Horn

- an upgrade to the following mouthpiece: Holton-Farkas medium cup.
- rotary oil & spindle oil.
- cleaning supplies: mouthpiece brush, snake brush, slide grease, & brass polishing cloth.

Trombone

- an upgrade to the following mouthpiece: Bach 6 ½ AL or Schilke 51D small shank
- supplies including: super slick slide cream, water spray bottle, mouthpiece brush, snake brush, slide grease and polishing cloth.

Euphonium

- an upgrade to the following mouthpiece: Schilke 51D small shank mouthpiece.
- Cleaning supplies: mouthpiece brush, snake brush, slide grease, & brass polishing cloth.
- valve oil

Tuba

- an upgrade to the following mouthpiece: Conn Helleberg standard tuba mouthpiece
- rotary oil & valve oil.
- cleaning supplies: mouthpiece brush, snake brush, slide grease, & brass polishing cloth.

Percussion

- Mr. Boyden (6th Grade) & Mr. Sarns (7th & 8th Grade) will communicate to the percussionists the supplies necessary.