

Band Handbook

Argyle Sixth Grade Center
Argyle Middle School

2025 - 2026

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www.argyleband.com

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PREFACE

This handbook has been written for the Argyle Middle School Band and Sixth Grade Center band members and their parents with the intent of providing information regarding the purpose, procedures, expectations and activities of the band program. All band students and parents are expected to read the handbook carefully to avoid conflicts with the policies stated herein.

As a member of the Argyle Band you have the honor and responsibility of maintaining a band program with high standards of excellence. We are extremely fortunate to have parents, administrators, faculty, and school board members who are committed and dedicated to a quality band program. We look forward to you being a part of the band program!

This handbook has been meticulously prepared to anticipate and answer virtually any question you may have regarding the Argyle Band program. We strongly encourage all students and parents to read it carefully and completely before submitting the band registration form and signing the handbook acknowledgment.

Your commitment to understanding and upholding these policies is essential; All band families and students will be held responsible for adhering to the guidelines detailed within this document.

BAND, ATHLETICS, AND ACADEMICS

Our band directors collaborate closely with our coaches, other UIL activity sponsors, administrators, and classroom teachers to ensure that the band program is fully compatible with other extracurricular activities and rigorous academic pursuits. In Argyle ISD, we firmly believe that participation in band enhances, rather than limits, a student's school experience.

We actively encourage students to participate in multiple activities, including athletics, academic clubs, honors classes, Pre-AP and AP courses, and UIL activities, alongside their musical studies. In fact, many of our most accomplished band students are also highly involved in these demanding programs while maintaining high grades! These diverse experiences are invaluable; they build the foundation of the well-rounded student that Argyle ISD is consistently recognized for, truly enriching each student's journey.

There is not a varsity sport, fine arts activity, UIL event, or school group we have not shared students with and we are determined to work with you and your family to help your student participate in all of the activities they are interested in!

With regards to long-term success, below is a video of some interviews from College admissions counselors and their input on what colleges are looking for when it comes to the admissions process. It's not just about grades, they look for students who have been committed to being a part of a group long-term.

[Click here or on the picture to view a short video with some college admissions counselors discussing what they look for!](#)



BAND CLASS OFFERINGS

There are several performing groups in the band program at Argyle Sixth Grade and Argyle Middle School. Each group listed below functions as an important part of the entire band program. All of our students start in beginner band in 6th grade:

Beginner Band

(6th grade ONLY)

The Argyle Sixth Grade Center is the only campus that offers beginner band classes. **If your students have any interest in joining band, sixth grade is the only time to do it in Argyle ISD.**

Beginner Band is the first step in the journey as a member of the Argyle Band. Students in the Beginner Band will enjoy instrument specific classes where they can learn to play their chosen instrument in a small-group setting. Students will learn all of the skills necessary to perform concerts for your family and friends!

The Beginner Band will perform several concerts throughout the first year, as well as travel to the North Texas Festival of Distinction to compete against bands from around the state.

Advanced Bands

(7th/8th grade only)

In both the Sixth Grade Center (SGC) and Argyle Middle School (AMS), 'Advanced Bands' refers to our 7th and 8th-grade students who have completed at least one year of instrument instruction, distinguishing them from our 6th-grade beginners. Those enrolled in these ensembles will prepare and perform challenging and rewarding literature suitable for the middle school level and above.

To best meet each student's individual needs and provide personalized attention, we divide our Advanced Band students into four ability-based ensembles. From the most foundational to the most advanced, they are called Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Symphonic Winds, and Honor Winds. We strive for the majority of students to advance at least one band between their 7th and 8th-grade years, provided they are ready.

Every student in our band program will have the opportunity to perform at all concerts, participate in all social events and trips, and be fully involved and included in our vibrant band community!

Musicians in Symphonic Band, Symphonic Winds, and Honor Winds will have weekly sectionals outside of the school day. Additionally, each student in Symphonic Winds and Honor Winds (our top two bands) will be required to audition for the TMEA All-Region Band.

Honor Winds students will have a weekly sectional AND a full band rehearsal.

[You can read more about the four ability-based bands on our website here.](#)

Jazz Band

(7th/8th grade only)

This course is by director recommendation only and students must also be concurrently enrolled in one of our advanced band classes.

Since fall 2023, we are excited to have offered a Jazz Band at Argyle Middle School! This class will meet during the school day only and will perform at all of our concerts as well as some outside of school events!

Jazz band is an optional class that our band students can sign up for in addition to their regular band class. Our Jazz Band students will have the chance to explore different genres and styles of music including Swing, Funk, Latin, Waltz, etc. Students will learn about the rich history of jazz music and musicians and develop new skills including music theory, improvisation, and solo writing. No jazz experience is necessary!

Any students interested in jazz band must also be signed up for a regular band class.

Colorguard

(7th/8th grade only)

Colorguard students do NOT need to be enrolled in a separate band class. Colorguard is a class where your students will learn how to perform choreographed dances and routines with various equipment from flags, to sabers and rifles. Colorguard combines dance, movement, and choreography but adds extra elements to it.

At the middle school level, colorguard mostly performs with pre-recorded music, but students will continue on into the high school guard program, where they perform with

the Argyle High School Marching Band! No prior dance experience is required, students will be taught everything they need to know to be in Colorguard.

All colorguard students will also be eligible to go on all band trips and perform in pep rallies!

There will also be a standalone winterguard season. Please email Ms. Erica King (erica.king@argyleisd.com) for details or if you have any questions about Colorguard!

BAND PLACEMENTS & AUDITIONS

Band placements for 7th/8th grade bands are determined through comprehensive evaluations, including auditions held around Spring Break. Our decisions are based on a holistic assessment of several factors, not just your student's playing ability:

- **Overall Academic & Behavioral Standing:** Student achievement and behavior in band and other classes. **This is often a determining factor for band placements.** We will look at your full discipline record when determining band placements
- **Student Ability & Work Ethic:** Demonstrated musical skill and commitment to excellence and hard work.
- **Musical Performance:** Assessed through pass-offs, homework assignments, video assignments, playing tests, and Band Olympics (6th graders)
 - 6th graders will get Band Olympics information in January!
- **Consistent Practice:** Measured by weekly locker checks to ensure instruments are taken home as well as pass-offs and assignments
- **Private Lesson Enrollment:** Participation in private lessons, which significantly aids development. **This is often a deciding factor in band placements.**
- **Instrumentation Needs:** Ensuring a balanced sound within each ensemble, as there's a limited number of each instrument we can accommodate per class.
- **Student input** - We value student input and will discuss their preferences for band placement directly with them.

All Band classes are full year courses, no schedule changes will be made at semester.

BAND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Beyond musical proficiency, the Argyle Band program is dedicated to developing well-rounded individuals who are responsible leaders in our school and local community. Through music, students will cultivate:

Essential Life Skills

- **Self-discipline and group discipline** fostered through preparation and cooperation with their peers. Many of the things we do in band are large “group projects” and everything is a team effort where we all rely on each other constantly.
- **Leadership, responsibility, and diligence**, along with the ability to collaborate effectively as a team. Everyone needs to be a leader and everyone needs to be responsible.
- **Grit** - The ability to push through challenges and problem solve when things get difficult. Your students will be challenged but will always be in a safe environment.
- **Perseverance and problem solving** in challenging situations go hand in hand with grit and will benefit your students immensely as they meet challenges in their other classes and in life!
- **Pride and self-esteem** - gained through achieving success and understanding the value of hard work. We will work hard and celebrate the successes of your students.

Musical Foundations

- **Instrument-specific skills** - Your student will be taught to refine their playing, focusing on posture, playing position, embouchure, characteristic tone, breathing, technical proficiency, and rhythmic skill.
- **Music theory comprehension** and the ability to read music fluently, including note values, rests, key signatures, scales, terms, signs, and symbols.
- **Critical listening skills** to make informed musical judgments and evaluate performance quality.
- **Self assessment** - To go along with critical listening, students will regularly evaluate their progress against self-established goals, and assess solo and group performances, recognizing quality in sound, pitch, style, tempo, rhythm, blend, balance, phrasing, dynamics, articulation, and musicianship.
- **A lifelong love for music and the arts** and an appreciation for their enriching power and the beauty they add to the world.
- **Concert etiquette** as engaged and informed audience members.
- **Creative self-expression** - Never has creativity and creative problem solving been more important than today’s world.

RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

Through music, we aim to cultivate not just skilled musicians, but also responsible students, respectful individuals, and successful leaders who are prepared for high school, college, and beyond.

To set students up for future success, we expect every student in the Argyle Band to uphold a high standard of conduct, manners, and dress. Our goal is for the Argyle Band to consistently project a positive image, reflecting the spirit, pride, and reputation of our school and our band program.

Many of these are expectations and guidelines more than rules, but we believe they are important to creating a positive environment in our band program.

CLASSROOM AND REHEARSAL CONDUCT

- **Follow all rules:** Adhere to all Argyle Band rules, AMS rules, the dress code, and the [student code of conduct](#). This includes upholding policies on academic integrity, ensuring all work submitted is original, and refraining from plagiarism or AI usage. Students must also follow all school rules regarding [\(PDF warning\) technology and chromebook usage](#).
- **Accept your consequences for breaking rules:** We all make mistakes. Understand when you've made them, learn from them, and accept the consequences of your actions when rules are broken. **Our consequences will never be arbitrary and will always be opportunities for growth, learning, and improvement.**
- **Respect the learning process:** Do not do anything that would interfere with the directors' ability to teach or other students' ability to learn.
- **Always show respect for other people and their property:** Demonstrate respect for all classmates and adults. Work collaboratively as a team.

EQUIPMENT, FACILITIES, & PRACTICE

- **Equipment: Care for your equipment:** Show proper respect and care for all band equipment, music, and instruments. Proper handling minimizes the risk of accidental damage and associated costs. Students and parents are responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing any damaged materials, even if accidental.
- **Equipment: Do not touch an instrument that is not yours:** The only instrument you should handle is your own, unless specifically instructed by a band director to assist with moving equipment or temporarily hold an instrument.
- **Facilities: Only band students are allowed in the band hall and band rooms.** To ensure the safety and security of our valuable equipment, we do not make exceptions to this rule.

- **Facilities: Only water is allowed in the band hall.** Sugary drinks cause buildup inside instruments and we have carpet in our room unlike most classrooms. No gum, candy, food or drinks other than water in the band hall, percussion room, practice rooms, or any other band rooms so we can keep our rooms clean.
- **Students are allowed to practice in the band hall before and after school.** The band hall is available for student practice before and after school. This time is designated solely for musical practice and study; inappropriate conduct or horseplay will result in students being sent home.
- **Practice regularly:** Consistent daily practice is essential for individual progress. Set realistic goals and strive for success. Your dedication to practice will directly impact your musical growth!
- **Strive for improvement:** Make a genuine effort to learn and improve every day. Focus on building a habit of consistent improvement—it's more important to consistently improve than to be the best!

ATTENDANCE & COMMUNICATION

- **Be present for school, rehearsals, and performances:** Every student is responsible for attending all rehearsals, concerts, and performances.
 - Please be sure students are dropped off on time for all call times. If a sectional or concert starts at 7:00, students should be dropped off earlier so they have time to get ready.
 - We will always communicate clearly with you.
- **Stay informed:** Regularly check the [Google Calendar](#) and keep up with emails for important dates and information.
 - **Weekly email updates are sent every Sunday at 1:00 PM; all students and parents are responsible for reviewing this important information.**
 - **Students are also expected to monitor Google Classroom for all posts and assignments.**
- **Parents AND students: keep us informed:** We are always willing to work with you as long as we know conflicts are coming up! If you tell us a month before that you have a conflict with something, it's much easier to figure out a solution than if you tell us about a conflict a day before

We believe that by following these expectations, every student will contribute to a successful and thriving band program and set themselves up for success later in life!

PRIVATE LESSON PROGRAM

Supplemental Private lessons are available to all band students for personalized, one-on-one instruction. Our professional private lesson teachers are able to tailor a program to each student's needs, letting them progress at their own pace.

Professional teachers on each instrument are available to teach these lessons during band class, advisory class, before school or after school. Lessons are scheduled at your convenience on a first-come basis. Students will be taught once a week during the school day. The cost of these lessons is \$25.00 per 30-minute lesson.

The success of the AISD Band Program largely stems from these supplemental lessons and our excellent staff. We strongly recommend supplemental lessons for all students and typically about 60-70% of students take lessons.

Private lessons are required for all Oboe and Bassoon players, and for all students in Honor Winds, as outlined during their instrument or Honor Winds sign-up.

Some general Private Lesson guidelines:

- 1. Lessons are required for all Oboe/Bassoon students in Argyle ISD as well as all students in Honor Winds**
2. Be fully prepared for each lesson.
3. Bring a pencil, books, and any other required materials to each lesson.
4. Keep a written assignment for each lesson.
5. Notify the supplemental teacher 24 hours in advance in the event a lesson must be missed. Failure to do this will result in an unexcused absence and the lesson must still be paid for. Excused absences by the student or the teacher shall be rescheduled or the cost will be refunded.
6. The cost of each lesson is \$25.00.
- 7. Payment should be made directly to the lesson teacher.**

CONSEQUENCES

We will hold all students accountable for following all school and district guidelines. Violation of any rules or any of the standards/procedures outlined in this handbook may result in one or more of the following actions:

This is typically the order we follow when it comes to discipline issues:

- Verbal warning
- Student conference
- Parent contact (Email)
- Lunch and/or after school detention
- Parent conference (Phone or in-person)
 - This will typically happen multiple times before an office referral and campus administration being involved
- Loss of band privileges including trips and social activities
- Office referral, campus administration involved
- Schedule change from one band class to a different one
- **Student's complete removal from the band program**

For small issues, we don't always make parent contact, but we will always communicate home if a large issue arises.

At any point, steps in this process may be skipped or additional consequences may be added as necessary.

For major infractions, campus administration will always be involved and every parent email we have on file will be contacted. We believe in having a paper trail for communication whenever possible.

To facilitate clear communication and maintain a comprehensive record of disciplinary discussions, **email will be the preferred method of contact.** Communicating through email rather than phone call helps create a "paper trail" for everyone involved and can help prevent miscommunication that frequently happens through phone calls.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Every member of our band is incredibly important – one absent member is like a missing link in a chain! Students with excessive absences from school may not be allowed to travel with the band; this has been an issue in the past. More information can be found in [travel privileges](#) below.

Regular attendance and active participation are crucial for your student's daily progress and development in band. This includes required rehearsals, sectionals, and performances that take place outside of normal school hours. Our state standards (TEKS) do address this and allow for rehearsals and performances outside of the school day to be graded. From our [TEKS and Texas Education code states §28.021](#), "if a student is enrolled in a class in which participation in extracurricular activities is a reasonable expectation of the class, the teacher may consider the student's participation in the extracurricular activity when assigning the grade for the grading period during which the extracurricular activity occurred."

Excused versus unexcused absences:

We understand that absences due to personal illness or other extenuating circumstances are sometimes unavoidable. Illness, family emergencies, a death in the family, and things of that nature will be excused absences **as long as communication happens in advance when possible. All absences will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.** Unexcused absences from class, rehearsals, or performances may result in a lowered grade or a zero for any missing rehearsals, performances, or assignments.

Every student is a vital part of the band and there is no true way to "Make up" a concert performance, as it depends on everyone being there.

Many student absences can be avoided or excused through proactive communication and planning. Should transportation to an event be a concern due to a parent's schedule, please communicate this to a director promptly. **With a program of over 250 students, we can often facilitate transportation solutions, therefore, lack of transportation will not be considered an excused absence.**

The success of your student is directly proportional to their consistent attendance throughout the year. We cannot teach an empty chair and they cannot learn everything they need to through Google Classroom!

TRAVEL PRIVILEGES

School attendance is vitally important to long-term student success. Students with excessive absences from school or from certain classes may lose travel privileges and might not be allowed to attend trips, including competitions, regardless of whether these absences are made up with seat time, Saturday school, or other methods.

- For instance, a student who has missed too many morning classes* may not be allowed to attend a competition with the band that requires them to miss additional morning classes.

Students must be in good academic standing to travel with the band.

- This includes maintaining acceptable grades* in all classes, keeping up with all coursework and homework, and submitting assignments to teachers on days missed for band events.
- Students who habitually fail to turn in work or make up work in a timely manner when missing classes for band events may be held back from future travel with the band, or from missing additional classes for trips or activities.
- Students who are struggling in any classes may not be allowed to go on a trip where they would miss those classes they are struggling in.

Before every trip, we will check student rosters for grades and attendance and consult with teachers and administration to determine if any students need to stay behind.

*What constitutes as too many absences or acceptable grades is ultimately up to the discretion of Argyle ISD teachers, staff, and administration

All travel with the band will be at the discretion of band staff and the campus and district administration.

BUS AND TRIP EXPECTATIONS

- **Stay seated and calm** while on the bus.
 - Talking on the bus is okay! Shouting is not. Keep the volume down please!
- **Couples will not be allowed to sit together.**
 - **No exceptions.**
- **Keep your hands, feet, and all objects inside the bus at all times**
 - Windows must remain closed unless otherwise instructed by a director, driver, or chaperone.
- **No gum, candy, food, or drinks** are allowed on the bus.
 - Very rarely will our trips be long ones. You don't need your water bottle on the bus for short trips and we will not stop the bus for you to use the restroom!
 - We will always give students a chance to use the restroom before we leave
- **No electronics during school-day travel to competitions.**
 - **Phones are permitted only on after-school or weekend trips.**
 - i. Students are fully responsible for keeping track of their phones, headphones, and all other personal devices or items they bring on any trip. The band program is not responsible for lost or damaged personal electronics.
 - ii. We will NOT turn the school bus around if you lose your phone on a trip. You and your family will be responsible for going back to get it if you lose it somewhere.
 - This also means no gaming devices, radios, CD/tape players, iPods, or other mp3 players.
 - All electronics should be left in student backpacks, securely locked in the band hall, for trips during school hours.
- **All students must ride to and from the activity on the provided bus.**
 - Any request for a student to ride with their parents must receive **prior director approval before the day of the trip.**

And most importantly:

Always be courteous and respectful to our bus drivers, chaperones, fellow students, and everyone else we encounter during our trips.

Leave the buses clean and tell the bus drivers thank you as you exit the bus for the day! Our trips would not be possible without our amazing drivers!

BAND CALENDARS

The most up to date band calendar is posted on the website (See link below). Please add this to your digital calendar, print and post a copy of the band calendar in your home, and record all of those dates into your family's central calendar or add it to your own personal Google Calendar. Please do whatever you need to do to make sure you note all of the important events, especially performances!

All performances are required!

Each member of the band is an important contributor. Great care has been taken by the band directors and other Argyle staff to avoid as many calendar conflicts as possible. We strive to make as many of these details available at the beginning of the year. Proactive planning by band parents in order to avoid calendar conflicts is a critical step in helping the band, and each student in it, perform and achieve at the highest level possible.

We ask for your help in keeping your child's band commitments in mind when scheduling vacations, physician and orthodontist appointments, and other events.

argyleband.com/calendar

BAND GRADING POLICY

We follow all of our standard campus grading policies; here is how they relate to band:

GRADE CATEGORIES

Minor grades – 50% of your student's grade - At least 10 minor grades every quarter

Major grades – 50% of your student's grade - At least 3 major grades every quarter

Grades include, but are not limited to:

MINOR GRADES:

- Weekly class participation and preparation
- Weekly locker checks
- Worksheets, handouts and assignments in class
- Passoffs and objective sheets
- Supply, binder, and cleaning checks
- Rehearsal and sectional attendance

MAJOR GRADES:

- All performances - **EVERY PERFORMANCE IS REQUIRED**
 - **This is a performance - based class, all performances are mandatory**
 - Students earn 1 grade for being at the performance on time, wearing the correct attire, as well as 1 grade for following all procedures and proper concert etiquette at the performances.
- Passoff sheets completion
- Playing and written tests (Including tests during sectionals for 7th/8th graders)

RETESTS

We allow our students to make up their video assignments and playing tests for a higher grade.

LATE WORK:

District policy: Work submitted 1 day late: max grade of a 90. Work submitted 2 days late: max grade of a 70

Late work accepted past two days in on-level classes is at the teacher's discretion

SEMESTER / FINAL EXAMS

We will have a semester exam in December and a Final exam in May that are based on a performance project. **You will get more details as these exams get closer.**

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Consistent and effective practice is the cornerstone of musical development. To maximize your progress and enjoyment, we have some practice recommendations:

Establishing a Routine

- **Consistency is Key:** Short, regular practice sessions are far more effective than infrequent, long ones. Aim for daily practice, even if it's just 15-20 minutes, to build muscle memory and keep skills fresh. Think of it like "band homework."
- **Have a dedicated Space:** Find a quiet, well-lit, and distraction-free area in your home for practice. Have all your materials (instrument, music, stand, pencil, metronome, accessories) readily available to optimize your time.
- **Set a Schedule:** Integrate practice into your daily routine. A consistent time, like after homework or before dinner, makes it a predictable and non-negotiable part of your day, similar to brushing your teeth.

Effective Practice Techniques

- **Set Goals:** Have a clear objective for each practice session (e.g., master a specific measure, improve a particular rhythm, play a scale perfectly).
- **Warm-Up First:** Begin each session with proper warm-ups, including long tones, scales, and breathing exercises, to prepare your body and mind for playing.
- **Practice Smart, Not Just Long:** Don't just play through pieces from beginning to end. Focus on the challenging sections. Break down difficult passages into smaller "chunks" and practice them slowly and repeatedly until perfect. Speed comes after accuracy.
- **Use a Metronome:** This is an invaluable tool for developing steady tempo and rhythmic accuracy. Many free metronome apps are available.
- **Record yourself and listen critically:** Use your phone or another device to record your playing. Pay attention to all musical markings (dynamics, articulations, tempo). Strive for a characteristic tone quality, good intonation, and musical phrasing.
- **Vary Your Practice:** While band music is essential, also dedicate time to scales, technical exercises, and even playing other music you enjoy (e.g., movie themes, popular songs) to keep practice fun and expand your skills.

Parent Support

- **Encourage and Celebrate:** Learning an instrument can be challenging. Offer consistent encouragement and celebrate progress, no matter how small. Your positive support makes a huge difference.
- **Stay Involved:** Ask your student what they are working on, listen to them practice, and review teacher notes. Your interest reinforces the importance of their musical journey.

Remember: "Practice makes permanent, not perfect." Focusing on correct technique and thoughtful practice will lead to lasting improvement and a rewarding musical experience.

Your students will have this handout to help guide their practice sessions.

SECTIONAL REHEARSALS (“Sectionals”)

(7th/8th grade - Honor Winds, Symphonic Winds, Symphonic Band)

Just like in athletics, achieving a high-quality band program requires more than just in-school instruction. Sectional rehearsals are vital, providing dedicated small-group time with like-instruments. This ensures every student receives the individual attention needed for instrument-specific development, something challenging to provide in a large class with over 60 students in it.

All students in Symphonic Band, Symphonic Winds, and Honor Winds are required to attend their weekly sectional and will be graded based on attendance.

Concert Band will have occasional full band rehearsals leading up to concert days, as needed, as they will be in a woodwind class and a brass class.

Attendance and Grading

Attendance will be taken and graded at all sectionals. Missing a sectional will result in a zero in the gradebook. Students must take the initiative to email a band director to schedule a make-up session to avoid this zero. If an absence is unavoidable, attending another similar instrument sectional the same week **may count as a make-up, but communication is still essential.**

Scheduling and Conflicts

Sectionals typically begin in the second week of school. To accommodate student-athletes and cheerleaders, sectional days and times may adjust at the beginning of each new sport season. We make every effort to schedule around athletic games and other school activities. **A sectional conflict form will be sent out with a firm deadline;** please complete it promptly as our ability to create a schedule with minimal conflicts depends on everyone's timely submission.

Please do not schedule appointments (e.g., doctor, dentist) at times that conflict with sectional rehearsals. Since sectionals occur only once per week, missing one session means missing critical small-group and individual instruction that week.

SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS

Students who play school owned instruments should take the same care as they would their own instrument. School owned instruments include:

- Oboe / English Horn
- Bassoon
- Alto Clarinet / Bass Clarinet / Contrabass Clarinet
- Tenor Saxophone / Bari Saxophone
- Euphonium
- Tuba
- Percussion
- In extenuating circumstances, other instruments may be school-owned as well.

These students are required to pay an instrument maintenance fee of **\$125 per year**.

This fee covers normal wear and tear and does not cover damage to the instrument, even if said damage was accidental.

The student and family are liable for damage due to negligence, carelessness or loss. The student must always inform the director of any repairs or maintenance needed.

INSTRUMENT AND FACILITIES POLICIES

To ensure the safety and organization of all instruments and facilities, here are our expectations and guidelines:

- Never leave instruments unattended.
- Store instruments in assigned band lockers during the school day.
- Keep your band locker neat and clean at all times; take pride in its appearance.
- Clearly label instrument cases with the student's name. Nametags are available if needed, just ask a director!
- Only band-related items should be stored in your locker.
- Take your instrument home every day after school dismissal.
- Locker checks will be conducted every Friday and will count as a grade.

Keeping the band hall, practice rooms, and all of our facilities clean and organized is everyone's responsibility!

INSTRUMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

When it comes to musical instruments, the adage "**you get what you pay for**" rings true. The quality of an instrument significantly impacts a student's success and experience. Cheaper or lower-quality instruments often feature inferior materials like thin metals that bend or break easily, weak solder points, or wood that cracks (or isn't genuine wood). This can lead to frequent malfunctions and, in many cases, make instruments impossible for local repair shops to fix due to unavailable parts.

To ensure every Argyle ISD band student has the best chance for success, we have standardized the recommended instrument brands and models for beginners. We also provide guidance and recommendations for "step-up" instruments when your student is ready for a higher-quality option.

“Step-up” instruments

Step-up instruments are made of higher quality materials and better craftsmanship than the beginner model instrument your student may be currently on. They are built to tighter tolerances and are typically assembled by hand and individually play-tested before being shipped out for sale. They play a little bit differently, typically respond better, and sound better than the beginner/intermediate instruments your students started on. **In fact, we even do this with school owned instruments. The school-owned instruments our 7th graders play on are more expensive and step-up models compared to the 6th grade ones!**

Step-up instruments help your student get to the next level of growth and ability. It is our experience that when students get a step-up instrument, they become even more dedicated with their practice and hard work knowing the investment you are putting into their music education!

[Click here to see our standardized Argyle ISD instrument models and step-up recommendations!](#)

CLASSROOM MATERIALS / SUPPLIES

All students are required to have certain materials and supplies at all times. At the start of the year, we provide a band binder with all sheet music and exercises, two pencils, and a highlighter. We always have extra pencils/highlighters to use during class in case your student loses theirs. Students are held responsible for having supplies daily.

ALL students need the following at all times:

1. Band instrument and appropriate supplies (instrument-specific supplies below)
2. Their band binder including all books, handouts, and music
3. A pencil and highlighter in working condition!

Every Woodwind/Brass student needs:

1) A music stand for home use

- Any wire one will work! We recommend any cheap wire music stand you can find. There is no need to spend a lot of money on a “premium” one unless you want to buy a nicer one.
- This stand will stay at home and does not need to come to school at any point.

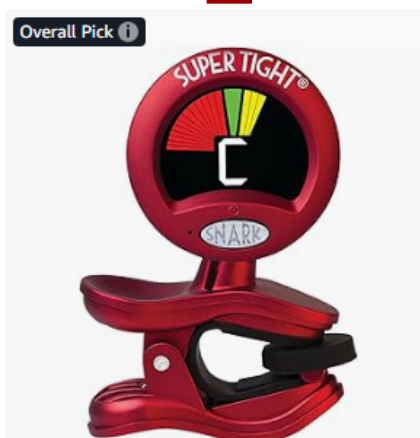
2) Metronome/Tuner and a clip

- Korg [TM70 tuner and CM-400 clip](#) (Amazon link) are the tuners we use here.
 - **Please do not get one of the round / square ones that clips right onto the instrument.** They lack features we use daily, have poor battery life, and we do not have extra batteries/chargers for them. **(See pics below for examples)**
- 8th graders and above, you might have a Korg TM-60. It is the older model, but it works well and you do NOT need to replace it!
 - ****IMPORTANT** The older model (CM-300) and newer model (CM-400) clips are NOT interchangeable between tuners**
 - If your tuner is a TM60, you need a CM-300 clip, ([click here](#) to order one)
 - If your tuner is a TM70, you need a CM-400 clip ([click here](#) to order one)

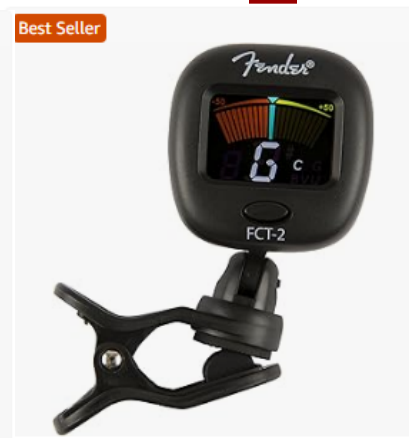
YES:



NO:



NO:



Instrument-specific supplies

Flutes:

- A **SILK** swab in good condition without any tears, knots, etc. (The silk ones are machine washable with your dirty laundry. Silk swabs are less likely to get stuck inside the instrument than cotton swabs or swabs made from other materials)
- It's good to have a silver polishing cloth to wipe down the Flute occasionally to prevent it from tarnishing. It doesn't need to be a flute-specific one

Oboes/Bassoons:

1. 3 reeds in good condition (No chips, cracks, or MOLD... Yes, I have to specify...)
2. A reed case with their name on it and space for at least 3 reeds
3. Reed soaker cup / clip
4. A swab in good condition without any tears, knots, etc. (The silk ones are machine washable with your dirty laundry!)

Clarinets / Saxophones

1. A **SILK swab** in good condition without any tears, knots, etc. (The silk ones are machine washable with your dirty laundry!) Silk swabs are less likely to get stuck inside the instrument than cotton swabs or swabs made from other materials
 2. A **reed case** with their name on it and space for at least 8 reeds
 3. **8 reeds in good condition** (No chips, cracks, or MOLD... Yes, I have to specify...) You will need a new box to start the school year, reeds have a limited lifespan.
 4. **Cork Grease** - One tube (That looks like Chapstick) should last YEARS
 5. **Mouthpiece Patches (Optional)** - I personally prefer the thicker black ones, but they also make thinner clear ones. These are personal preference!
- **CLARINET** - Please purchase D'addario Reserve Classic strength 3.5 reeds (Unless a director or lesson teacher asked you to purchase 3.5+ or stronger!)
 - **SAXOPHONES** - Please purchase Vandoren BLUE BOX strength 3 reeds

Clarinets / Saxophones - Please do not try to find cheaper reeds/options to save money. Speaking from experience, it will only cause you and your students frustration!

Trumpets / Horns / Euphoniums / Tubas

1. Mouthpiece (Bach 5C for 6th grade and Bach 3C for 7th grade Trumpets and older, Holton MC for horns, Schilke 51D for Euphoniums, Schilke Helleberg SH for Tubas)
2. Valve Oil
3. Slide Grease
4. Cleaning Snake and Valve Brushes

Trombones

1. Slide-o-mix **OR** Yamaha Trombone Slide Lubricant (Purple bottle)
2. Spray bottle (with their name on it!)

PERCUSSION SUPPLIES:

All percussionists need a metronome

Our wind players use a Korg TM70. If your student has a phone, we recommend the Frozen Ape "Tempo" metronome app on their phone or "Tonal Energy".

All percussionists need these for practicing at home. These will stay at home:

1. Snare practice pad / stand at home

- We recommend the Offworld Outlander Practice Pad with a stand

2. Practice Marimba at home

- We recommend TexasMarimbas

3. Wire music stand

- Any wire one will work! We recommend any cheap wire music stand you can find. There is no need to spend a lot of money on a "premium" one unless you want to buy a nicer one.

Stick Bags:

A Stick Bag that zips up (without any holes in it!) and your student's name on it. Ms. Mollenkopf recommends the [Humes and Berg GL8000](#) stick bag for beginners. If your student needs a bigger one, look at [Saylers](#) and [Innovative Percussion](#).

Snare sticks - Two different pairs, 3 if your student is in Jazz Band

1. Concert sticks - [Innovative Percussion \(IP-LD\)](#)
2. ****NEW FOR EVERYONE**** Marching sticks - [Innovative FSTR](#) (for pep rallies and playing on different drums)
3. JAZZ BAND STUDENTS ONLY - [Vic Firth American Jazz 1 Drumsticks](#)

Two pairs of Marimba Mallets ****NEW FOR 7TH GRADE****:

- A SECOND pair of what you already had from 6th or 7th grade so we can start doing "Four mallet" playing - A new skill in 7th/8th grade
- 6th/7th graders - You more than likely have the [Innovative Percussion IP3105b mallets](#). If they are in good condition, you can just buy a second pair.
- If your mallets are not in good condition, please purchase two pairs of either the [Saylers E20](#) or the [Innovative Percussion IP240](#) mallets.

Timpani Mallets ****NEW FOR 7TH GRADE****

- Timpani Mallets - [Promark Jonathan Haas- JH 2](#)
- In 7th grade, we ask all students to add a set of Timpani mallets to their stick bag. As long as they are taken care of, these will last your students YEARS

If you have questions about any of these supplies:

Please reach out to Ms. Mollenkopf at Christine.Mollenkopf@argyleisd.com

PHONES AND PHONE APPS

We do not allow your students to use their phones during class or during the school day, but when used responsibly, they can be a great tool or for practicing. **If your student has a phone, these are some things we recommend they have:**

Email (Free)

We highly recommend that all students with a phone log into their school Gmail account on it to make communication easier. There will be times where we email your students or they need to email us quickly with questions or important information.

Calendar (Free)

All students should add the appropriate band calendar to their personal one.

Argyleband.com/calendar

Google Classroom app (Free)

Students will use Google Classroom for nearly all assignments this year, in band and other classes. The app allows them to easily track assignments and due dates, and directly record and upload "Video assignments" (music performances) from their phones.

Tonal Energy app (\$5.99)

Tonal Energy is a very powerful tuner and metronome app that has a lot of different tempo, tuning, analysis, and tone generation capabilities past what most standalone tuners and metronomes are capable of. We use the "Tone Generation" and "analysis" features a lot in class and it can be a gamechanger when you know how to use it.

It's so much more than just a tuner!
Expanding smiley face and pitch tracker
Ideal for: Wind, Strings, Voice

Powerful Metronome
Fast access to 60+ meters and subdivisions
Customizable visual beat display
Industry first voice count-in
Presets, groups, and sequencing, ideal for practicing
20 met sounds and many options

Audio recording and playback
Import and export everything
Detailed Analysis

Many custom temperaments
Over 20 high quality instrument sounds
Tone Generation
Sustain notes or chords

PERFORMANCES

All band performances are required and graded.

We have a variety of performances throughout the year, some more formal than others, but all are required as part of our state requirements (TEKS) and students will receive a grade for attending performances. Our TEKS require us to teach your students about solo, small ensemble, and large ensemble performances

Concerts (Typically 3-4 every year)

We typically have a fall concert in October, a winter concert in December, a Pre-UIL concert in late February/early March, and a Spring concert in May.

- **Beginner band students will have a “World Premiere” in October, a Winter concert in December, and a Spring Concert in May**
- **Jazz Band students will have an additional concert.**
- **Honor Winds students will typically have several additional concert performances.**

Solo and Ensemble

All students in the Argyle Band program are required to perform a solo every year. Depending on which band class they are in, their solo performances will happen either in February/March or in May. We stagger these solo performances to avoid overwhelming your students! Please see the band calendar for details and dates.

Your student’s grade will depend on the rating earned for their solo performance. Details will be provided before the solo contest.

Pep Rallies and assemblies

We combine all of our band classes into one large group to perform at all pep rallies. These happen during the school day and you will receive information as they come up.

All-Region

All students in Honor Winds and Symphonic Winds are required to try out for the All-Region band. If they earn a spot, they will get to perform an additional concert in December!

Grades

Your student will typically receive two grades at each performance. One grade will be for arriving at the performance on time wearing the correct uniform and one will be for

following correct concert etiquette. See below for expectations on both. Details will always be specified before each performance.

DRESS CODE FOR PERFORMANCES

Casual dress

The **Band T-shirt and jeans** are the required dress for many band functions. They will get their band shirts at the start of the year and we will wear these frequently. Once your student gets their Band T-Shirt, please make sure they keep up with it as it will be needed many times throughout the course of the year.

“Nice Clothes” (Typically 6th grade, sometimes 7th / 8th grade)

Students will sometimes be asked to wear “Nice clothes” rather than a specific formal uniform. Details were provided before the performance but this typically consists of a polo and slacks (No jeans) for boys and a skirt, blouse, or dress for girls (But nice pants are also appropriate).

Concert black / Black Formal uniform (7th / 8th grade)

First impressions matter, and we want the Argyle Middle School Band to always project a professional and unified image at concerts and competitions. Our formal “Black Formal” uniforms help us achieve this, representing our school with pride.

At the beginning of the year, students will be professionally fitted for their uniforms, which are covered by your Band Booster fees. This includes the “core uniform”, or a shirt and pants. These uniforms are required for all concerts and competitions.

While we provide the core uniform (shirt and pants), students are responsible for providing solid black formal dress shoes and socks.

Boys should wear crew-length or knee-length black socks, and girls should wear solid black tights or crew/knee-length black socks to ensure a consistent, all-black appearance even when seated.

The boy’s full black formal uniform consists of:

Boys: black collarless tuxedo shirt (PROVIDED), black dress pants (PROVIDED), black belt, black crew-length socks and black leather shoes.

All boys will need to provide their own:

- Crew-length black dress socks (no-show or ankle socks are not acceptable)
- Solid black formal dress shoes
- A black belt.

The girl's full black formal uniform consists of:

Girls: black blouse (PROVIDED), black palazzo pants (PROVIDED), black hose or leggings, and closed-toed black shoes.

All girls will need to provide their own:

- Knee-high black hose or leggings, tights, or socks
- Closed-toed black formal dress shoes. NO HEELS

Please see the image below for examples of appropriate and inappropriate shoes:

Examples of Appropriate Ladies Formal Concert Shoes



Examples of Appropriate Boys Formal Concert Shoes



Not Appropriate

NO: Sandals, Elaborate decorations, peep-toe, tall heels, tennis shoes, bunny slippers



CONCERT ETIQUETTE

Attending a concert is a special experience, and everyone plays a part in making it enjoyable and respectful for performers and audience members alike. Please review the following guidelines for proper concert etiquette:

During the Performance

Stay for the Entire Concert:

- Students and parents are expected to remain for the entire length of the concert to show support for all performing groups.
- Listen Actively & Be Respectful: Please be supportive of all groups in the band program. Remain seated and quiet while a group is performing. Avoid talking or walking around during musical selections. Each ensemble has worked incredibly hard, and your focused attention is a sign of respect.

Manage Disruptions:

- If you arrive late, please wait until the current musical selection ends before quickly finding your seat during the applause.
- If you need to leave during the concert, do so quietly between musical selections or during band changes.
- If you have a crying baby or noisy youngster, please exit the performance area immediately. Unwanted noise is distracting to both performers and other audience members, especially as performances are often recorded.

Showing Appreciation

Applaud Appropriately:

- Show your appreciation by clapping. Whistling and shouting student's names are generally not appropriate for a concert setting.
- Recognize Exceptional Performances: For a truly outstanding performance, you can show extra appreciation through extended applause or a standing ovation.

Electronic Devices:

- Parents & Photography: **Please turn off flash and shutter sounds before taking pictures / videos.** Parents are welcome to use phones for taking pictures and recording videos, but please ensure your device remains silent and your activity doesn't distract others. Shutter sounds are loud and will be heard on mics!
- All cell phones and other electronic devices **belonging to students** must be silenced and put away during a performance. Students seen with on a phone during a concert will immediately receive a 0 for their concert etiquette grade.
- **Please do not use tablets/iPads for video recording as they are a large distraction (No pun intended!) to other audience members.**

BAND FEES

We will NEVER let money get in the way of your students participating in band. Once fees are finalized, you can reach out to the band staff confidentially and we will work out payment plans as needed.

We will not charge fees until the school year starts. You will need to pay two separate sets of fees, one will go to Argyle ISD (Paid on REVTRAK) and one will go to our Band Boosters (Paid on Boosterhub). The reason there is a separate set of fees for Argyle ISD and the Band Boosters is because these items all have to come from different budgets.

This varies from year to year, but for your planning purposes, here's approximately how much the fees will be:

Argyle ISD Band Fees

These get paid directly to Argyle ISD and to the band program. We collect these fees online through REVtrak.

Band Fee - Approximately \$65 per year

EVERY student pays this fee. It goes towards the purchase of:

- **Band Binders.** Every student gets a heavy duty 1.5 inch black band binder with dividers, labels, page protectors, a pencil pouch, 2 pencils, and a highlighter at the start of the year. Every student gets a new binder every year.
- **Foundations book (7th/8th grade)** - This is a workbook we work out of every year
- **Ear training tools - BERPS and Tuner Clips (7th/8th).** We buy extra tuner clips in bulk at the start of the year for when they break (It happens very often unfortunately). BERPS are an ear training tool we use with brass players.
- **Contest entries.** Band contests are expensive! The cheapest ones start at about \$600 per group (So if we take Honor Winds and Symphonic winds, it's \$1200!).

Jazz Band Fee (7th/8th) - \$25 - Only students in Jazz Band

- Your jazz band students will get a LOT of different materials that won't fit in their regular band binder, so they will get a separate red jazz band binder
- This fee also includes the method book we will purchase for your students to use in jazz band next year

School owned instrument fee - \$125

- ONLY for students who play a [school owned instrument](#).
- **Again, this covers normal maintenance and wear and tear, not damage due to accidents or neglect**

Band booster fees

All things that have to do with food, uniforms, attire, and apparel have to go through our band boosters. Band booster fees will be paid online through the boosterhub website.

Booster fee: Approximately \$45 - EVERYONE pays this fee

- This will go towards a band t-shirt for your student as well as helping cover the cost of feeding students on the many competitions/trips we go on that make them miss their school lunch.
- If there is an event that will cause your students to miss dinner at home, we will make sure they are fed from this fee.
- On a typical school year, we need to feed the kids 4-5 times and this will cover those expenses.

Black formal uniforms (7th/8th grade): Approximately \$70 for boys and \$80 for girls

- All 7th and 8th grade students wear the same black formal uniform for concerts, competitions, and recording sessions
- After the school year starts, we bring in a tailor to measure all of your students for their black formal uniforms
- **ALL 7th graders pay this fee to get a new formal uniform that fits them.**
- **8th graders who have one from last year that still fits will not need a new one! Please see the note below.** We use the exact same uniforms from year to year to try and offset some costs and our tailor comes in and purposely sizes uniforms a little larger so your students can wear them longer!

8th graders - Trying on your uniforms:

Before you pay your fees, try your uniform on from last year and make sure it isn't too tight. If it fits comfortably, you may not need a new uniform or may only need the top or bottom. **Once you've tried it on, please sit down with good posture and in playing position to check how it truly fits.**

If you sit down and the pants come up too far above your ankles, you may need to release the hem or get new pants.

If the shirt is too much higher than your wrists, you may need a new shirt.

If your students' band fees are not paid promptly, they will not receive their band shirts when they get delivered.

As a reminder, we will never let finances get in the way of students participating in band but communication is key. Please reach out to a band director once fees are finalized if you are in need of financial assistance.

BAND REGISTRATION FORM

At the start of every year, a band registration form is sent out and we need it turned in within a week.

This registration form will be used to collect:

- T-shirt sizes
- Uniform information
 - 8th graders - If your uniform from last year fits you will indicate that on this form
- Updated contact information
 - Including emergency contact information, insurance information for when we travel, etc
- School-owned instrument agreement form
- Supply acknowledgement information
- Private lesson enrollment information
- Trip and travel guideline acknowledgement
- Band handbook acknowledgement
- Band fees

If we do not have a band registration form on file for a student, they will not be allowed to travel with us.

If we do not receive your registration form in a timely manner, you will very quickly start getting DAILY email reminders from us as we need that information in order to place a T-shirt order.

We also need medical forms on file before your student can travel with us.

ARGYLE BAND BOOSTER CLUB

We are fortunate to have a district wide band booster organization. By virtue of having a child in the band program, all parents are members of the band boosters and are eligible and encouraged to volunteer whenever possible.

The main objective of the AISD Band Booster Club is to provide funds and support for the various projects in our band programs. Some of these projects include supplemental lesson scholarships, social activities, guest clinicians, senior scholarships, etc.

It takes a great deal of work and cooperation from parents at all levels to accomplish our goals. We appreciate your help and support whenever possible.

Volunteer opportunities:

Our band boosters run all of the indoor concessions in Argyle ISD. Whether it's basketball, volleyball, wrestling, or anything else that happens in the gym, it's band parents and students that run the concessions and all of the money goes right back to your students. On a typical night, the concession stand brings in about \$500! If every band parent just volunteers one time per year for concessions, we can easily fill up every time slot!

All of the money goes back to your kids in the form of scholarships, supplies, paying for lesson teachers to come in for master classes, paying for clinicians to come in and work with the kids, help to pay for food for kids, and much more.

When we say we will never get finances get in the way of students participating in band, the band boosters are a critical part of that. Please volunteer at least once per year for concessions!

We need one adult per shift and no experience is necessary!

YOU - the parents - make it happen for your children!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Email is always the best way to reach us! Our phones are too far away for us to get to them when they ring and we will rarely stop teaching our students to answer the phone. **The students in front of us will always take priority over everything else.**

With the band program's busy schedule, email allows us to respond as time allows and keeps record of our correspondence. Our goal is to respond to every message in a timely manner.

Argyle Sixth Grade Band Staff

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Argyle Middle School Band Staff

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BAND WEBSITE:

www.argyleband.com

The Argyle Band Website is the central hub of information regarding the Argyle Band. Please bookmark this important resource, as it will be referred to throughout the school year.