

St. Croix Falls Middle School Beginning Bands Handbook



Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year in the St. Croix Falls Music Department! It is important that every student in our program make a strong commitment to uphold our high standards in the classroom and during performances. We ask each of you to accept the challenge of working hard to achieve stunning artistic results. At public performances, we encourage you to reflect the pride that we've taken in our work and use our musicianship to have an emotional impact on our audiences and within ourselves.

Alexander H. Miller - 5-6 Music Teacher
milleal@scfschools.com
(715)483-9824 ext. 1340

Behavior in Rehearsals

Each student is expected to consistently display appropriate behavior during rehearsals, performances, and school related activities. **All school rules apply to all music activities.** Specific Expectations:

- **Be on Time** to ALL rehearsals and performances. You are to be in your place with your folder and materials when rehearsal begins.
 - **Attendance will be recorded no later than three minutes after the bell rings. Students must be ready for class at this time or risk being marked tardy.**
- Absolutely **NO GUM** chewing permitted in the music department or performance space. **NO FOOD, CANDY, OR DRINKS**, etc. Water only.
- Always have a sharpened **PENCIL at hand**. Keep it in your binder or case!
- **Talking is not appropriate during rehearsal** unless permission is given. Even if your intention is to aid fellow musicians, noise is distracting and disturbs the concentration of the rehearsal. **Stay focused!**
- A **positive attitude and effort is vital** to the success of rehearsals and performances. *We are a community of learners and musicians.*
- Proper Concert Etiquette is expected at all performances. **See** Basic Concert Etiquette **further below**.
- Address your fellow classmates' undesirable effort, attitude, or behavior in a **constructive manner**. Help each other make good choices to be better students and musicians!

Commitment

In the case of a student wanting to discontinue participation in band, this can be done within the first two weeks of school, after the first semester and the end of the school year. To drop, a student must ask for a drop slip from Mr. Miller, take it home to get signed, and return it to the teacher.

Supplies

In order to successfully participate in band, students need to consistently bring these supplies to class.

1. **An instrument:** students have three options for getting an instrument. The best option is to rent from The Music Connection in Forest Lake, MN. They have fair rental plans and excellent customer service! A student may also bring in their own instrument. Take caution: some models are made cheaply and spend more time in the repair shop than the students' hands. If neither of these are viable options, students may rent from the small amount of instruments the school has in stock. (Please only use this last option if absolutely necessary.)
2. **Music:** Students are required to have a Tradition of Excellence book 1 for their given instrument. This can most easily be ordered through Amazon. Please bring it to every rehearsal and lesson. If a student loses it, it's their responsibility to obtain a new one from The Music Connection or online.
3. **A pencil:** it is important to get in the habit of bringing a pencil to every

band class. This will benefit you in being able to mark music and take notes whenever necessary.

4. **Student planner:** In addition to filling out passes, a student planner is essential for writing practice reminders and other notes.
5. **Black Binder:** students will need a three-ring binder for keeping music and other handouts organized; a black one is preferred.

Instrument Care

1. All students will have an instrument locker assigned to them. Please only keep your instrument and music in the lockers. No food, drink, homework, etc is to be kept in the locker.
2. When instruments are stored, they are to be properly disassembled, placed correctly inside the case, and latched/zipped closed. Close the locker door when finished.
 - Students may bring a lock to secure their locker. It is the student's responsibility to remember the combination.
 - Be cautious during the loading/unloading process. Do not rush. Look out for others and their instruments/cases.
3. When instruments are in use, it is expected that they are **treated with respect**. They are likely the most expensive items that you will operate on a daily basis, and they should be handled as such!
 - Students must always hold their instrument as instructed by the teacher. Failure to do so may result in a broken instrument.
4. Instruments are expected to be maintained in fair playing condition.
 - Speak with the director immediately if you feel that your instrument needs repair!
 - If the director can not fix it, it will be sent out for repairs. Most repairs return within one week. If the repair is under \$50, they will fix the instrument without approval. If the cost is over that amount, they will call you for approval.
 - Personal instruments are expected to be paid by the family, and school instrument repairs are paid through the district budget.

Attendance

- A. **Students are expected to attend class each day they are scheduled.**
- B. **Students will participate in all performances and after school activities that involve their ensemble.** Failure to do so will result in your grade being lowered.

Band is an activity, as well as a class; it involves extra time.

Students are required to attend all events that are listed for their ensemble.

- To obtain an excused performance absence: The parent must contact the

director **by phone or email** in advance of the concert. **If a student brings a note, the director will ignore it.** We want the opportunity to dialogue with the parent about the absence and the make up assignment. Absences will be granted for extreme illnesses and funerals. Transportation problems are NOT excused. Many other students, families, or school officials would be willing to help with transportation issues. Failure to follow these procedures will result in an unexcused absence.

Fine Arts Center Expectations

Our school and community takes great pride in our BRAND NEW Fine Arts Centers. We would like to keep

1. Absolutely no food or drink will be allowed in the Fine Arts Center (including water) - this is NON-NEGOTIABLE.
2. Be respectful of the space by not leaving your belongings behind when you leave; including instruments, folders, handouts, garbage, hoodies, sweatshirts, track jackets, etc...
3. Bathroom use is restricted to the PUBLIC bathrooms in the fine arts center.
4. Feet belong on floors and on floors alone; not on backs of chairs, seats of chairs, walls, other people.
5. All equipment stored in the fine arts center will remain in the fine arts center. Risers, shell, grand piano, scenery shop tools etc.
6. This is a professional building; the best of its kind in the area. Remember to behave professionally while in the facility and that it is a privilege to be able to use such a quality facility.

Grading

1. Assessments (combined 60% of grade)

- a. Concerts/Performances: WMEA Standard, Performing
- b. Musical Assessments: WMEA Standard, Responding/Performing
- c. Projects: WMEA Standard, Connecting

• Absence/Late Policy for Assessments

- Complete make-up assignment (provided by director)
 - If absent from a performance, the director will assign work that is related in skill and “time equivalent” of the respective event (ex: Concert = 1.5 Hours).
- Students will be eligible for 90% of the original grade if completed within two days of the assessment.
- Students will be eligible for 75% of the original grade if completed one week before to the end of the quarter.

2. Class Work (combined 40% of grade)

- a. Lessons: WMEA Standard, Performing
- b. Peer Rehearsal Evaluations: WMEA Standard, Responding
- c. Theory Homework: WMEA Standard, Connecting

Lessons

Lessons are important for your success in band. Please refer to the chart below for specific information regarding lesson attendance. All lessons will be during the school day.

Ensemble	Lesson Commitment
5 Band	-Lessons offered weekly (1st semester) -Voluntary
6 Band	-Lessons offered weekly -4/Quarter

Performances

Performances in the Music Department capstone the gained knowledge, skill, and affective outcomes achieved throughout the school year. Please use the following guidelines to aid in a successful performance presentation:

- **Call Times**

Students will be expected to arrive early for performances in order to take care of music, uniform, or instrument issues ahead of time. It is vital that students are on time, and punctuality will factor into the overall performance grade. A late arrival at the middle school will dock a student's grade by 5 percentage points.

- **Concert Attire**

Concert attire will be determined by the performers and director no later than one month prior to the performance date.

Beginning Band Calendar

Date	Event	Start	End	Facilities
12/08/25	5-12 Band Winter Concert	7:00pm	7:45pm	Fine Arts Center
02/12/25**	Middle School Solo & Ensemble Festival	2:00pm	9:00pm	Unity Middle School
05/18/25	5-8 MS Band/Choir Spring Concert	6:00pm	7:00pm	Fine Arts Center

**Select 6th graders may be asked to perform at solo and ensemble contest

Music Boosters

“Our mission is to support, both physically and financially, all grades of the SCF Music Department and its students.”

If you're a parent of a music student, consider yourself a booster; we need any and all the help you can give. Throughout the school year, you can give us a “boost” by providing your precious time and talents to the department in the following ways:

- Aide in fundraising
- Sewing flags and costumes
- Ushering for the musical
- Preparing food for concessions
- Selling food at concessions
- Water carriers for parades
- Making/printing flyers
- Advertising within the community
- And more!

If you're interested in learning more, please find the boosters on our facebook group: “Saint Croix Falls Schools Music Boosters”

Concert Etiquette

1. Electronic devices should be turned **OFF**.
2. Absolutely **NO** food or beverages are allowed in the auditorium. Concession items purchased must be consumed before entering the auditorium.
3. **NO** flash photography. Video or audio recording of any kind is prohibited by strict copyright laws unless otherwise noted. This includes concerts. Pictures are permitted.
4. Remain **silent** and avoid other unnecessary noises during performances. If possible, stifle or muffle any coughs or sneezes.
5. If you have young children, please instruct them to remain silent and stay in their seats. If they begin to fuss or cry, please take them outside of the auditorium to comfort them. When they have calmed down, you may re-enter between scenes or pieces.
6. Unless there is an emergency, wait to **enter and exit the auditorium until we are between pieces**. If there are multi-movement works, it is customary to wait until the end of the entire work.
7. **Wait until the conductor steps off the podium** to begin your applause. Vigorous, lengthy, and standing applause signals particular pleasure and enjoyment. Athletic contest “shouting” is not customary in a fine arts performance.

Handbook Completion Form

****MUST BE COMPLETED BY PARENT OR GURADIAN****

If viewing the handbook digitally, follow this [link](#) to digitally sign!

If you have a physical copy, please scan this QR code to reach the form. Step 1.

Open Camera app on your phone

Step 2. Point camera at QR code and Focus

Step 3. Either wait for a link to pop up or take a picture to be sent to the form!

