

SAUGATUCK
MIDDLE SCHOOL BANDS

A Tradition of Excellence!



Band Handbook
2019-2020

Andrew C. Holtz, Director of Bands

401 Elizabeth St
Saugatuck, MI 49453
(269) 857-2133 ext. 111

Dear Parents and Students:

Thank you for your participation in the Saugatuck Middle School Band Program. At Saugatuck, our goal is to establish a tradition of excellence and pride that will be a central pillar to our local community. I am thankful to serve as your band director and am looking forward to getting to know each one of you better throughout the coming school year.

Although our free time is becoming more and more scarce with each passing year, the band program and boosters alike need volunteers. The more people we have to volunteer, the less time everyone will need to commit. We are willing to use any band parent, relative, or student in any capacity that person sees fit - but volunteering is the most vital asset to having an excellent band program. We need people to chaperone, build/repair equipment, participate as officers, etc. Please let us know how you can help, and it will be greatly appreciated – and you will be helping the students to become better musicians and a better band.

If ever you feel the need to contact me, the best way to do so is through my school email, aholtz@saugatuckps.com. If the need is urgent, please contact my cell phone at (616)550-4672. Please understand that I have four young children at home and may be unable to answer your call immediately.

Thank you once again for taking the time to help the band. We could not do it without every single individual. I am so excited about this year, and if there is ever anything I can do for you as your band director, please do not hesitate to let me know. Thanks, and I look forward to a wonderful school year!

Sincerely,
Andrew C. Holtz
Director of Bands, Saugatuck Middle and High School

FUNDRAISING



Fundraising is one of the many activities the band participates in to pay for its expenses; from trips to bringing in guest conductors. Your child will be asked to participate in several fundraisers throughout the year. Although fundraising is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged because it enhances the activities available to each band student.

Fundraising Calendar

A number of diverse fundraisers are planned for this school year, from service projects to performances to the more traditional selling of items. Please review the school website's band calendar for dates of each fundraiser. Your child will also be receiving information on each event in class. As the fundraiser dates approach, please ask your child if they have received this information.



When turning in fundraised money, please make all checks payable to: "Saugatuck Public Schools". Paying by check is the preferred method of payment, as the canceled check becomes your receipt. Please place all payments in a sealed envelope with the student's name clearly marked on it.

Payments should be handed in to the director outside of class time, and it is the student's responsibility to see the director write the payment down!

Funds may also be mailed to the following address: **Saugatuck High School Music Boosters: 401 Elizabeth St. Saugatuck, MI 49453**

EXPENDITURES



As stated earlier, to maintain and upkeep such a large organization certain fees are necessary. Please note that many bands require their members to pay hundreds of dollars each year simply to participate. Fortunately, in the Saugatuck Band Program, this has not become a necessity. The band boosters try to keep all fees reasonable so anyone that wishes to participate can and won't be held back simply because of financial reasons. In cases of extreme need, help can be provided. Please contact Mr. Holtz immediately if you are in such a situation. Expected expenditures this year include instrument supplies (sticks, reeds, oil, etc., all available at the school or in any music supply store), marching supplies (lyre & folio), a concert long-sleeve shirt (7th/8th grade only, and optional), and a music workbook.

Middle School Band Discipline & Grading Policy

GRADING POLICY: ****Since Concert Band is a performing ensemble that requires student participation for success, ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY; and it will play an important role in the grading policy.*** See below for details:*

Evaluation for the Concert Band (each trimester) will be determined by an average of these criteria:

1. Weekly Effort, Conduct, and Participation Grades.
2. Preparation for Class (Having materials, etc.)
3. Attendance and Tardy Grade for Rehearsals
4. Written Evaluations (including Semester Exams and tests)
5. Level of Musicianship and Improvement
6. Playing evaluations
7. Care of Equipment
8. Performance Attendance

Band is graded using the "Total Point" system, so that each assignment weighs equally toward the final grade. Please note that bigger assignments such as concerts and parades will be worth more total points than daily preparation grades or playing quizzes.

Performance Attendance Grading Policy:

Each performance is a summation of what the student has learned in class to that point. In missing a performance, the student has missed their chance to demonstrate what they have learned as an individual and as a group. In other words, missing a performance is like missing a test in another class. Unlike other classes, there will be no chance for a makeup, as there is no way to recreate the performance missed; we won't reassemble the band to perform again just for one student who missed, and it is virtually impossible to bring back all members of the audience!

As missing a test in another class would adversely affect your grade, the same holds true for band. An unexcused performance absence results in a score of zero for that assessment. **Just don't miss! Clear your schedules now!!!**

***THE KEY WORD IN THIS POLICY IS UNEXCUSED!!!** As in most relationships, communication is the big key. A student will be excused from a performance if there is a death in the family, a marriage, or personal illness (as documented by a physician). Work will not be considered an excusable absence, as the performance schedule has been handed out well in advance and as band is part of a child's school day, a student's education needs to take priority over work.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

****Additions or deletions may occur. Notice will be given at least two weeks ahead of time.****

Date	Event	Location	Performance Time	Call Time
12/12	Holiday Concert	SHS	7:00pm	5:00pm
2/20*	Pre-Festival Concert	SHS	7:00pm	5:00pm
2/26-3/5*	District Festival	TBA	TBA	TBA
5/7	Spring Concert	SHS	7:00pm	5:00pm
5/25*	Memorial Parades	Saugatuck/Douglas	TBA (am)	TBA

*NOTE: These performances are for 7th & 8th grade band only.

A Note on TBA's

Dates and times are given with as much advance warning as possible, but some performance times are outside my control, such as festivals hosted at other schools. Your student will be informed in class numerous times and with weeks of advanced warning when the TBA times and locations are, they are just unavailable at the time this handbook is written. Please ask your student for this important information as the date(s) approach.

PERFORMANCE ABSENCE POLICY



Each SMS band member needs to understand that the success of these ensembles depends upon each members' attendance! We cannot have members missing or being tardy and expect to be successful. For each ensemble there are certain requirements. *Note that an unexcused absence from a performance will result in a reduction in the student's grade, as detailed above!!!*

ABSENCE PROCEDURE FOR A REHEARSAL:

Attendance is required for each rehearsal and every performance. *For necessary absences, students are responsible for following the following procedures:*

The procedure for being excused from a **rehearsal** is as follows:

1. Email the director at aholtz@saugatuckps.com
2. Include a message stating your reason for absence and a number where you can be reached.
3. Bring a note describing the reason for absence and signed by your parents/guardians on the day you return.

ABSENCE PROCEDURE FOR A PERFORMANCE:

The procedure for being excused from a performance is as follows:

1. Submit a request to miss a performance to the Director for consideration as soon as possible, but at minimum three (3) weeks in advance of the performance (also signed by parents).
2. In case of illness, follow the same procedure for missing a rehearsal, however the student needs a note signed by a doctor as well as the parents.

Note: Failure to give proper notice will be considered unexcused and will result in the forfeiting of your grade for the assignment.

EXAMPLES OF UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Work
- Going out of town
- Church events (schedule is open to accommodate people on Wednesdays and Sundays)
- Non-emergency doctor or dentist appointments. These should be scheduled around band events
- Shopping or hair appointments
- Beauty contests/talent shows outside of school
- Claiming someone “made you late”
- Rock concerts
- Other school and after school related activities (unless arrangements have already been made between the band director and coach/sponsor)

EXAMPLES OF EXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Extreme illness, as documented by a physician
- Sudden emergencies
- Death in the family
- Family weddings

**Unforeseen events may arise, so these will be dealt with on an individual basis by the director.*

TARDINESS:

*“To be early is to be on time . . .
To be on time is to be late . . .
And to be late is to be left!”*

-Dr. Benjamin Caton 🎵

Tardiness should be avoided at all cost. Each band member is expected to arrive at every rehearsal and performance on time with music, instrument/equipment, uniform, pencil, and any other special item that might be called upon for the event. The Attendance Requirements list exists to provide ample time for performance preparation. The director will use scheduled rehearsal time efficiently and strives to be a good steward of each student’s time. Promptness promotes efficiency.

PHILOSOPHY OF PRACTICE



Playing an instrument is a skill akin to many athletic talents. One may possess a large amount of talent, yet even the most talented should strive to improve. Practice is the single most important item a student can do to improve themselves and the ensemble as a whole.

I have been teaching for 17 years, and my philosophy on how to grade students for practice has gone through many permutations in that time. I recently went through a significant mental shift, focusing less on the practice records I had used for years to frequent in-class playing quizzes. Students in 6th grade will be expected to fill out practice records each month, while 7th and 8th graders will be asked to play for me (sometimes in front of the class) several times throughout the year to demonstrate their growing abilities on the instrument.

A reminder: If you do not hear or see your child's instrument at home on a regular basis, he or she is not fulfilling the requirements of the course. I have talked to many directors about how much time they expect devoted to practice, and the answers are quite varied. My best rule of thumb is that a student should be around an hour of individual practice per week in 6th grade, and ninety minutes per week in 7th & 8th grade.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Each member is here by choice and will be treated as an adult. In return he/she is expected to act as an adult at all times and to avoid those situations that would cause one to compromise himself/herself or the school. It is advisable for all band members to realize that they are members of one of the most visible organizations on campus and serve as representatives of Saugatuck Middle School. Any conduct which is not exemplary or which reflects poorly on SMS will result in dismissal from the organization. If this kind of behavior occurs while on an off-campus trip, the student(s) may be sent home at their own expense.

The conduct of any student will be a factor in their grading as stated in the grading section previously.

Policy on School-Owned Equipment

School owned properties, instruments, and equipment can be distributed for use with school band personnel only; however, certain obligations must be accepted by the lendee before a loan can be given.

1. The lendee will follow proper procedures in securing property:
 - a. Obtain an authorization form (instruments only)
 - b. Sign an Agreement form and Check-Out form
 - c. Return property at the end of each trimester or school year (instruments cannot be taken over the summer unless approved by the Director)

2. The lendee will accept full responsibility for the property while in their possession. This will include:
 - a. Repair of any damage from the result of negligence or misuse.

- b. Replacement of lost or stolen articles of property or instruments while in the lendeer's possession.
- c. Compensating the school for any lost or stolen property at the current price as established by the Director.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Please inform Mr. Holtz by phone call or email of any concern you may have in regards to your child's health in band class. Items such as heart conditions, hearing loss, allergies, and asthma are important for the director to know in order to safely teach your child.