

*SAUGATUCK
MIDDLE SCHOOL BANDS*

A Tradition of Excellence!



**Band Handbook
2020-2021**

Andrew C. Holtz, Director of Bands

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

Dear Parents and Students:

What a difference a year makes! I'm sure the start of this school year has brought as much if not more anxiety and uncertainty to your home and hearts as my own. I am excited and anxious for this year to start, while still feeling many layers of other, positive and negative, emotions.

This year's band handbook is very different than all the ones that have come before it. Most of that is due to the high levels of uncertainty we are currently facing. Will we be able to rehearse indoors or outdoors? Will we be able to schedule any performances? What are we doing in band class if we can't play our instruments?

Please take some time to read through this document. Things have changed repeatedly over the summer, and will undoubtedly change many more times throughout the year. This handbook is living, and by necessity will have to change as new regulations and mandates are handed down.

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 school-age children of my own at home and may be unable to answer your call immediately.

If there is ever anything I can do for you as your band director, please do not hesitate to let me know. I look forward to a school year like no other!

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

“The Problem”

Justifiably, the main concern right now for band class is Covid-19 and the potential spread of germs through a class our size and the playing of wind instruments. Across the nation, several scientific studies have been done since things were shut down in March, and the biggest takeaway is that band CAN be done safely, so long as a list of safety protocols are followed.

Procedures

Students will be playing outside, under a tent, on the school softball field (across the street from the front entrance of the school). Students will be in chairs spaced 6 feet apart (9 feet of space is the guideline for trombone players, and will be granted accordingly), and each will have their own personal music stand.

Masks will not be on while students rehearse outdoors, however the end of brass players' instruments will be covered with a mask to reduce emissions. Studies have shown woodwind emissions to be much less problematic. Percussion instruments will be shared as infrequently as possible, and percussion students will use all of their own sticks and mallets.

Student instruments will be stored in the school's hallways in such a way that instruments can be picked up quickly before class and after school. Students will be assembling their instruments outdoors while socially distant.

Chairs and stands will be cleaned/sanitized by students between each use.

“The Plan”

Given that we have not played together for nearly six months, skill regression is a given for most. I have accounted for this in my lesson plans, and we will be sure to rehearse in a way that ensures everyone successfully moves forward on their instrument. Due to current

recommendations and guidelines, we will be going outside to rehearse every day—unless weather doesn't allow. On days when the weather is poor we will be meeting in the auditorium—sitting in the audience seating and conducting a music exploratory/appreciation type class. Content for this class will primarily be student interest driven, and could cover a wide range of topics from music composition to music literature/history, and from improvisation to theory. We will be flexible and adapt as our situation dictates.

In November, when rehearsing outside becomes problematic, we will shift to fully inside. If we are still not able to play our instruments indoors at that point, we will adapt and make music by other means. On some level, every student wants to be a percussionist. I look forward to continuing to make music with our band students through the use of large percussion ensembles if necessary. As those months approach, we may be asking for drum-like equipment to be brought in from home (trash cans, buckets, etc). If you have a surplus of these at home and would be willing to help us out, it would be greatly appreciated!



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 lendeer before a loan can be given.

1. The lendeer will follow proper procedures in securing property:
 - a. Obtain an authorization form (instruments only)
 - b. Sign an Agreement 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 lendeer 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 appropriately teach your child.