

**EAST AURORA UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
EAST AURORA MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**BAND HANDBOOK  
2017 © 2018**



**MR. BENJAMIN DAVIS, DIRECTOR**

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## EAST AURORA MIDDLE SCHOOL INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Dear Parents and Band Students:

Hello! I hope you all had a restful and enjoyable summer, and are now looking forward to the beginning of another great school year! In this handbook you will find policies, procedures, and other important information regarding the EAMS Band program. Please take the time to read this material carefully, as the success of our band depends upon *each individual working toward the same goals*.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at school. I have no doubt that this will be an exciting and wonderful year, and I look forward to everything ahead of us!

Sincerely,

Mr. Benjamin Davis  
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# PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC

Every aspect of music is important and will be emphasized at various stages in a student's development. The EAMS Music Department stresses the advancement of the student's abilities to function in both the large group and small ensemble setting. Music offers a unique opportunity to challenge each student *cognitively, affectively, and physically*. It provides a basis for emotional expression, intrinsic worth, and has a positive impact on individuals, families, communities, and cultures.

## COMMITMENT

The success of any performing group is dependent on the commitment of its members. Students who sign up for participation in the Band program are asked to make every effort to stay with the program for the entire school year. It is understood that being in the Band is challenging, demanding, and at times frustrating. This experience is common to all musicians, but success is only possible through commitment to musical growth individually, and as part of an ensemble. Should it become absolutely impossible for a student to continue in the Band program, written notification from a parent or guardian, as well as a conference with the parent and teacher, are required before the student will be removed from the roster.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### CONCERT BAND

The Concert Band meets on A, C & E days during 8<sup>th</sup> period. The Concert Band is made up of students in grades 5 and 6. This group performs on two major concerts during the school year.

### SYMPHONIC BAND

The Symphonic Band meets on A, C & E days during 6<sup>th</sup> period. The Symphonic Band is made up of students in grades 7 and 8. This group performs on two major concerts during the school year.

### JAZZ BAND

The Jazz Band is an audition-based extracurricular ensemble which meets after school during ELT on Tuesdays. The group is open to students in grades 5 – 8, and performs in two major concerts during the school year.

### INSTRUCTIONAL LESSONS

All band members receive one one-period instructional group lesson per six-day rotation.

Lessons are given on a rotating basis so that the student will not miss the same subject each week. Schedules will be posted in the band room, in all middle school classrooms, and distributed to each student. It is the student's responsibility to know when his/her lesson is and to inform any teachers who may need to know. All work that is missed while at a lesson is to be made up for the following day.

If a student misses a lesson for any reason, it is his or her responsibility to communicate with Mr. Davis regarding this absence and to receive any missed assignment. Unexcused absences will result in a grade of zero for the lesson.

## INSTRUMENTS, MUSIC & SUPPLIES

Each student is responsible for procuring his or her own instrument and book. Most area music stores offer rental and lease programs. Students who have been renting who may be interested in purchasing an instrument should speak with their band director.

Some larger instruments such may be rented from the school. See *page 6* for details on school instrument use.

For all other instruments, a list of reputable dealers is located on *page 6*. Some dealers will deliver instruments to the school. For help in selecting a rental agent, please contact the Band Director.

Also on *page 6* you will find a list of the required books and additional materials for each instrument.

### \*\*\*CAUTION\*\*\*

In recent years, many very poor quality musical instruments have become easily available to parents and students. These unbelievably affordable instruments demonstrate a clear example of the phrase "you get what you pay for." The word "cheap" describes not only their price, but also their quality. These off-brand instruments are not made by reputable music companies and are not built using quality materials or design specifications. They do not play well in tune, and do not produce good quality sound. Many music repair shops will not even work on them, as replacement parts are not available and the materials used to build the instruments cannot withstand normal repair procedures without further breakdown.

Obviously, these problems put the student performer at a severe disadvantage. In order to avoid such unfortunate situations, please consult with your child's teacher before purchasing an instrument. Teachers are happy to help you determine which instrument might best suit your child, and can recommend brand names that are reputable and reliable. Let's work together to provide the best experience for our young musicians!

### LOCAL MUSIC DEALERS

Al Hemer Music  
4190 N. Quaker Rd.  
Orchard Park, NY 14127  
856 – 9527

Hamburg Music Center  
4433 Southwestern Blvd.  
Hamburg, NY 14075  
649 – 6660

Limelite Music  
706 Main St.  
East Aurora, NY 14052  
652 – 7539

Twin Village Music  
44 Central Ave.  
Lancaster, NY 14086  
683 – 4879

### SCHOOL INSTRUMENT USE

In order to encourage students to learn some of the larger and traditionally more expensive instruments, certain instruments are available to rent from East Aurora Union Free School District. In some cases, depending on available inventory, students will be assigned an instrument to keep at home for practice, and a second instrument to use in school. Instruments available to rent from the district include:

- Bassoon
- Bass Clarinet
- Tenor Saxophone
- Baritone Saxophone
- Horn in F
- Trombone
- Euphonium
- Tuba

The district also has instruments available for families in financial need. Families who use the free & reduced lunch plan, or who feel they may qualify, should contact the band director.

School-owned instruments can be rented at the rate of \$50 for the school year, with the option of a summer rental for an additional \$25. District rental contracts are available from the band director.

## REEDS, VALVE OIL & OTHER SUPPLIES

The following items are available to students for purchase in the Band room:

- Clarinet Reed - \$2.00
- Bass Clarinet Reed - \$2.50
- Alto Saxophone Reed - \$2.00
- Tenor Saxophone Reed - \$2.50
- Baritone Saxophone Reed - \$2.50
- Cork Grease - \$1.00 per tube
- Valve Oil/Rotor Oil - \$2.00 per bottle
- Trombotine - \$5.00 per tube

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

INSTRUMENT	ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES
FLUTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning rod</li> <li>- 10" x 10" square of a lightweight cloth for cleaning the inside of the instrument (cotton flannel works best).</li> </ul>
OBOE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning swab</li> <li>- 2-3 Leshor or Jones medium reeds</li> <li>- Small canister (film canister-sized) for water.</li> </ul>
CLARINET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning swab</li> <li>- Cork grease</li> <li>- Extra reeds (Rico, strength 3 to 3 ½)</li> <li>- Reed case</li> <li>- Thumb-rest cushion</li> </ul>
BASS CLARINET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning swab</li> <li>- Cork grease</li> <li>- Extra reeds (Rico, strength 3 to 3 ½)</li> <li>- Reed case</li> <li>- Thumb-rest cushion</li> </ul>
ALTO SAXOPHONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning swab</li> <li>- Cork grease</li> <li>- Extra reeds (Rico, strength 3 to 3 ½)</li> <li>- Reed case</li> </ul>
TENOR SAXOPHONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning swab</li> <li>- Cork grease</li> <li>- Extra reeds (Rico, strength 3 to 3 ½)</li> <li>- Reed case</li> </ul>
BARITONE SAXOPHONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cleaning swab</li> <li>- Cork grease</li> <li>- Extra reeds (Rico, strength 3 to 3 ½)</li> <li>- Reed case</li> </ul>
TRUMPET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valve oil</li> <li>- Tuning slide grease</li> </ul>
HORN IN F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rotor oil</li> <li>- Tuning slide grease</li> </ul>
TROMBONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trombotine slide cream</li> <li>- Tuning slide grease</li> <li>- Small spray bottle for water</li> </ul>
EUPHONIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valve oil</li> <li>- Tuning slide grease</li> </ul>
TUBA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valve oil</li> <li>- Tuning slide grease</li> </ul>
PERCUSSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Snare sticks (wood tip, 5B)</li> <li>- Hard rubber bell mallets</li> <li>- A stick/mallet bag</li> </ul>

## PROGRESSION OF METHOD BOOKS

THE PROGRESSION OF BOOKS FOR WOODWIND AND BRASS PLAYERS IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. BREEZE EASY BOOK 1
2. BREEZE EASY BOOK 2
3. BELWIN STUDENT INSTRUMENTAL SERIES, LEVEL 2 (RED)
4. RUBANK INTERMEDIATE METHOD BOOK (BLUE)

THE PROGRESSION OF BOOKS FOR PERCUSSIONISTS IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. BREEZE EASY METHOD FOR DRUMS, BOOK 1 (WHITE)
2. ALFRED'S DRUM METHOD BOOK 1 (BLUE) & BELWIN SERIES FOR MALLETS, LEVEL 2 (RED)
3. ALFRED'S DRUM METHOD BOOK 2 (PURPLE)

## GRADING POLICY

As outlined by the New York State Department of Education, music is a required part of our state's curriculum. Instrumental music is therefore a graded school subject.

Areas that are graded:

- Playing tests
- Written tests
- Rehearsal attendance
- Rehearsal preparation
- Lesson attendance
- Lesson preparation
- Practice reports
- Concert participation

Extra credit can be earned through:

- Participating in Jazz Band
- Participation in solo festivals
- Participation in All-County and Area All-State ensembles
- Other extra credit opportunities

## TESTING

Students are tested one time per marking period: One written test, on a concept taught over the course of the marking period. During the fourth quarter, students will be given a summative written test and a performance exam.

- Written tests will present the students with terms and concepts learned throughout the marking period, and ask the students to describe and define them.
- Playing tests will be assigned one lesson in advance, and may consist of method book exercises, scales, or a passage from the concert music.

## ATTENDANCE

Attendance is required for all rehearsals and lessons. *The success of the Band is dependent upon each individual working together, to the best of his or her ability, to achieve a common goal.* School policy will prevail in dealing with unexcused absences and tardiness during the regular band period.

### REHEARSALS

Rehearsals are part of a graded course, and should not be viewed as study halls or times to catch up on outstanding schoolwork. Students should not ask to be excused from rehearsal.

- Concert Band meets on A, C & E Days during 8<sup>th</sup> period (1:45 – 2:30)
- Symphonic Band meets on A, C & E Days during 6<sup>th</sup> period (12:17 – 12:57)

### LESSONS

Lessons are given on a rotating basis so that a student will not miss the same period class more than once a month. Should the need arise for a student to miss a lesson due to a test or field trip, it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the band director the reason for the absence, and to collect the week's assignment.

## **PREPARATION**

Being prepared for rehearsals and lessons means that students have brought all necessary instruments, equipment, and music, as well as spent the appropriate time at home becoming familiar with the music. Assignments given each week should be considered homework for Band, and will be graded as such.

## **PRACTICE**

Band students should be prepared to devote a minimum of twenty minutes daily to individual practice. The rewards of playing a musical instrument increase in direct proportion to the number of hours invested in individual practice.

There will be many times during a given week when more time than twenty minutes can be devoted to practice, and also when less than twenty minutes are available; the key is to set aside a certain time every day for practice. Set up a daily schedule to ensure that practice is an important part of your daily studies.

Practice reports are due each week at the beginning of the student's lesson. Practice is homework for Band, and should not be considered an optional activity.

## **CONCERT PARTICIPATION**

Nearly all performance dates are announced at the beginning of the school year. They can be found on the district calendar, as well as in this handbook and on the Band website. Should any additional performances be scheduled, students will be given as much advance notice as possible. The Band is a close-knit team that is affected significantly by an individual absence at a performance.

Students will be excused from concerts only in cases of genuine emergency, such as serious illness of the student or death in the family. Students should notify the Band Director in writing in the event of such an emergency. Students who miss a concert due to an excused absence will be required to complete their grade in another way. Students who are absent from a concert without an excuse will be penalized by one letter grade.

The New York State Education Department says, "...while performance is not the only consideration for a final grade, it is a legitimate part of a total grade. If a performance is the culminating activity so stated in lesson plans, a grade may be given for participation or non-participation as the case may be. Extenuating circumstances should be considered for missed performances."



## GRADING RUBRICS

BAND REHEARSAL				
CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
PREPARATION	Student is prepared with all necessary instruments & music.		Student is prepared with some of the necessary materials.	Student is unprepared.
ATTENDANCE	Student is present.			Student is not present (unexcused absence).

WEEKLY LESSONS				
CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
ASSIGNMENT	Exceptional preparation and practice are evident in superior tone quality, note accuracy, rhythm accuracy, and attention to dynamics and phrasing.	Sufficient preparation and practice are evident in good tone quality, note accuracy, rhythm accuracy, and some attention to dynamics and phrasing.	Some preparation and practice are evident in adequate tone quality, note accuracy, rhythm accuracy. Little attention is paid to dynamics and phrasing.	Assignment has not been prepared.
PREPARATION	Student is prepared with all necessary instruments & music.		Student is prepared with some of the necessary materials.	Student is unprepared.
PRACTICE MINUTES	Practice minutes, signed by a parent, are present.		Practice minutes are present, unsigned.	No practice minutes are present.
ATTENDANCE	Student is present.			Student is not present (unexcused absence).

PLAYING TESTS				
CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
TONE	Outstanding tone, characteristic of the instrument, is displayed consistently.	Acceptable tone, characteristic of the instrument, is displayed consistently. Some issues with pitch may be present.	Fair tone, characteristic of the instrument, is displayed. Occasional issues of pitch are present.	Poor tone, uncharacteristic of the instrument, is displayed.
NOTE ACCURACY	Notes played are all consistent with written music.	Notes played are mostly consistent with written music.	Some notes played are consistent with written music.	Notes are not consistent with the written music.
RHYTHM ACCURACY	Rhythms played are all consistent with written music. A steady tempo is kept throughout.	Rhythms played are mostly consistent with written music. A steady tempo is kept.	Rhythms played are somewhat consistent with written music. Tempo is inconsistent.	Rhythms played are not consistent with written music. There is no steady tempo.
DYNAMICS	All written dynamics are incorporated, for a more musical performance.	Most written dynamics are incorporated, for a more musical performance.	Some written dynamics are incorporated.	Written dynamics are not present in the performance.
ARTICULATION	All written articulations are incorporated, and played consistently throughout.	Most of the written articulations are incorporated, and played regularly.	Some of the written articulations are incorporated.	None of the written articulations are incorporated.
PHRASING	Obvious consideration is given to phrasing, written and implied, throughout performance.	Obvious consideration is given to written phrasing throughout performance.	Some consideration is given to written phrasing.	Phrases are inconsistent and irregular.

WRITTEN TESTS				
CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
TERMS	Student can identify and define all terms correctly.	Student can identify and define most terms correctly.	Student can identify and define some terms correctly.	Student can not define terms.
SYMBOLS	Student can identify and define all symbols correctly.	Student can identify and define most symbols correctly.	Student can identify and define some symbols correctly.	Student can not define symbols.

## CONCERTS

CONCERT ATTIRE	
LADIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WHITE SHIRT OR BLOUSE</li> <li>- BLACK OR NAVY SKIRT OR SLACKS</li> <li>- BLACK SHOES</li> </ul>
GENTLEMEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WHITE COLLARED DRESS SHIRT</li> <li>- NECKTIE</li> <li>- BLACK OR NAVY SLACKS</li> <li>- BLACK SOCKS</li> <li>- BLACK SHOES</li> </ul>
<b>For the Winter Concert students may wear seasonally appropriate neckties if they would like.</b>	

CONCERT DATES	
WINTER CONCERT	12/12/17
SPRING CONCERT	5/29/18

Each child is important to the success of the ensemble. Unavoidable conflicts must be presented in writing at least two weeks prior to the concert. Students who are not present at a major performance without prior written notification will receive be docked one full letter grade.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

In order to maintain an orderly educational environment, the following discipline policy has been implemented. All students in the EAMS Bands will:

- Follow directions of **all** adults
- Keep their hands, feet, and any objects to themselves
- Use appropriate language and gestures
- Not speak while conductor is on the podium
- Raise a hand and wait to be recognized before speaking
- Not have food, drink or candy in the room **at any time**
- Do their work every day to the best of their ability

## PRIVATE LESSONS

A list of private lesson teachers can be provided upon request, and also found on the Band webpage. Students are encouraged to take private lessons because they offer one-on-one, individualized instruction with a specialist.

## WEBPAGE & E-NEWS

The EAMS Band maintains a comprehensive and up-to-date website that can be found on the district webpage. Here you will find copies of each document that is distributed to students, along with an interactive calendar, photo galleries, news updates, as well as an opportunity to sign up for the e-news system. Please visit the site often, at: [www.eastauroraschools.org](http://www.eastauroraschools.org)