

BAND HANDBOOK

For members of the MEHS

Symphonic Band

Wind Ensemble

Jazz Band



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THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONS ARE PLANNED FOR A FUTURE EDITION OF THIS HANDBOOK:

- Music Boosters information
- Equipment requirements & recommendations? (music stand, metronome, percussion, etc)
- Descriptions of *Smart Music* & other software
- A completed written *Trip Policy*
- Samples of rubrics used (including those used for lesson grades & Seating auditions)

If Band Parents find any other *voids*, please bring it to our attention and we’ll address it in the future.

PHILOSOPHY

The instrumental music program at Maine-Endwell High School will provide a comprehensive music education, a wide variety of performance opportunities, and an artistic and emotional outlet for all students. Through their active participation in music performance, we hope that students will acquire cultural values, artistic awareness, personal pride, and a sense of belonging and identity, while also learning the academic aspects of Music Theory, History, Composition, Analysis and Improvisation.

In addition, students will find that musical success requires the reliance on life-skills such as self-discipline, goal-setting, perseverance and humility. Our Maine-Endwell High School Band program will strive to meet the standards set for music on a national level while also helping students develop as well-rounded and respected *citizens*.

GOALS / OBJECTIVES

It is the intent of the MEHS Band Program to help students:

- Work cooperatively in a group situation, while contributing individually
- Develop personal performance skills to the highest possible level
- Develop skills & abilities toward achievement of the *National Standards for Music*
- Appreciate the challenges of *live* music performance
- Develop an appreciation for music of all styles and from all periods of history
- Learn to listen critically to music, and to understand music's connection with other academic disciplines
- Gain an insightful perspective on time-budgeting, self-analysis, and repetitive drill as a part of the responsibility and commitment required for any pursuit
- Use the study of Music in school to assist with the development of responsibility, management and care of materials & equipment, willingness to follow regulations and adhere to schedules
- Acquire a lifelong love of and appreciation for Music

THE NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC

1. *Creating, Performing and Participating in the Arts*

Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the Arts (dance, music, theater and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts.

2. *Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources*

Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.

3. *Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art*

Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.

4. *Understanding the Cultural Contributions of the Arts*

Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.

WHY TEACH MUSIC?

MUSIC IS A SCIENCE: It is exact, specific, and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart: a graph which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody, and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

MUSIC IS MATHEMATICAL: It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time and space into fractions which must be done instantaneously and not worked out on paper.

MUSIC IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Most of the terms are in Italian, German or French and the notation of notes is certainly not English, but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language.

MUSIC IS HISTORY: Music has always reflected the environment and times of its creation, often even the country or racial feelings.

MUSIC IS PHYSICAL EDUCATION: It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lip, cheek and facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach and chest muscles which respond instantly to the sound the *ear hears* and the *mind interprets*.

MUSIC DEVELOPS INSIGHT AND DEMANDS MUCH RESEARCH.

MUSIC IS ALL OF THESE THINGS, BUT MOST OF ALL,

MUSIC IS ART

It allows a human being to take all these dry, technically boring (*but fantastically difficult*) techniques and use them to **create emotion!**

That is one thing science cannot duplicate: *humanism, feeling or emotion* - call it what you will.

THAT IS WHY WE TEACH MUSIC --

Not because we expect you to major in music ... Not because we expect you to play or sing all your life ... not so you can relax ... not so you can have fun ...

But so you will be *human* ... so you will recognize beauty ... so you will be sensitive ... so you will be closer to an infinite beyond this world ... so you will have something to cling to ... so you will have more love, more compassion, more gentleness, more good. In short, **MORE LIFE.**

Of what value will it be to make a prosperous living unless you know how to live?

THAT'S WHY WE TEACH MUSIC!

EXPECTATIONS (of students as well as of the director):

- We will all be better musicians at the end of the school year.
- We will respect each other.
- We will start and end rehearsals on time.
- We will each come to each rehearsal, lesson and performance with all required materials, ready to perform.
- We will not abuse music, instruments, equipment, music stands, furniture or the Music Suite area.
- We are each responsible for our music, folder, instrument and equipment. They are to be put away properly after use.
- Instrument lockers are for music equipment only.
- We will not have food or drink in the Music Suite areas during the school day.
- We will not chew gum during rehearsals or performances.
- Cell phones are not allowed* during large-group rehearsals or performances (*music applications, research functions and other possible usages should be checked with the Instructor *first*)
- Practice Rooms are to be used only for individual or small group practice.
- Make-up classes must be arranged within 1 six-day cycle, and completed within two weeks.

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN BAND

- Be ready to play on time for each rehearsal and performance, always with a pencil
- Pay attention to details, and write in markings to support your work
- Be responsible for learning your parts *to the very best of your ability* - PRACTICE on your own
- Learn *notes* and *rhythms* outside of rehearsal, so we can work on music together
- Realize that great performances can result only from great preparation, personal practice and rehearsals
- Smile ~ Enjoy ~ Let the music touch your soul for life

RECOMMENDED EXTRA ACTIVITIES

Band students are encouraged to seek additional activities that support their music education. Many of the following options offer extra credit on the Quarterly Grades. Consider some of these highly recommended options:

- Study with a qualified private instructor – This is *highly* recommended for any serious music student.
- Perform for judging in the NYSSMA Solo & Ensemble Festival
- Audition for All-County, Area All-State, All-State and other select festivals
- Audition for membership in the Binghamton Youth Symphony
- Audition for membership in the *Teen Jazz Project*
- Join the “Players” JAZZ CLUB (available at the High School, usually beginning in October/November). Jazz Club offers extra experience in listening, performance and appreciation of all jazz-related styles of music.
- Offer to teach younger music students
- Take piano lessons
- Join a community band, orchestra or chorus
- Go to a summer music camp, workshop or American Music Abroad
- Play your instrument or sing in church
- Play along with recorded accompaniments (i.e. our *SmartMusic* software is a *terrific* place to start)
- Study music theory & composition
- Form your own small ensemble or jazz/pop/rock band
- Practice along with other students
- Learn a new instrument

MEHS INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMANCE GROUPS' MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

This brief section discusses each available *Band* ensemble at MEHS. In this packet is a Calendar of Events describing performances for the various ensembles. Please put those dates on your family calendars so that any conflicts can be recognized and resolved *early*. For each ensemble, members and parents are also encouraged to read carefully about the *attire* worn for performances. Almost every MEHS Band musician will be a member of the Symphonic Band or Wind Ensemble (or both); students wanting additional experience may also opt to join other ensembles.

- **The MEHS Symphonic Band** is open to all capable instrumental musicians enrolled at Maine-Endwell High School. There are no limits to the number of students who can participate. The Symphonic Band is the main *band* organization within the MEHS Music Department, and performs a variety of Concerts, Parades, Competitions and other events each year with full membership. The Symphonic Band meets daily as a full-credit course during 1st Period.
- **The MEHS Wind Ensemble** is a smaller and more select band that exists as an advanced organization meant for advanced performers. The Wind Ensemble performs more difficult literature, and offers students the opportunity and challenge of performing individualistically, as most instrument families are assigned one-to-a-part. The Wind Ensemble meets as a half-credit course on Days 1-3-5. For your future planning, membership in the Wind Ensemble is typically by teacher recommendation or individual audition.
- **The MEHS Jazz Ensemble** is open to all students who have an *appropriate* level of ability on any instrument used in the Jazz Ensemble (a typical "Big Band"). The Jazz Ensemble is made up of performers on Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Drums, Bass, Guitar, Piano, Vibes and, on occasion, Voice. The group specializes in music from the Jazz genre such as *swing, blues, pop-rock, funk, ballads, and various Latin* styles. Students are taught and encouraged to *Improvise*. The Jazz Ensemble meets as a half-credit course on Days 2-4-6. For your future planning, membership in the Jazz Ensemble is by teacher recommendation/invitation, or through an individual audition.
- **Pep Band** is a fast-paced and *fun* option open to all musicians regardless of skill-level. Pep Band plays at sports games and other special events, using primarily Pop songs, chants, fight songs and cheers. While we are in the process of rebuilding the marching band program, the members of Pep Band also have the opportunity to perform the moving Drill portion of the Homecoming Day halftime show, and may also help teach marching fundamentals to younger band members.
- **The MEHS Spartan Marching Band***, when available, is an extra-curricular group open to all students in grades 7-12 who perform on a woodwind, Brass or Percussion instrument, or who join the **Color Guard**. The Spartan Marching Band performs a Halftime Field Show during football games, plus in occasional competitions and other events. Rehearsals begin in the summer and continue throughout the Fall. * Note for 2014-2015: This aspect of our Program is *partially* available again; for this year, the Field Show will be specially designed for one game only (Homecoming Day) for volunteers who would like to experience performing a field show without a long-term commitment. See Mr. Linaberry by Friday, September 19th to sign up.
- **"Players"** (also known as **Jazz Club**) is an extra-curricular group formed to give extra education in improvisation to all interested musicians. Any interested student is invited to be a member, regardless of what instrument/voice is used. The "Players" group typically performs on at least one Concert yearly and often performs 'gigs' in the school and community. The rehearsal meetings are scheduled differently each year, specifically to best suit the needs of the students who join. **NOTE:** "Players" will begin in mid-October, and will be scheduled during an after-school time slot on whichever weekday will allow the largest number of interested performers to participate.
- **Various Small Ensembles*** such as Woodwind and Brass Quintets, Percussion ensembles, Clarinet Choirs, etcetera, are formed each year for advanced players showing interest, and are rotated as the Lesson Lab group. Along with performing solos, small-ensemble playing is among the highest levels of music performance, and all advanced students are encouraged to seek membership in such a group. *NOTE: At the beginning of each year, interested Upperclassmen should look for a sign-up sheet in the "Lessons" area of the Band Bulletin Board.

INSTRUMENTATION:*

We should always be striving to have the best possible bands. One significant factor in making an outstanding band is balanced instrumentation. We can affect our instrumentation in the best way if students are willing to 'transfer' to other instruments when necessary. We have been very successful with transfers over the years, and it is an expected component of excellence to assume that capable students will continue to try learning new instruments to help the band at times when instrumentation imbalances exist. *2014-2015 (so far) appears to need more players on Bassoon, French Horn and Tuba. See Mr. Linaberry promptly if you're interested.

CONCERT PERFORMANCES ~ BASIC INFORMATION: (Please refer to the “Policies” section on page 9 and the “Attendance” sections on page 15 for very detailed information)

All students will be given a **Calendar of dates & events covering the entire school year**. Please note that mandatory dates are shown in **bold**, and are marked with a musical note (♪). The main events include the Homecoming Parade & performance, Fall Concert, Winter Concert, Pops Concert, Prism Concert, and Spring Concert. In addition, a typical year also has performances for *Music In Our Schools Month* (March) at the Oakdale Mall, the annual state rating at the *New York State School Music Association Major Organization Festival*, and participation in the *M-E Ice Cream Social* and *M-E Music Boosters’ Chicken Barbecue*. If any other events arise that are not currently posted on the Band Calendar, students will be notified of the event at least one month in advance.

All performing group members are asked to arrive at least **thirty minutes prior** to the start of the performance, and to be dressed in proper attire. If there are any conditions causing a conflict, students are expected to discuss it with the director immediately, *and* tell the Section Leader.

On *shared* Concerts (when more than one group is performing), there may be times when one group (e.g. Symphonic Band) will be seated in the Auditorium while another group is performing. It is expected that *all* of our students show respect to their peers by demonstrating appropriate audience behavior while waiting for their own performance to begin.

EQUIPMENT

- **School-owned instruments** are distributed at the beginning of the school year for students who have not yet picked them up. Students should *ask* if they need an additional home-practice instrument; that might not be possible in every case, but I’ll do everything I can to meet students’ needs.
- **Folders** are handed out in each large-group performance class. Like the school-owned instruments, folders and music are the property of the M-E School District and it is expected that the materials will remain in good condition.
- **Lesson folders** are recommended for ALL students to hold lesson books, fingering charts, exercise sheets, practice records, etc. I have some here that I can provide to anyone who asks (simply paper folders, but they will last with care). If the paper folder doesn’t last, I strongly recommend that students each have a way to organize Lesson materials (a more durable binder, folder, notebook, etc.).
- **Music Stands** - I’d like to give my yearly reminder that *every musician should own a music stand* for home practice. Playing posture and good lighting conditions during practice sessions help provide the foundation for successful progress. Music stands are available in all price ranges, from inexpensive folding wire stands to desktop stands, to fancy professional stands with adjustable racks.
- **Reeds** are kept here at all times, and are available for purchase at good rates. However, it is important for woodwind players to have *multiple reeds* on hand, so at the HS level it is **expected** that you’ll buy enough reeds at once so you’ll *always* have a playable reed ready. This year, I’ve asked Section Leaders to be sure all players have several playable reeds at once; that’s always the best recommendation for woodwind players, but it will also avoid disruptions caused by students needing to purchase a reed in the middle of a class period. I strongly urge you to buy a full box at a local music store. NOTE: For **Bassoon & Oboe** players, we’ve got a limited supply of commercial reeds on-hand, but it’s always best for students to develop their own reed-making skills and/or find a source for quality hand-made reeds.
- **Mutes** are available here in small supply. Trumpet players should **own** – as a minimum – a Straight mute (aluminum preferred), and Cup mute, and may want to consider a Wah-wah mute as well. Trombone players use mutes a *bit* less often; I recommend a Straight mute (metal) as the first purchase, followed by a Cup mute (“*Stone-Lined*” brand, or plastic or metal).
- **Lyres and flip-folios** are also available in small supply, but I still encourage band musicians to have their own (especially the style of lyre matched to the instrument). Those will be necessary for the Homecoming Parade and for any bleachers-playing you do, unless you have the ability to memorize your music easily.

COMMUNICATIONS

To ensure students have the correct updated information ...

- ... announcements will be made regularly in daily class rehearsals;
- ... important details will be displayed *daily* on the SmartBoard;
- ... signs will be posted as reminders;
- ... time-sensitive details (deadlines & instructions) will be distributed in written form;
- ... the Student Officers' team will use social-networking connections to pass important and timely details on to all Band members;
- ... Mr. Linaberry's webpage will *always* be a valuable place to find updates;
- ... "Quarter Notes", the Bands' quarterly newsletter, will be distributed in school *and* will be posted on the webpage as a PDF download;
- view the **scrolling banner** on the webpage for the most recent news & most important information.

In school, the main Bands Bulletin Board is a daily source for updated information about Lessons, Deadlines, Events, Grades/Tests, All-County Auditions and more.

Students and parents are encouraged to communicate about upcoming band functions frequently since schedules sometimes change. If there is any uncertainty, please contact Mr. Linaberry.

When handouts are given in class, it is each student's responsibility to get them home and share them with parents. Newsletters will be sent out a few times per year to keep parents posted on current events.

The Band Director will also release events information and other reminders using email. To sign up for these reminders email rlinaberry@me.stier.org and write "Band Info Subscribe" in the subject heading.

When you are having a problem, *please don't hesitate to call!* Mr. Linaberry may be able to help or suggest a solution. You are important to the Maine-Endwell High School Band Program. Let us help you.

Robin Linaberry

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MUSIC SUITE REMINDERS:

While you already know these things, please be reminded that being in the Music Suite at times *other than* your classes and lessons is a privilege which can be taken away. Please always remember that classes, rehearsals and lessons take place in one of the Music Suite's rooms *every period of every day*. Therefore, you are expected to be respectful of the teaching and learning at all times. Follow all behavior expectations in the Music Suite, and you'll find it to be the *best place in the building*.

Remember also there should be no food or drink* in the hall, practice rooms, rehearsal rooms or Auditorium. (*Water is accepted, so long as students take care of garbage/recycling). Also, it's a school-wide rule that hats and cell-phones are not allowed.

The large Bulletin Boards in the Band Room are the best places to find updated information about any Band, the Music Boosters, Lessons, Grades, the Calendar of Events, and more.

~ POLICIES ~

REHEARSALS: The *Symphonic Band* class meets daily during 1st Period - It is expected that everyone will be in the room by the time the 7:45AM bell rings (warning bell rings 5' earlier), with all instruments, music and equipment ready. Students arriving after the second bell should enter with a signed pass. *Wind Ensemble* and *Jazz Ensemble* rehearsals are held during 2nd Period on alternate days - since a number of students must come from other classes, they'll be given an additional minute on the passing time. We will always begin rehearsals promptly. Since both verbal and non-verbal directions are common in a performance group, students must be willing to be attentive: *listen and watch*.

MUSIC LESSONS ~ THE "LABS": Lessons are an integrated part of the instrumental music curriculum, and are a required part of band classes. **Each student will have an individual or small group lesson once during each six-day cycle, on a rotating basis so that no student will miss the same academic period for a Music Lesson more than twice during each grading Quarter.** Because we'll use five or six periods of the day throughout a 6-Day cycle, students will not rotate back to the same class period for 30-36 days. Moreover, every attempt is made to minimize conflicts; *most* students will not be scheduled to have lessons on the same day they'll have their Science, Math or Writing labs.

- Classroom teachers are given copies of the Music Lesson Lab schedule, but **it is the responsibility of the music student to communicate with teachers about the lesson, especially with regard to homework, assignments and class responsibilities.**
- When a student's Lesson is scheduled during the same period as *a test, quiz, field trip, guest speaker*, or some other *unmissable* event in another class, he/she may be excused from the lesson. It can be made up at a later time. The student is expected to communicate with the director *before* missing the lesson. A log sheet is hanging at all times on the Band bulletin board; students should sign that when a Lesson must be missed.
- When students are scheduled for a Lesson during their Lunch period, they should eat first, then come to the lesson as quickly as possible. Students will *not* miss a full Lunch period for a Lesson.

MAKING UP MISSED LESSONS: Like other MEHS classes, missed Lessons are expected to be made up; the *plans** for that Make-Up must be made within six days after missing the lesson (*the actual make-up Lesson might need to take place later, but the arrangements must be made). In music performance, it's additionally important to do the make-up right away because skill-building occurs in order. A music lesson is a time for the musician to get feedback on how well his/her personal practice strategies have helped to improve the skills, along with updated suggestions. Therefore, it's only possible to do *well* in music by keeping a steady schedule of practicing & lesson performance for feedback. Make-ups should be completed as the missed lessons occur, and should *not* be left for the very end of the semester. **Note:** By making use of the *Band Mentors*, students will always be able to find a time for making up missing work.

GRADES: The MEHS Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble are credit-bearing academic courses for which students are graded in a variety of areas. *Lessons, performances, practice* and *Benchmark exams* all contribute to the quarterly grade. See the "MEHS Band Grading Policy" (next Section) for complete details. NOTE: The Grading policy across the entire MECSD was changed in the summer of 2014 ~ this Bands Grading Policy below is a subtle revision to fit the new district-level plan. A copy of the Grading Policy is made available to students, displayed on the Bands bulletin board; for Parents, the document is distributed and discussed at Open House, and at Band Parents' Night. In short, the grades are determined with this formula:

80% ACHIEVEMENT

- Performance progress in Lessons
- Concerts
- Performance Assessments (short quizzes targeted at skill-development)
- NYSSMA Solo performance

20% PROCESS

- Effort/Participation in daily classes
- Homework assignments & outside-of-class projects (i.e. Intonation Maps, Rudiments Inventory, Practice Records, Forms to turn in, *etcetera*)

MEHS BANDS *GRADING POLICY*

In its simplest terms, the Band grade comes from

- **80% Achievement** (*Performance quality/progress in Lessons/ Concerts*)
- **20% Process** (*Effort / Participation / Homework / Assignments*)

The ACHIEVEMENT portion (80%) of the Quarterly Grade *will be calculated from approximately 10 grades each Quarter, including 5 Lessons, 1-2 Concert events, 2-3 Skill-assessments, and 1 Solo performance task.*

Lessons Performance: Each Lesson is graded on a 100-pt. Rubric. Students must complete *at least five* Lessons per Quarter (missed Lessons should be made up). NOTE: The gradebook will keep *only* the highest 5 Lesson-grades from each Quarter.

Concert Events Performance: One grade will be entered after each scheduled Concert (refer to the Bands Calendar). The grade starts at 100.

Note: Students who miss an event for *Excused* reasons will make up the grade by performing their parts for individual evaluation using an accepted grading rubric for Instrumental Music. Students who skip an event (a “No-show”) or miss it for other Unexcused reasons will receive a “0” for the grade, and no make-up will be allowed.

Specifically stated, Concert Performance deductions are shown here:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▪ Emergency Absence (illness or family emergency) | No Deduction |
| ▪ Excused Absence, <i>turned in before the deadline</i> | No Deduction |
| ▪ Excused Absence, <i>turned in <u>after</u> the deadline*</i> | Deduction of 1-through-10 pts
The grade deduction reflects how many <u>changes</u> are needed to cover for the absence |
| ▪ UNEXCUSED reason for absence, or “No Show” | Grade becomes “0”
Unexcused absences are <i>not</i> eligible for a make-up grade; the grade stays at 0 |

Skill Assessments: 2-3 short Skill Assessments per Quarter, focused on skills & concepts chosen to match the level-of-need for each student. Each is graded on a 100-pt Rubric. *Note: Although we expect Skill Assessments will take place 2-3 times per quarter, IF none are assigned in a given Quarter this portion of the grade will stay at default of “100”.

Solo Performance*: From 100 points ~ students attending an *official* NYSSMA Solo Festival will use the NY score (Levels 1-2-3-4 scores are converted by multiplying the 28-point Rubric by 3.6), while *unofficial* in-house grades are earned by performing the Solo in school for the Teacher, who will use the same NYSSMA-based scoring method. Each Quarter has a specific aspect of the Solo performance:

1st Qtr: Student chooses & commits to preparing a specific composition. **Grade = 100 or 0**

2nd Qtr: Student turns in the completed “Solo Preparation Guide” **Grade = 100 or 0**

3rd Qtr: Perform the Solo for evaluation **Rubric Grade = 70-100**

4th Qtr: Perform the annual Watkins-Farnum Performance Scale (sight-reading assessment) **Quarterly Grades are based on *growth (improvement)* from the pre-score, and will be displayed on the WFPS Score-Conversion chart.** Basically, grade options include:

100 =	Improvement of 10% or greater from the pre-test* (*IF the WFPS pre-score was already 80 or above, <i>any</i> improvement yields a Quarterly grade of 100)
95 =	Improvement up to 9% (for pre-scores of 80 or greater, successfully repeating the <i>same score</i> yields a Quarterly grade of 95)
90 =	Repeating a score equal to the pre-score (for pre-scores of 80 or above, a <i>loss</i> of up to 5% yields a Quarterly grade of 90)
85 =	For a loss of 6%-10% from the pre-test
80 =	For a loss of 11%-20% from the pre-test
70 =	For a loss of 21% or greater

The PROCESS portion (20%) of the Quarterly Grade *will be calculated from approximately 8-10 grades, including 5 Participation grades and 3-5 Homework/Assignments.*

Daily Class Participation / Department ~ A bi-weekly grade is entered for each student. **The participation grade will always start at “100”** - Deductions are only taken when problematic behaviors are observable during daily class periods. Deductions are commonly recorded for disruptions, inattentiveness, missing music/pencil/equipment, repeated tardiness, gum-chewing and other such behaviors which affect the entire class. These deductions will be able to be viewed by the Student at any time.

Homework, Assignments & outside-of-class Projects: These grades – usually 3-to-5 times per Quarter - come from students’ assigned work on a list of tasks including Intonation Maps (winds), Rudiments Inventory (Percussionists), Practice Records (all), Forms to turn in, *and others.*

"HOW TO GET A HIGH QUARTERLY GRADE IN BAND"

To get a good grade in **Lessons Performance**

The Lesson Performance grade will be easy if you consider some key aspects:

- *Attendance*: Attend your lessons – the schedule will be posted in plain view, and you'll see reminders regularly. *You* decide what to do to remember your Lessons; if you have no other plan, use your agenda. When a conflict with another class requires you to miss a Lesson, see me, make the arrangements, and get it made up. NOTE: the most common reason for a low grade in Band is for not making up missed Lessons. It's important to remember too that we now have an exceptional Mentors Program, and *mentors* can help you with make-up lessons.
- *Performance during the Lesson*: When you're in Lessons, do your personal best at all times.
- *Personal progress* (your improvement of your own skill-level): Make *progress* at the concepts covered (fingerings, scales, rhythms/meters, etc.), even if you're not perfect ... just get *better* from one Lesson to the next.
- *Practice*: Keep good notes about what you're studying, and keep a regular *schedule* for your Practicing.

If you come to at least 5 Lessons in the Quarter, stay attentive, keep up personal practicing (even if it's irregular), and just try your best, it's impossible to get low grades in Lessons.

To get a good grade in **Concert & Event Performances**

- Don't miss Band events (emergencies excepted).
- Solve your conflicts or - when that is not possible - communicate the problem *immediately*. Do not wait.
- If you miss events for an emergency or for an *excused* reason, calmly do the best job you can when you play your "make up" concert – you'll still get a good grade.

In *almost* all cases, the entered grade here will be 100. Deductions result from not reporting excused absences long enough before the performance date (see the Performance Attendance policy), or observable poor performance including severe problems with the make-up performance. However, "No Shows" (players who *skip* an event without warning) and *Unexcused* absences result in a "0" as a grade for that performance. Skipping is an avoidable personal choice, so *no make-up is allowed* - just accept the zero and move on.

To get a good grade in **Skill Assessments (Playing quizzes)**

- Be sure you know what you'll be asked to play in Lessons; take notes as necessary ... Benchmark tests on skills are designed to be *short*, but they'll focus specifically on a required skill so make sure you know what to practice.
- Employ wise practice strategies: slow-to-fast practice, repetitive drill, "rhythmatizing", writing on the music, etc.
- Re-take any tests you feel didn't go well ~ you can re-do a Skill Assessment as many times as you want before the end of the Quarter. Our philosophy is to help you get *better*, and never to punish you or make Band membership difficult or uncomfortable.

To get a good grade on the **Solo Performance** tasks

- During the 1st Quarter, it's an *easy* 100 ... your assignment is *only* to choose & commit to a specific Solo for your instrument. We'll explore options during the Lesson classes. Choose something correct for your level of playing, so you get *just the right* amount of challenge ("not too easy, and not too hard"). However, failure to finish this *easy choice* results in a "0".
- During the 2nd Quarter, it's again a very easy 100 ... you'll be given a short (written) Solo Performance Guide sheet. Simply complete it and return it before the end of the 2nd Quarter to get a 100 on this assignment. Failure to complete the form on time results in a "0".
- During the 3rd Quarter, you'll perform your Solo for rating. You may choose to be judged at the official NYSSMA Solo Festival (you'll need to sign up in January), or you might choose to perform it in-school for a non-NYSSMA score. Solos at Levels 5 & 6 are graded on a 100-point scale. Solos at Levels 1-through-4 are graded on a 28-point scale which will be converted to the Quarterly grade through multiplying by 3.6. Example: A Level 4 Soloist goes to NYSSMA and is rated "*Outstanding*" with a score of 26 out of 28 ~ the Quarterly MEHS grade on this Solo is 94 (26 x 3.6). NOTE: The *minimum* grade entered for the Solo evaluation will be 70. Students can *only* get a lower grade ("0") by not doing the Solo.

- During the 4th Quarter, your ‘Solo’ grade comes from the annual Sight-Reading test. This is a standardized way to objectively evaluate your level of *improvement* with sight-reading. Over the past 25+ years of record-keeping, the *average* ME Band student’s improvement has been appx. 10% so it’s again easy to get a *very* high grade on the 4th Quarter Solo task.

To get a good grade in **Daily Class Participation / Deportment**

- Make the most out of the daily Rehearsal period.
- Arrive on time, be prepared with your instrument and equipment, and give your best effort for the whole period.
- Have a pencil on hand at all times, and use it whenever needed. A pencil was provided at the start of the year.
- Finish other homework; *don’t* open other work during the class period.
- Avoid conversations with neighbors unless the music requires it.
- Pay close attention to what’s going on at all times.
- Specifically, cell phones & texting are disallowed during the rehearsal periods
- In simple terms, do your *best work* whether you’re a great musician or not.

In *almost* all cases, the bi-weekly grade entered will be 100, but your own actions may affect it.

To get good grades on your **Homework/Assignments** is *very easy* ...

- You’ll be given detailed instructions about what to do, and when it’s due, whether it’s a worksheet to complete or just a permission slip to return. Simply take care of the obligation on or before the due-date.
- If you need extra assistance in any way see Mr. Linaberry, or your Section Leader, or any Band Mentor.

The intent of this Grading Policy is to help you *progress* as a Musician, while also helping to keep your grades high. Good luck!

BAND GRADES ~ “FAQ”

“I’m in Symphonic Band and in another Band. How do my Lesson Grades get applied?”

- Lesson Grades are applied to ONE credit of study. If you are in Symphonic Band and another Band course, your Lesson Grades will be averaged into the Symphonic Band grade *only*. (On Parent Portal, you’ll notice that your Lesson Grades *do show up* in Symphonic Band, but not in the other courses.)
- Sometimes students are in Wind Ensemble or Jazz Ensemble, but *not* Symphonic Band; in that case, your Lesson grades will be averaged into *both* of those half-credit courses. You’ll see the same Lesson Grades in both courses when you view the Parent Portal.

“What happens to my grade if I have to miss a Band event for a legitimate (or emergency) reason?”

- Nothing, if you have submitted an approved excuse before the deadline. Your absence can be “covered” ONLY if we know about it very early. “Covering” a missing part will require re-assigning the parts, re-training players or, in some cases, bringing in a professional to fill the vacancy. All of those possibilities require *time* for planning. For more information, refer to the Attendance Policy for *Events*.

“How can I get Extra Credit in Band?”

- There are *many* ways to earn extra credit in Band. See the “Extra Credit Policy” sheet on the Bands Bulletin Board ~ you may qualify for extra credit, but it will *only* be applied if you fill out the form and return it before the deadline (3:00pm on the last day of the Quarter).

“I’m smart in other classes, but not very skilled in music performance. Does that mean I’ll always get a low grade in Band?”

- ***Not at all!!*** The MEHS Bands Grading Policy is designed to allow you to earn excellent grades by giving your full *effort*, whether you are an outstanding performer or not. You may not be able to perform everything we do, but your grade will reflect the amount of care you give to your attendance, *progress* (are you better this week than you were *last week?*), practicing, etc. In almost every case, if you attend Lessons regularly (or promptly make up the ones you’ve missed), come to all Band events, and generally give *your best effort* in classes & performances, you should get an excellent grade.

Note: The average grade for Band students over the past several years is *above* 94.

(More entries in a future edition ~ Please help by suggesting other topics ...)

SEATING PLACEMENT:

Seating placement will be determined by the director at the beginning of each school year, using objective factors (e.g. the *most recent NYSSMA score, the Sight-Reading test score, etc.*) as the first step in the decision at the beginning of the year. In some years there will be specific auditions only for *1st part* and *Principal Player* positions. In most years, however, the seating placement auditions must be completed *before the end of the second week of school*. **Students should refer to the “September Seating Audition” sheet hanging on the bulletin board for very clear details; all students are asked to play “the most difficult music you feel you can play well”, and what they choose to play is up to them.**

The resulting seating positions are based on the needs of the band, individual playing ability and, to some extent, grade level. At times students may be disappointed with the seating and are encouraged to discuss the situation with the director. *Challenge Auditions* are scheduled when necessary. Students who are seated in the Principal Player seats have the additional responsibility of communicating with the director about the performance of players in the section. Even without *Challenge Auditions*, the seating placements may be adjusted at times throughout the year as needed, especially to accommodate changes in students’ ability levels, and to break up pockets of undesirable behavior when necessary.

Principal Players *may* or *may not* also be *Section Leaders*. The Section Leaders are the upperclassmen in the MEHS Band program, and contribute a great deal to the overall well-being of the band, in musical as well as social terms. Section Leader information can be found later in this packet. **Reminder: Auditions for 1st parts and Principal Player positions will take place during the *second Lesson* of the year.**

SECTION LEADERS:

1. The Role of Symphonic Band Section Leaders

- a. Take Attendance in their Sections at all rehearsals, and specifically at Performances.
- b. Manage and monitor the Folders & Music.
- c. Manage and monitor Equipment (esp. Percussion); make arrangements to get special equipment when necessary (mutes, Etc.).
- d. Monitor and help Section members. Check markings in each Folder; assist Section members with markings when necessary. Be on guard for specific Section problems which might require help for specific Section members (tuning problems, technical problems, Etc.).
- e. Run Sectional rehearsals when necessary. The Section Leaders will be given a specific strategy for helping the Section to improve, and will be in charge when the section is alone for its occasional Sectional Rehearsals.
- f. Meetings: stay after the morning Rehearsal once weekly for no more than 4-5 minutes to discuss Section needs and progress.
- g. Be trained in the use of Tuners, recording equipment, metronome techniques, administering tests (like the Watkins-Farnum sight-reading test), Etcetera.

2. Section Leaders are determined using the following method:

- a. The Section Leader is the Senior in the section, assuming that person has had regular membership in Band up through the Senior year.
 - i. If there are no Seniors in that section, the person with the most experience (*e.g. via seating position, festival attendance, etc.*) will serve as Section Leader.
 - ii. If the only Senior in that section is not enrolled every day in Band, that Senior will share the position with the next most experienced person in the section. Also, if the only Senior in that section is a far less-accomplished player than the Principal Player, she/he may be encouraged to share the position with the Principal Player in the best interest of the section.
- b. If there are multiple Seniors in the section, the person who held the higher seating position at the conclusion of the previous year will serve as Section Leader.
- c. If multiple Seniors shared essentially the same seating position (i.e. rotations), the person who received the better NYSSMA rating on that instrument will serve as Section Leader.
- d. If all conditions are equal, the Seniors will be asked to share the position, or to elect one of the seniors to serve as Section Leader with a unanimous vote.

CONCERT ATTIRE

Concerts are special events requiring special attire. The following uniform attire is expected at *CONCERT* performances unless you are notified otherwise -

Symphonic Band

- Ladies - ϕ White Blouse (*long sleeved preferred*)
 Black Skirt or Pants (*below-the-knee length*)
 Black Shoes
- Gentlemen - ϕ White Shirt (*long sleeved with collar*)
 Black Pants
 Black Shoes & Socks (**no sneakers*)
 Long Tie of your choice; Jackets optional

Wind Ensemble (*formal black bow ties & cummerbunds will be provided*)

- Ladies - ϕ White Blouse (*long sleeved preferred*)
 Black Skirt or Pants (*below-the-knee length*)
 Black Shoes
- Gentlemen - ϕ White Shirt (*long sleeved with wing-tip tux collar*)
 Black Pants
 Black Shoes & Socks (**no sneakers*)

Jazz Ensemble (*lamé bow ties & cummerbunds will be provided*)

- Everyone - ϕ White Shirt (*long sleeves preferred*)
 Black Pants/Skirt
 Black Shoes & Socks
 For *some* events, we'll use a Long Tie of your choice (*colorful*)

ϕ Performers are encouraged to purchase a formal white shirt with wing-tip tux collar in addition to the standard white top. Try a local formalwear shop for pre-worn formal shirts, or look for sales on these shirts. NOTE: Current Band Parents report that they've found wing-tip shirts at Michael's craft store, and at J.C. Penney. Also, these online distributors have been found to offer low-cost formal shirts:

www.menswearhouse.com www.uniformalwearhouse.com www.gpuniforms.com
www.concertattire.com www.formalwear-outlet.com

All Band Members for Parades (*MEHS Band Polo Shirts & Hats will be provided*)

Black Shoes & Socks (*not sneakers*) – We recommend shoes like Dinkles or DrillMasters
Black slacks (*not jeans*)
For colder weather Parades, add a White long-sleeved turtleneck.

Other Attire:

- For the *Homecoming Day* performance, band members should wear the Parade uniform described just above.
- For *less formal events* including pep band performances, extra-credit football bleachers performances, etc., band members should simply wear jeans & the (provided) shirt/hat, with any additional clothing needed for weather (blue & gold colors are preferred).
- Full-time members of the *Spartan Marching Band* wear full uniforms provided by the school and fitted to each student. The full uniform does require that white shoes be worn with blue/black socks. Students can obtain inexpensive special marching shoes from a variety of sources (information provided in school), or may wear white sneakers *provided the sneakers are kept completely clean and have no stripes or other designs*. NOTE: It is planned that the full-time Spartan Marching Band will become available soon.

Please speak to the director confidentially if you have any trouble obtaining these items. Please take care of getting your concert and marching attire as early as possible.

ATTENDANCE POLICY, PART 1 – BAND EVENTS:

Obviously membership in a performance group of any kind requires attendance at all major events. Nonetheless, unbreakable conflicts occasionally arise, but must be dealt with as early as possible. Grade deductions for missing events are as follows:

1. ***Emergency** *No deduction*
*The only *excusable* reason for last-minute absence is *illness* or *family emergency*. For those absences, students are expected simply to submit a short note upon returning or, if possible, to call or e-mail the director when the emergency arises.

2. **Excused Absence, before the deadline** *No deduction*

3. **Excused Absence, with the excuse turned in after the deadline*** *10-pt. deduction*
* The Deadline is *Three weeks* (or more) before a mandatory performance, and *one week* before a Practice

4. **UNEXCUSED reason for absence, or “No Show” without emergency** *Grade becomes “0”*
Examples of unacceptable excuses include ...
 - “*Had to work.*” [Make arrangements with your employer early.]
 - “*Couldn’t get a ride.*” [Be responsible. Check with the Director, or your Section Leader, or another Band member to arrange for a ride.]
 - “*Didn’t know about it.*” [Be responsible. You’ve been given several types of advance notice.]
 - “*Parents made me stay home to work or study.*” [Attendance is an expected part of membership in any performance group. Budget your time accordingly.]Remember: *No Make-Up is allowed* for Unexcused Absences or “No-Shows”

To report a conflict requiring you to miss a Band event ... Students will find copies of the “*Event Excuse Slip*” hanging on the Band bulletin board. Students who recognize a schedule conflict with a Band event are to submit an *Event Excuse Slip* immediately. Except for emergencies, all other conflicts which would require a student to miss a performance should be reported no later than 3 weeks prior to the event in order to allow time for changes, reassignments, and other work to be done. Please note that ***part-time jobs are not acceptable excuses for missing a Concert*** – *with the entire year’s dates in hand, members are expected to communicate the school schedule to employers.*

Excused absences will be made up by performing excerpts for individual evaluation (using an accepted grading rubric for Instrumental Music).

A “*No-Show*” (unexcused absence with no prior warning) will result in a grade of “0” for that event, and the student will not be allowed to make it up.

We ask that Music Department dates be marked on all *personal* and *home/family* calendars. *Ample notice will be given if any performances might be added to our schedule.* A complete calendar of important dates for the entire year - both the mandatory events and the extra events - is made available for students in school, has been attached to this handout, and will always be displayed on the Bands bulletin board. The bulletin board display is the single best place for students to find updates and revisions. NOTE: Parents wanting regular updates are strongly encouraged to provide a home e-mail address for group mailings.

ATTENDANCE POLICY, PART 2 – DAILY CLASSES / REHEARSALS:

The Attendance policy for daily class periods is described thoroughly in the Maine-Endwell High School handbook and Band classes are treated like any other curricular class. Please refer to the “Comprehensive Attendance Policy ~ Policy #5121” in the Student Handbook

DISCIPLINE CODE

Any discipline problems will be addressed immediately to help avert a more serious problem. You represent Maine-Endwell High School, your local community, and yourself as a citizen. *Think* before you *do*! See your school handbook for specific policies, as all policies in the handbook pertain to band class. Aside from any consequences from the MECSD Administration, serious behavioral problems *may* result in suspension from membership in MEHS music groups. Although New York students are required to complete a unit of credit in the “Arts”, the curriculum does not specify that the credit must be in music. A Music performance group is an elective in the schedule, and membership is a privilege.

FUND RAISING AND THE MEHS BANDS ~ F.A.Q.

Is it mandatory for each student to participate in each Fundraiser?

Absolutely not. Our goal is simply to make enough fundraising opportunities *available*. Students are *not required* to do any fundraising. However, since many of our activities involve cost, the teachers in the Music Department recommend some degree of participation.

What happens to the fundraiser profits?

The profit from each student's fundraising work is deposited into an account bearing that student's name. The accounts are managed by the M-E Music Boosters. After each fundraiser is complete, a listing of students' accounts will be posted in the Music Suite. Each student will be able to monitor his/her account growth.

How many fundraisers will be available this year?

In a typical year, we make plans to provide *at least* three fund-raising opportunities, and sometimes more. The largest and traditionally the most successful event - the Citrus Fruit Sale - will occur in January. Information will be distributed in school, and all students will have the *opportunity* to participate in fund-raising events.

How may the students use the money?

The Music Department and Music Boosters have prepared a policy statement detailing the functions for which students can use their Booster Account money. That policy is displayed on the *Music Boosters'* bulletin board. In short, they can use it for Music Department trips, NYSSMA events, summer music study, and the Music Department Banquet among other things.

What if a student chooses to do no fundraising?

Again, it is *not* a required activity. However, if students do not participate in any fundraising activities, then payments will need to be made in cash (*or by check*) for any cost-bearing events. Some families prefer to pay for all events, while others prefer to participate in every available fundraiser. The choice should be completely up to each family.

How much will this year's trip cost?

Detailed Trip information will be sent each year as soon as it is available. In the planning process for a typical trip, we are responsible to have our bill paid in full several weeks before the trip; therefore, we expect we'll need to have all students' fundraising profits (and/or cash payments) raised usually no later than February for any trips we may take. Students are encouraged to make deposits to their music accounts whenever possible to supplement their fundraising profits.

When a student graduates, where does the money go?

The Music Boosters have also designed a very careful and detailed policy about leftover funds. The most important part is that graduates' accounts are 'rolled over' to any younger sibling in the Music Department, if one exists.

Questions? Feel free to see or call Mr. Linaberry at any time

MUSIC BOOSTERS ACCOUNTS / FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Each MEHS Music student has the *opportunity* to have an account managed for him/her by the Boosters Treasurer. The account may be built from fund-raising efforts, personal deposits, or a combination. We recommend that students use this option as a way to help manage money for music department events, but also as a way to learn about banking, statements, deposits/withdrawals, etc. A full copy of the detailed Music Boosters Account Policy Statement is attached at the end of this packet.

TRIP POLICY

[A revised written policy is in development at this time. Short-term details will be given out this year along with all information about the Spring Trip]

M-E MUSIC BOOSTER ACCOUNTS POLICY STATEMENT

1. Each student in the M-E High School Music Department will have an individual account set up for him/her.
2. Each account will include:
 - any balance (positive or negative) carried over from the student's previous year in the High School.
 - any rollover/deposit from the student's sibling (who no longer participates in Music Dept.)
 - funds raised through the **fundraisers sponsored by the M-E Music Boosters**. Funds a student may earn from other Music Dept. related fundraisers are not included in this policy. If a student desires to have funds earned from other Music Dept. related activities deposited in his/her MUSIC BOOSTER account then arrangements to do so must be made with the chairperson of that activity and the Music Boosters. *Music Boosters will not be responsible for collection of money or distribution of profits of any fundraisers not sponsored by them.*
3. A **written request will be required** from a student to transfer any money from this M-E Music Booster Account for use in any Music Dept. sponsored event such as:
 - the annual Music Banquet
 - solo and ensemble NYSSMA fees
 - Music Dept. trip deposits

These requests are to be made by the deposit deadline for the event. All money due from fundraisers must be turned in before a student is eligible to take part in any Music Booster sponsored event. (Future fundraisers, Music Dept. trip, Music Banquet, etc.)

4. **Money left in any account after a student has graduated or has left the Music Dept. while still attending MEHS or while attending another High School will be rolled over to a sibling's High School Music Booster Account. Rollovers occur at the beginning of each school year. If there is no sibling account, the balance will be deposited in the account of the appropriate music organization. Disbursements will not be made to those other than siblings.**

Please transfer: \$_____ from my Account

Name: _____

Function: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____