



**Eden Band Handbook  
&  
Course Expectations**

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**Mr. Myles Kifner  
2023-2024**

## **Greetings Fellow Musician!**

Welcome to Mr. Kifner's Instrumental Classes for the 2023-2025 Academic Year! To successfully participate in this course, the student and parent/guardian must review the enclosed information, as it is paramount for student success. By signing the document, you agree to all rules and regulations stated within. I strive to hold students to their most professional self, and in order to do so, clear understanding of these expectations is **required**.

## **Course Content**

Band is a full year performance-based course. We will be performing various styles of Wind Band literature. Through the rehearsal and performance of assigned band literature, students will develop the following skills:

- Aural Skills: related to intonation, balance, blend, interval identification, pitch recognition, chord progressions and rhythmic circumstances
- Technical Skills: fingering facility of performing on a musical instrument
- Musical Concepts: phrasing, articulation, terminology, dynamics, accents, stylistic performing, etc...

## **Supplies Needed**

- Band Folder with a pencil at all times
- Instrument:
  - Supplied through purchase, rental (HIGHLY recommend), or school loaned
  - If purchasing a new or used instrument, please discuss the instrument with me for my recommendation
  - Instrument cases should be labeled with the student's name, address, and contact number
  - A minimum of two-three reeds that are known to be working is required. Reeds should have a proper storage case to protect and enhance their life span. Please see Mr. Kifner for a reed recommendation when purchasing your own. You can also purchase reeds from me at school, but it is HIGHLY recommended to have your own box.
- Ensemble Music and Handouts as given by the teacher.
- Woodwind players: must have 2-3 quality reeds, swabs, and cork grease
- Brass players: must have quality slide lubrication and/or valve oil
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- Percussionists: 5B Snare Sticks
  - ◆ **Grades 7-9**: Vic Firth 5B Snare Sticks
  - ◆ **Grades 10-12**: Vic Firth 5A Snare Sticks

## **Student Conduct**

Students are expected to behave in a courteous, attentive, non-disruptive manner during lessons, rehearsal, and performances and should demonstrate respect to their instrument, other student's instruments (*if it's not yours, don't touch it!*), school-owned property and premises. No food, beverage, gum, or candy is permitted while performing on ANY instrument. It will cause bacteria to grow on the inside of your instrument and could make you very sick. Students are expected to demonstrate proper behavior and to give substitute teachers the same courtesy and respect as they would to the regular teacher.

## **Rehearsals**

Students are expected to be on time for rehearsal and in their seats with instruments and music ready to go ASAP. A student who is late must have a pass from a teacher. These class sessions are the rehearsals that help us to prepare for our concerts; where we put the various aspects of a piece of music together, not where you learn or practice your part. It is vital that you come to every rehearsal prepared by having practiced prior.

- Before Rehearsal Begins: Quickly get out your instrument and sit quietly in your seat. Make sure all reeds are soaked and all brass valves and slides are oiled/greased and ready to go. Get out materials that are listed on the board.
- During Rehearsal: Disruptions during rehearsal take away from the group's musical productivity and therefore are not acceptable. When the conductor stops, stop playing immediately and listen for instructions. Feel free to ask your section mates questions regarding the music we are rehearsing. Don't EVER be ashamed or afraid to ask someone for help on any aspect of the music or your instrument. After all, we are a group and we need to help our teammates out! Also, when you make a mistake, write something in your music immediately that will remind you to not make the same mistake again. Professional musicians write all over their music. Don't feel bad for marking your music up. We all learn from our mistakes!
- After Rehearsal: Students will be allowed a few minutes to pack up their instruments and return them to their storage units before the bell rings. All woodwind instruments should be swabbed at the end of each rehearsal. Students will remain inside the band room until the dismissal bell rings.

## **Small-Group Lessons**

All students will receive a weekly lesson on a rotating basis. This means you will only miss one singular class once every 5 weeks. Students will receive a separate schedule for each marking period. Lessons may be excused due to testing, quizzes, projects, or labs and will be honored only at the discretion of the teacher. Students *MUST* communicate with Mr. Kifner *BEFORE* the assigned lesson time if they are not able to attend, or the lesson grade for that week will result in a 0. There will also be a rotating make-up lesson once per week on Friday. Students may also make up lessons during study halls, lunches, resource rooms, or after school. These must be set up with Mr. Kifner ahead of time.

## **Individual Performance**

It is expected that each member will perform his/her assigned part to the best of their ability at all times. Students who cannot play their parts and who do not come to rehearsals, do not take their instruments home, or do not request extra help (when needed) can expect a lower grade. Playing assessments (a check for understanding) will be given throughout the year.

## **Practice**

Practicing is your homework for band. Maintaining good practice habits is essential to having good ensemble and personal success on an instrument. It is expected that students will practice on a daily basis outside of rehearsal time for the amount of practice necessary to perform their part to the level of the ensemble for which they are a member. Practice may also be done at school during study hall, lunch periods, or before and after school (with teacher approval). Practice rooms in school may be used for this reason during any period. Instrumental practice is required to maintain physical skills, muscle memory, to develop strength and endurance, and further musical development. In order to be a successful musician, personal practice at home is crucial. Each student will be given lesson assignments to practice each week. These are to be completed before the next lesson. Students will have to play their practiced material to move on to the following book numbers/music selections. The goal is to practice in shorter sessions more frequently, rather than for two hours in one day. Aim to practice for **15-20 minutes** per day.

## **Concert Citizenship**

Concerts are one kind of performance. Band members will experience concerts as both performers and audience members. When in the audience they will sit as a group in an assigned area of the auditorium and listen to and support the other musicians in the concert. Players are to act with **integrity** and **maturity** while in the audience; using appropriate applause at the end of a piece, not talking, and not leaving the auditorium while a selection is being performed. This is a part of the performance grade.

## **Performances**

Anyone missing a concert without a legitimate or timely excuse, or an excuse from the director, will receive a zero for that concert. Concerts cannot be made-up. The only legitimate reasons that will be accepted include personal illness or family emergency. Work or the lack of transportation will never be accepted! If a problem or conflict arises with a scheduled event, the student must see the instructor as soon as possible. Many conflicts can be worked out if you plan ahead!

## **School Owned Instruments**

The music department will supply several larger, or more expensive instruments such as tuba, bassoon, baritone, etc. Students are responsible for the instrument issued to them at the beginning of the year. The student AND their parents are responsible for any damage beyond normal wear. All school-owned instruments are issued with a contract stating the terms of agreement for the instrument, instrument condition, serial number, etc. Please refer to your contract for specifics. Note: due to the fluctuating size of some sections, it may be necessary in some years for two students in different ensembles to share an instrument. In this event, the repair cost will be split. Seniors: make sure to leave your school-owned equipment with me at the end of the school year!

## **Instrument Storage at School**

All instruments are to be kept in the Instrument storage lockers in the Music Department not in the student's hall locker, for any reason. Instruments should be labeled with the student's name and address, and if a student has a second instrument at home. It is a good idea that the make, model, and serial number of the instrument be kept on file at home.

## **Fundraising**

In High School, you will have the opportunity to go on Band Tour. To help defray the cost of this, we will have fundraising activities throughout the year. Individual fundraising is *NOT* mandatory, but it is highly encouraged! Information regarding these fundraisers will be distributed when appropriate throughout the school year. Money raised individually by students will be "earmarked" for that student to use in the future. This year we will be doing a pie sale, coffee sale, and cookie dough!

## **Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony**

All students in band are **required** to perform in the Memorial Day parade followed by the ceremony located in the Evergreen Cemetery. This is the *LARGEST* community audience we have each year. You will be given a grade for this performance.

## **Commencement Ceremony**

*ALL* students in 8-11th grade are **required** to perform in the Commencement ceremony. Your participation in this event will be graded and will count as your final exam.

## **Dress Code for Performances**

- “Eden Band” polo shirt on top with **SOLID BLACK dress pants**, **SOLID BLACK dress shoes**, and **SOLID BLACK socks**.
  
- Articles of clothing that are NOT allowed: Sneakers/converse, flip flops, Birkenstocks, leggings, jeans, joggers, sweatpants, etc. If you wouldn't wear it to church, don't wear it to a concert.
  
- **Band Polo Shirts:** Every fall (beginning of the school year) I will put an order in for polo shirts. If you need one because you lost yours, outgrew it, or would just like to have another, please see me and fill out the order form. I will *ONLY* be doing ONE order each year, so make sure that you are planning ahead if you think that you may need one as they are our **CONCERT DRESS REQUIREMENT ALL YEAR LONG**.
  
- **\*NEW FOR 2023:** All high school band students *MUST* purchase a new **BLACK** band polo!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

## **Eligibility**

If you are on the ineligibility list, you **MUST** attend or be excused from your lesson each week in order to receive an S. If you forget your lesson, you may do a make-up in the **SAME** week of your missed lesson. I am required to update your eligibility status by 2:30 pm on the last day of the week. Because of this, make-up lessons **CANNOT** be completed on Fridays after school in conjunction with AEP.

## **Remind Messaging & Google Classroom**

We will be using the Remind messaging platform and Google Classroom as communication tools. Instructions will come out soon as to how you can join my Remind messages.

## **House Points Motivational System**

We will be utilizing the “House Points” motivational system in band this year. This is a fun way to encourage team building in our ensemble while also competing for prizes and bonus points. Details will be shared at the beginning of the school year.

## Overall Grading Weights and Descriptions

Instrumental Lessons	Band Participation	Performances
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weight:</b> 50%</p> <p><b>Description:</b>            Each student will have a one-period-long lesson with me that will happen once per week in a small group made up of similar instruments. Lessons are set up on a rotating schedule so that students are not missing the same time each week. It is imperative that students come to their lessons not only for their grade for band, but because of the “snowball effect” that is caused by missing lessons. Each student will have a copy of the lesson schedule at the beginning of each quarter. Every lesson will start at 100 points. Please see the attached rubric to see how lessons are scored.            Students who are absent from school, testing in a class, have a lab, or group project, and miss their lesson are excused as long as they communicate the absence with me. Each lesson will be averaged together at the end of the quarter. Make-up lessons will take place after school or during a study hall/teacher prep and will earn an 85% for the lesson that was missed.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weight:</b> 30%</p> <p><b>Description:</b>            Band is an ensemble. The definition of ensemble is as follows: <i>“A group of musicians, actors, or dancers who perform together. A group of items viewed as a whole, rather than individually.”</i> This means that all students must put forth their best effort, behavior, attentiveness, willingness to learn, and participation for the success of the ensemble. Students who do not actively participate will lose participation points. Any forms of classwork (handouts, worksheets, etc.) will be a part of the band participation grade in addition to performing on our instruments.             Each student will be given ONE participation grade out of 100 points at the end of each quarter.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weight:</b> 20%</p> <p><b>Description:</b>            Students must be at <b>EVERY</b> concert. As an ensemble, we cannot perform without all of our members. HOWEVER, if an emergency arises, please contact me ASAP. A supplemental assignment and/or a lowering of overall band grade may occur if I am not notified in advance of a concert absence.</p>

## **Band Rehearsal Participation (One Quarterly Grade)**

Participation Grade	Description
<b>100</b>	The student is <b><i>enthusiastically</i></b> participating and is <b><i>fully engaged</i></b> in all aspects of rehearsal with regards to asking questions, writing on sheet music, playing to the best of their ability, evidence of individual practice, preparedness with necessary materials, minimal distractions, and following classroom procedures.
<b>90</b>	Student <b><i>almost always</i></b> participates and is <b><i>almost always</i></b> engaged for the majority of the rehearsal with regards to asking questions, writing on sheet music, playing to the best of their ability, evidence of individual practice, preparedness with necessary materials, minimal distractions and following classroom procedures.
<b>80</b>	Student <b><i>mostly</i></b> participates and is <b><i>mostly</i></b> engaged for the majority of rehearsal with regards to: asking questions, writing on sheet music, playing to the best of their ability, evidence of individual practice, preparedness with necessary materials, minimal distractions and following classroom procedures.
<b>70</b>	Student <b><i>sometimes</i></b> participates and is <b><i>sometimes</i></b> engaged in rehearsal. with regards to: asking questions, writing on sheet music, playing to the best of their ability, evidence of individual practice, preparedness with necessary materials, minimal distractions and following classroom procedures.
<b>65</b>	Student <b><i>does not</i></b> participate and <b><i>does not</i></b> engage in rehearsal with regards to: asking questions, writing on sheet music, playing to the best of their ability, evidence of individual practice, preparedness with necessary materials, minimal distractions and following classroom procedures.



## Instrumental Lessons (One Grade Per Lesson)

Grade	Description
<b>100</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>ALL</b> correct notes and rhythms</li> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>OUTSTANDING</b> attention to musical detail</li> </ul>
<b>95</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>ALMOST ALL</b> correct notes and rhythms</li> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>SOME</b> attention to musical detail</li> </ul>
<b>90</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>MOST</b> correct notes and rhythms</li> <li>• Student performs assignment with <b>SOME</b> attention to musical detail</li> </ul>
<b>85</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>MOST</b> correct notes and rhythms</li> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>LITTLE</b> attention to musical detail</li> </ul>
<b>80</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>SOME</b> correct notes and rhythms</li> <li>• Student performs assignments with <b>LITTLE</b> attention to musical detail</li> </ul>
<b>75</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student is <b>on time</b> for lessons, but shows <b>no evidence</b> of having practiced</li> </ul>
<b>70</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student is <b>late</b> to their lesson and shows <b>no evidence</b> of having practiced</li> </ul>
<b>65</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavior, participation and preparation are <b>well below average</b></li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student <b>did not</b> come to their lesson and <b>did not</b> contact Mr. Kifner to explain the reason for having missed the lesson.</li> <li>• A makeup lesson is <b>necessary</b> to improve this grade. Students cannot earn more than an 85% on a make-up lesson</li> </ul>

→ Musical Detail: Dynamics, Articulations (accents, staccato, legato, slurs, etc.), Phrasing, Style

→ Having and utilizing a pencil is mandatory. No evidence of having or using a pencil will result in a **lowered** lesson grade.

→ To keep track of practice routines, please do not forget to grab a weekly practice sheet after each lesson from the band room. You will fill out the practice sheet as you practice between lessons at home. Turn in practice sheets at the following lesson. Prizes and parties will be awarded for logged practice sessions that tally 30 minutes or more.

### **Extra Credit:**

Students may obtain extra credit towards their GPA at the director's discretion for participation in the following musical activities:

- Jazz Band, Full Orchestra, Pit Orchestra, Pep Band
- Out-of-School groups (church, community groups, solo/ensemble, etc.)
- All-County and All-State participation
- Other school district concerts. The program is needed for verification.
- Professional performances (ECWE, BPO, OP Symphony, etc.). The program is needed for verification.
- Other (see me if you think you did something to earn extra credit)

### **Course Drops:**

If you are planning to drop the course, there is a process. Drops are **ONLY** accepted during the first week of school. If you wish to drop band, you must schedule a meeting with me to discuss your rationale for dropping. Once you have a meeting with me, I will give you a form that your parents must then fill out. This form will then be turned in to your guidance counselor for verification.

## 2023-2024 Band Calendar

- HS Band & Orchestra Halloween Concert.....October 26th @ 7:30pm
- 6-12 Band & Jazz Ensemble Holiday Concert.....November 30th @ 7:00pm
- HS Symphony Orchestra & Chorus Holiday Concert.....December 14th @ 7:00pm
- Holiday Concert Make-Up Day.....December 19th @ 7:00pm
- 6-12 Band Spring Concert.....March 21st @ 7:00pm
- Spring Concert Make-Up Day.....April 11th @ 7:00pm
- Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony.....May 27th @ 11:00am
- HS Band, Orchestra & Chorus End of Year Concert.....May 30th @ 7:00am
- Darien Lake Festival of Music.....TBD
- 6-8 End of Year Band Concert.....June 4th @ 6:30pm
- End of Year Concert Make-Up Day.....June 12th @ 7:00pm
- Commencement w/ 8-11th Grade Band Members.....June 25th @ 7:00pm  
*This will display next year's High School Band*



*Please do not hesitate to contact me at any point during the school year! I will be glad to assist you in anything that you need, or any questions that you may have for me. I am looking forward to an amazing, music-filled year!*

*-Mr. Kifner*



## Eden Bands Agreement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (*student name*), have thoroughly read and agree to the classroom expectations and information provided to me in this band handbook. I will uphold these requirements and expectations, and will adhere to **ALL** performance dates, and will strive to be the best musician that I possibly can be. I look forward to a **fun-filled** year as a member of Eden Bands!

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*Student Signature*

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*Parent/Guardian Name*

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*Parent/Guardian Signature*



Please tear this sheet from the packet, sign, and return it to Mr. Kifner by **Friday 9/15!** Please keep the packet for your reference throughout the year.