

SILSBEE MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND



*Developing a lifelong love for music and a strength of character
through performance excellence.*

2025-26 Handbook Beginning Band Addendum

DIRECTORS

Louis Ellis

Dakota Ard

Todd Patterson

Welcome!

Welcome to the Silsbee Middle School Band Program! We are pleased to introduce our band program to you in greater detail. The SMS band program has established a wonderful tradition of excellence, and we welcome you to be a part of it.

Your child's participation in our band program is beneficial in many ways. Band students are engaged daily in a highly creative performing art that stimulates growth in areas of the human brain that no other discipline can. This growth effortlessly transfers into your student's academic life and sets them ahead of their peers. In addition, our band students will develop traits such as teamwork, responsibility, dedication, self-discipline, social skills, confidence, leadership, and dependability. Membership in our band program will give all members a sense of accomplishment, as well as pride and respect, as they develop musical and personal skills that will enrich their lives.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the guidelines and expectations for making this year a success for all involved and to serve as a guide and resource for students and parents. Both students and their parents should take the time to peruse this handbook. When you are finished reading through this document, the form on Rank One regarding the Handbook must be completed.

Contact Information

The directors encourage positive communication and are willing to discuss any aspect of a student's progress in band with his/her parents. The easiest way to communicate with a director is through email.

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Goals and Objectives

- Organizational Skills
 - Practice Techniques
 - Mental and Physical Discipline
 - Citizenship through Group Endeavor
 - Physical Conditioning
 - Cultural Growth
 - Value Judgments
 - Music Theory
 - Proper Instrumental Technique
 - Creative Self-Expression
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Conduct Expectations

Band members will observe all procedures set forth by Silsbee ISD, in addition to the following, as they pertain to the instrumental music setting:

- Any behavior that is not representative of good citizenship, as perceived by the band staff, may result in the student's dismissal from the activity and possibly the band program. This also applies to the actions of student leaders in both public and private events.
- All students are expected to exhibit good conduct at all times. Display of yelling, profanity, temper tantrums, or flagrant violation of the rules and expectations will not be tolerated. Individual behavior during a band function is a reflection of the group.
- Students will follow the director's instructions.
- Students will be in their assigned rehearsal area ready to work at the set rehearsal time with all equipment, including music, pencils, instruments, and supplies for each rehearsal. (see detailed supply list for each instrument).
- Students will keep their hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
- Students will not use or play on equipment they do not own without permission from a director.
- Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings.
- Students should request permission to speak by raising their hand and waiting quietly to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be extremely quiet so that time will be utilized wisely and as efficiently as possible.
- When allowed in the band hall, either before or after school, students will not disturb any rehearsal in progress.
- Students will respect the property of others and return their equipment to its proper storage place when not in use. Students should keep their equipment in the designated storage area and keep it clean. Students who demonstrate great difficulty with this may lose the privilege of having a storage area in the band hall.
- Students will not deface or make marks on the music stands, chairs, walls, or in the practice rooms, etc.
- Students will not write on the dry-erase board without permission from the director.

- Percussionists will place all percussion equipment in the designated percussion areas after every rehearsal or practice session. Percussionists are responsible for the cost of repair or the cost of replacement for any percussion equipment they damage.
 - Students will utilize their assigned storage slot for instrument cases during rehearsals. Cases should not be left out on the open floor or brought into rehearsals unless requested by a director.
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Care of Facilities

- No gum, food, or drinks are allowed in the band hall except when authorized by the directors.
 - All trash, such as paper, broken reeds, and drumsticks, is to be deposited in the waste baskets provided. The floor in your area should be clean of all debris before you leave for your next class.
 - Acts of vandalism or the willful misuse of school property will be dealt with severely and appropriately. Every band member is responsible for helping the directors monitor the facility and control vandalism, which includes writing or carving on walls, destroying music, or breaking school property.
 - No student is allowed in the workroom or band library without permission.
 - Practice and ensemble rooms are designed for practicing, not social gatherings. Not more than 2 students in a practice room at a time. Students who misuse the practice rooms may be asked to leave and/or will lose the privilege of using a practice room in the future.
 - Please knock on the office door, and if you are invited in, you may enter. Otherwise, the band office is off-limits to students.
 - The telephone in the band hall is only be used to call parents for rides, or other important communication. Students must ask permission to use the phone, and all calls will be limited to 2 minutes.
 - Students should never sit at a teacher's desk or access a teacher's computer unless authorized.
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Daily Supplies

The following list is what each student should plan to bring to the appropriate rehearsal and/or performance. Other items may be added at the discretion of the directors.

- All issued music and the required band book(s)
- Pencil and highlighter
- Instrument
- All supplies related to their instrument
- Band Binder
- Metronome/tuner
- Contact Microphone/Pick Up (exception: percussion)
- Other equipment as needed (could vary from year to year)

For supplies specific to your instrument, refer to our [Beginning Band](#) page on the BAND APP.

Grading Guidelines

SISD band programs have instructional objectives that relate to the mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for grade-level subjects or courses. These objectives are aligned to address the academic skills needed for successful performance in the next grade or next course in a sequence of courses. Assignments, tests, projects, classroom activities, and other instructional activities are designed to demonstrate the student's level of mastery of the instructional objectives. The student's mastery level of these objectives is a major factor in determining the grade for a subject or course.

Students will be expected to meet the responsibilities for each band class as determined by the director. Since the band is an academic music class with some extracurricular activities attached, the band students' grades will reflect achievement in both curricular and extracurricular areas.

25% - [Practice Sheets](#) (based on punctuality and quality)

25% - Playing Grades (based on the preparation of music)

25% - Written Grades

25% - Participation (bringing materials, effort, attendance at concerts and contests, proper uniform, etc.)

The following list is provided to give students and parents examples of items that can be subject to grading. Additional assignments may be given at the discretion of the director.

- The student will be on task and focused during all rehearsals.
 - The student will have an instrument, music, a pencil, and supplies.
 - The student will be prepared to play his/her part successfully.
 - The student will mark music and take notes as needed.
 - The student will be expected to improve individual music skills.
 - The student's individual skill development will be evaluated through recorded music tests, individual playing tests, scale tests, and/or written tests.
 - The student will be evaluated on the improvement of ensemble skills during daily rehearsals.
 - The student will be expected to improve his/her performance fundamentals.
 - The student will be evaluated for improvement of his/her music fundamentals through daily observation during the "basics" part of each rehearsal and sectionals.
 - The student will be expected to demonstrate correct posture, hand position, embouchure, air production, and articulation as monitored during rehearsals.
 - The student will be expected to develop a historical knowledge of the literature relative to their respective instrument.
 - The student will receive a grade for each performance during a grading period.
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Weekly Practice Sheets

Students will keep a weekly practice sheet that is worth 25 percent of their overall average. Practice sheets will be both goal and consistency-oriented. Students will write down the objectives for the coming week during class with their director and log the number of minutes they work towards meeting those objectives. The weekly practice requirement is 7 days a week for enough time to complete the given assignment to the best of their abilities. Practice sheets should be signed by a parent/guardian and turned in every Monday at the beginning of the class period. **Practice Sheets will not be accepted without the required signature.**

Eligibility

All SISD Bands adhere to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and SISD. Some band activities are designated as extracurricular. Students participating in activities are held to eligibility requirements. A student shall be suspended from participation in all extracurricular activities sponsored or sanctioned by the school district during the nine weeks following a grade reporting period in which the student received a grade lower than seventy in any class. Loss of eligibility does not take effect until seven days after the end of the reporting period. Ineligible students are not suspended from practice or rehearsal of extracurricular activities. The student is not suspended from participation during the period in which school is recessed for the summer or any other vacation time.

Students may regain eligibility under certain circumstances. If a student has been suspended as a result of failing, he/she may regain eligibility by passing ALL courses in the third or sixth week of the affected grading period. Reinstatement of eligibility would occur seven days after the three-week or six-week progress report period. (see TEA/UIL Side by Side)

The eligibility law does not affect activities that are considered curricular components of any course. Examples of these activities are all the rehearsals and performances that take place as a regular extension of classroom instruction. Any performance that is competitive or for which admission is charged is deemed extracurricular.

In addition to the eligibility rules and regulations as stated by TEA and SISD above, students are required to pass the 4th nine weeks and not receive PAC placement during the spring semester to attend the spring trip. ISS placement during the spring semester may also result in a student being ineligible for the spring trip.

District-Owned Instruments

SISD provides a limited number of instruments for student use. These instruments include the Bassoon, Oboe, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Euphonium, Tuba, and Percussion. These expensive instruments are provided by the school district because families cannot. Thus, all district-owned equipment must be handled with optimum care. Students failing to take proper care of their district-owned instruments may lose the privilege to use such instruments.

The following is a list of general procedures for district-owned instruments:

- Tuba, French Horn, and Euphonium players may be given a home instrument and a school instrument. This will be at the discretion of the directors and will be based on instrument availability and transportation needs.
- SISD does not provide insurance for individually owned or district-owned equipment. Students will be held responsible for all district-owned instruments issued to them. This responsibility will include fire, theft, accidental damage, abuse, and general maintenance not incurred through normal use.
- Students and parents must sign an instrument checkout form before the student can use the instrument.
- Each instrument will be issued in good playing condition. Each issued instrument will be checked and cleaned before issue. Students are expected to maintain their issued instruments accordingly.
- The band member is financially responsible for all equipment and/or materials they check out.
- All equipment and materials must be kept in the proper storage location when not in use.
- SISD will assess a fee of \$100 for routine (end-of-year) cleaning and maintenance of district-owned instruments.

Special Note – District-owned instruments are not to be treated as "free" instruments. Basic supplies must still be purchased, and repairs must still be made, just like student-owned instruments. Please strive to treat these instruments as if they were your own. Most district-owned instruments exceed \$2,000 in value.

Instrument Storage and Identification

Every student must have a nametag with their phone number, or Silsbee Middle School's phone number, fastened to the outside of their instrument case. Also, be sure to keep a record of the serial number of the instrument if it is stolen or lost.

Private Lesson Program

This is a district-wide program that provides a high-quality enhancement to classroom instruction. Our teachers are professional musicians in the area, and are either working toward, or have advanced degrees in the performance of their instruments. Lessons are extremely valuable to the individual student and are highly encouraged.

- ALL students are ENCOURAGED to take individualized private instruction.
 - Lessons will be given weekly during the band classes, before, and after school.
 - If there is a need for before or after-school lessons, every effort will be made to schedule private lessons at times that do not conflict with sectionals or other activities.
 - Detailed information will be distributed on the private lesson program.
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Uniform Guidelines

We have one uniform for the 6th grade at SMS.

- Band t-shirt (tucked in)
 - Blue jeans
 - Closed-toe shoes
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Concerts/Performances

Concerts and performances are frequent with all bands. Students should consult their schedules for dates and times. Periodically, the schedule will change, and updates will be sent home and posted on the SMS Band website.

- Concerts consist of three objectives: the warm-up, the performance, and the listening objective.
 - The concert begins for the student with the warm-up. Punctuality is essential. A concert concludes when the last group performs and the directors have given permission for students to be dismissed.
 - A general report time will be announced for all students.
 - All concerts are a group effort; thus, ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED!!!
 - All concerts are an extension of the classroom and will be graded accordingly.
 - Students should be punctual and prepared for each performance/concert.
 - In the event a performance causes a student to miss another class, the student is responsible for making up all missed work.
 - The appropriate dress for all concerts will be a dress uniform (see Uniform Guidelines).
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Concert Behavior Expectations

Band students will exhibit proper behavior during the concert, whether performing or as members of the audience. Students will be graded on their behavior. Concert etiquette is an integral part of music education. Appropriate conduct in formal and informal concert settings is included in the TEKS.

The following rules will be followed at all times:

- Talking is not permitted on stage or in the audience. It is disrespectful to the performers on stage and the audience members.
- Do not distract the performing band in any way.
- Do not leave your seat for any reason during a performance. You will be given ample time to use the restroom and drinking fountain before a concert begins. If you must leave, do so as quietly and inconspicuously as possible (make sure the doors do not slam shut). Leave between songs only.
- No food or drink is allowed on stage, backstage, or in the seating area. This includes water bottles and gum.
- Cell phones must be turned off (not on vibrate or silent) and stowed away. Any student using a cell phone during a performance may have consequences.
- Move between the seating area and stage in quiet, single-file lines. Sit in your assigned seat/row. Do not talk as you enter or exit.
- Support your fellow band members with appropriate applause. Yelling, whistling, or shouting names, etc., is not acceptable.
- Set a good example for the audience and other students. Other people may not know how to behave in a concert setting.
- We hope all parents and guests will stay for the concert when bringing a student to a concert. Students are expected to remain for the entire concert.

Travel Guidelines

The band will travel on either school buses or commercial buses. Student conduct is expected to be at the highest level on any trip.

Students who have been subject to school-level discipline in the course of the school year may be deemed ineligible to participate in non-UIL field trips, at the discretion of the director and/or campus administration.

Students must travel to events and return from events on the bus when a bus has been provided. Any student wishing to arrive or leave with his/her parent must notify a director in writing with the parent's signature, before the event. Permission will be granted or denied based on the circumstances of the occasion.

Students must have all necessary forms (Medical/Travel Release) completed and on file with the band office to travel on any band trip.

While on the bus, students will:

- Remain seated at all times.
- Sit properly in a forward position.
- Keep the bus clear of food, drinks, and debris.
- Keep all body parts inside the bus.
- Use only approved type/headset radios (no audible speakers).
- Remain silent when addressed by an adult on the bus.
- Refrain from loud, boisterous talking, singing, screaming, whistling, inappropriate jokes, etc.
- No public displays of affection.

Special Note

As a member of the band, you are a representative of your school. Always be on your best behavior. If you are in doubt about an action, do not do it! Your conduct at all times should be considered a good reflection on the school, the band, your home, yourself, and the community.

Chaperones

Adult chaperones are a great asset for the band program. Students will treat them as an extension of the band staff. Proper respect will be shown to all adults at all times.

Solo and Ensemble

All band members will prepare and perform an approved solo unless other permission is granted. Percussionists will also perform in an ensemble of the director's choice.

Grades will be issued for preparation and participation in the solo and ensemble process.

Safety

Due to heavy student traffic going in and out of the band hall, and due to the possibility of theft of instruments, students not enrolled in the SMS band are not allowed in the band hall at any time. Friends of the SMS band members may wait outside the band hall to accompany their band friend to another location.

Band Hall Hours

The middle school band hall normally opens for 7th and 8th grade sectionals at approximately 7:00 a.m. every day, and closes at approximately 2:40 p.m. every day during football season. The band hall will be open for private lessons, as needed by the private lesson teachers. These times are scheduled on an individual basis.

During the few weeks in the year when no sectionals are held, the band hall will open at 7:30 a.m. and will close at 3:00 p.m.

Students may be allowed to stay in the band hall during these times to practice (only in designated areas), quietly work on homework, or have their private lesson. Students are NOT allowed to be in the band hall during these times to eat or act in a disorderly fashion.

Parent Pick and Drop off

Parents must make preparations for the transportation of their children to and from lessons or sectionals, and to and from the band hall during trips and special events. Lack of transportation will not be an accepted excuse for missing a band function. To ensure the safety of their children, parents are encouraged to have a plan for drop-off and pick-up of students for band events.

Band Parent Volunteers

Our middle school band does not have a booster program of its own; however, if you have the desire and time, we have band parent volunteers who assist the students by chaperoning at contests, band trips, and parades, and by donating bottled water and snacks for various band events throughout the school year.

Fundraising

We have the possibility of two fundraisers planned for the school year. Participation in the fundraiser(s) is encouraged, but not required. Fundraisers will be used to purchase additional materials and equipment for the SMS Band Program. Due to budget limitations, this has become a necessity.

Our "wish-list" includes, but is not limited to: music for concerts, funds for guest clinicians, new instruments for the band department, instrument accessories, fees, and/or deposits for honor band entries and other competitions.

Donations are accepted and appreciated to help the band program. Any funds donated to the SMS band program are given to the school to be used for expenses outside of student fees and trip expenses. These include, but are not limited to, instrument repair, replacement equipment, helping families in need, and unforeseen expenses that might occur. Please make checks payable to the SMS Band.
