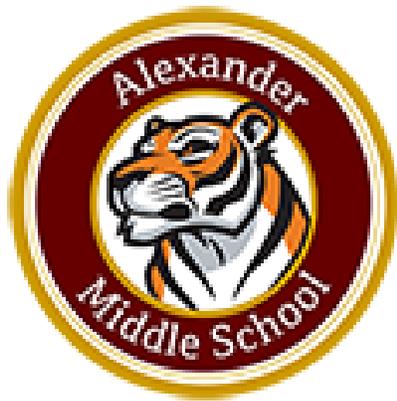


Alexander MS



Band Handbook & Information Packet

2024-2025

Alexander Middle School Band

Dear Alexander Band Parents,

Thank you for taking a brief moment to review some important information that could have a lasting impact on the future success of your child. We are excited about providing a rewarding, fun, and successful experience that begins at Alexander Middle School and will continue through the band program at PJH East and Pearland High School. This information packet is designed to help you understand our goals for this school year.

Band provides a recreational goal by offering the opportunity for worthwhile use of leisure time, for an emotional outlet, and for social activity with a family of long-lasting friends. Our educational goals are to develop competent musical performers, promote music appreciation, train future band members, enhance the development of responsibility as a citizen, and foster good self-discipline in members of the Alexander MS Band.

On August 19th we will begin teaching the instruments. All instruments rented through the music store during the spring have been delivered to Alexander. If you have your child's instrument at home or have just recently rented an instrument your child will need to bring it to school **by August 19th** . The students will be allowed to bring their instrument to the band hall before school starts, where it will be secured until their band class.

Please understand that our communication to you – the parents – is a very high priority for us. We want to take care of concerns and make every situation the best for each student. Please contact us for clarification on any concerns before they become major issues.

We teach on two different campuses during the school day and it can be difficult to reach us by phone. We will make every effort to return messages within 24 hours. In most instances, **email** is the best way to contact us. If you would like to speak to a director, please email us a phone number and time to reach you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wren

Tyler Hensley

Brant Pembleton

Clayton Jasper

Alexander MS Band Directors

Band Director Contact Information:

Jennifer Wren

Wrenj@pearlandisd.org

Main Campus Phone:

832-736-6268 (office at PJH East)

Tyler Hensley

Hensleyt@pearlandisd.org

Conference Time:

By appointment

Brant Pembleton

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Campus Address:

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Pearland, TX 77581

Clayton Jasper

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PJH East & AMS Band Website:

<https://bit.ly/pjheastband>

High School Band Website:

www.pearlandband.org

Alexander Band Principles

The Alexander Band Program is based on more than just musical excellence. We take great pride not only in how well we perform as musicians, but more importantly, in the way in which we conduct ourselves on a daily basis, both in and out of the band classroom or stage. It is in the way we treat ourselves and others, both in and out of our band family, which makes the Alexander Band Program the best that it can be.

There are several key guidelines we try to live by that facilitate these values:

1. **Attitude** – “Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you choose to react to it.” Approaching every situation with the proper mindset can dramatically affect the outcome.
2. **Be Proactive** – Think and plan ahead always. Do not wait to be told how to do things you already know how to do. Do not let life take you by surprise. Try to anticipate events and circumstances and prepare for them in advance.
3. **Commitment** – The ability to begin a task or concept and follow through until its full completion. This often means fighting through frustration, difficult times or momentary distractions to reach a worthwhile goal.
4. **Generosity** – Share the talents you have been given unselfishly with others. This often refers to monetary donations, but it also is simply taking time out of your day to help another person. Who did you go “out of your way” for today.
5. **Integrity** – Always do the right thing in every situation – even if it isn’t the easy choice. What decisions do you make when you are by yourself?
6. **Judgment** – The ability to decide what is important and what is not. Do not waste energy on situations beyond your control, but don’t use this as a cop-out for situations that you could positively affect with effort.
7. **Respect** – Treat others in a kind and caring way. “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.”
8. **Responsibility** – The ability to respond to every situation with your own choice. Evaluate yourself honestly, and always strive for improvement. Push yourself to do the best in all you do.
9. **Trust** – The ability to believe in and depend upon a person’s character. Trust is an essential element in any meaningful relationship. With every interaction trust is gained or lost. Make sure you build trust with as many people as possible through all human contact.

10. **Walk the Talk** – Actions speak louder than words. Don't be hypocritical. If you say you are going to take care of something, make sure it gets done. If you offer help to others, make sure you have taken your own advice.

Through positive attitudes and actions, we try to affect the world around us in the most productive and helpful way possible. Through music, we hope to bring enjoyment to those for whom we perform. This is one of the truest rewards for the diligent work of all of the students, private lesson teachers and directors at Alexander Middle School.

Student Characteristics:

- Make good and well-thought-out decisions
- Find enjoyment in working diligently and intelligently
- Set high standards for themselves regarding conduct
- Treat each other with sincere respect and encourage each other to be successful members of a team
- Put the group and others ahead of themselves
- Set the standard with regards to maturity, enjoyment and energy
- Develop great practice and study habits while mastering the fundamentals of their instruments
- Know when to ask for help
- Know when to offer help
- Show respect to all adults, teachers, clinicians, volunteers, chaperones, etc.
- Learn to communicate effectively and appropriately

Director Characteristics:

- Obvious commitment to the students
- Communicate goals, expectations and visions clearly
- Reward positive habits, behaviors, accomplishments and actions in a timely manner
- Follow through on commitments personally, academically and musically
- Provide a wealth of information in a simple and motivational manner
- Time commitment to individuals
- Commitment to planning and goal setting
- Ability to help students reach their goals in the appropriate manner
- Understanding of students, their needs, interests and motivational types
- Communicate with parents regarding student success and individual needs through e-mail, phone calls and personal communication
- Display the ability to learn and better themselves as people, musicians and teachers
- Ability to ask for help when needed

Environmental Characteristics:

- Calm and pleasing atmosphere
- "Air" of success throughout the band hall
- Organized and clean
- Inspirational and motivational
- Open door policy
- Fun place to hang out where there is an awareness of environment and instruction taking place
- Family-like atmosphere

Teaching Objectives for Beginning Band Students

I Will...

- Learn and use good posture while playing
- Learn the correct method for breathing (wind instruments)
- Learn and use the correct embouchure while playing (wind instruments)
- Learn and use correct hand position
- Learn and use correct technique for percussion playing (percussion only)
- Learn the proper concept of tone production and tone quality
- Learn various rhythmic notations and the counting system
- Learn and understand the musical terms and symbols necessary for the performing seventh and eighth grade bands
- Work to develop discriminatory listening skills
- Work to develop good home practice routines
- Work to promote social development through large group interaction

- Work to develop personal and social self-discipline
- Work to prepare students to advance to the seventh and eighth grade bands after their beginning year

Daily Practice

Our Goal is for every student to practice most days (5 days a week). We will help students learn how to practice through Guided Practice Records. Daily practice time requirements will begin small (5 – 10 min) in the fall and work up to 30 minutes by the spring. As directors we will provide students with certain objectives to practice at home. There will always be something your student can practice.

*** Parents can help by encouraging regular practice and provide a place and time that will not disturb other family members or impair the concentration of the band student. Having to “practice outside or in the garage” or “practice softly” will result in serious problems that are difficult to correct. We recommend that students own music stands and have a metronome app for proper playing and good habits at home. (Many smart phones have inexpensive or free downloadable metronome apps.)

****All Instruments must go home every day, both for the security of the instrument and for home practice.**

Band Concerts

The band program at Alexander takes great pride in the students’ accomplishments. We have two after school performances, one in the winter and one in the spring. Our public performances are the culmination of an enormous amount of hard work. These performances are considered Co-Curricular by PISD and the TEA state board of education and are part of the student's classroom grading. Students are required to be at both the Winter Concert and Spring Concert. We understand there are circumstances beyond your control such as sickness or a death in the family. In these events, please contact a director prior to the absence. All other absences will be considered unexcused. Students will need to complete an alternate assignment to make up their grade. We will send home a letter **well in advance** of the concert date with information about the performance. At the start of the school year, parents sign a FERPA form which releases or does not release the right to publish a child’s name. Band concert programs must comply with these forms.

Spring Trip

We will take a spring trip in the weeks shortly following the Spring Concert. This trip is a reward for participation in the band classroom. In order for students to be eligible for the trip, they must have a passing grade for both the Winter Concert and Spring Concert, plus be in good discipline standing with the school and band program.

GRADING POLICY

Examples of Grades

1. Daily Performance
2. Rehearsal Etiquette
3. Weekly Guided Practice Records
4. Weekly Playing Tests
5. Music Theory/Rhythm Assignments
6. All Performances/Rehearsals

BAND EXPECTATIONS

In addition to the Alexander classroom guidelines, the following band hall guidelines apply:

1. Refrain from food, drink, gum, or candy in the band hall.
2. Respect the newly renovated band hall structure, furniture, and electrical equipment. Writing on the dry-erase boards, music stands, and or chairs is **strictly prohibited**. Do not touch the metronome or tuner for any reason.

3. Only percussionists have permission to touch the percussion equipment or be in the percussion area unless otherwise instructed by a band director.
4. Do not touch another student's instrument, even with his/her permission. This expectation carries outside of the band hall as well.
5. For your protection, as well as for practice, your instrument should be taken home every day.
6. Show up on time, with all required materials, and be picked up on time from all band functions. Failure to do so may result in not being able to participate in future functions.
7. Treat all directors and fellow band members with courtesy and respect.
8. Only band students are allowed in the band hall. DO NOT let your non-band friends enter. This rule is to safeguard our band members and equipment. If you see someone you do not recognize as a band member, LET US KNOW IMMEDIATELY.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Consequences for misbehavior:

1. Warning.
2. Conference with director. [06]
3. Conference with director and parent contact. [06]
4. Restorative Behavior Assignment/Lunch Detention. [06]
5. After School Detention/Office Referral.
6. Exclusion from Band Events or Activities.
7. Serious offenses will be dealt with as outlined in the PISD Student Code of Conduct.
8. Serious offenses warrant an immediate office referral and may result in removal from the band program.

Rewards for good behavior:

1. Positive comment and/or note to the student.
2. Positive comment and/or note to the parent.
3. Prizes and Privileges.
4. Performance Opportunities.

Instrument Repair

If damage occurs to a school owned instrument, please notify a director immediately. School owned instruments may only be repaired at approved music repair shops. If your instrument is in need of repair, please ask a director for advice on where and how to fix it. We will help protect your investment and money. Many repairs are an easy fix for the band directors and will save you time and money.

Step-Up Instruments

When students reach a more advanced playing level, parents may consider the purchase of a "step-up" instrument for your child. This is a more professional model that is designed for advanced music levels and creates ease of playing the full range of the instrument. The tone quality is a more mature sound. These instruments can last a student throughout their middle school, high school, and college careers. Most times, music companies can help you use the beginner instrument towards the purchase of this new instrument. In a lot of situations, students keep their "beginner" instrument for the outside marching band environment. If you have questions or are planning on taking this step toward a higher level instrument, PLEASE CONTACT THE BAND DIRECTORS. We can give you information on music companies and their representatives that can give you the best price for your instrument. PLEASE LET US HELP YOU.

BRACES / ORTHODONTICS

Braces are a fact of life for many students. The directors ask the parents to please keep us up-to-date with dental plans involving your child's teeth. Braces may affect your child's playing to a degree for a short time and we, as teachers, need to prepare for that with your child. Please keep your child's performance schedule in mind when arranging the appointments for "getting the braces." Braces should not go on during the Fall semester of 6th grade band. Your children are in the middle of learning a new and difficult skill; changes to anything in their month may make it very difficult to learn to play correctly.

SCHOOL OWNED INSTRUMENTS – PISD POLICY

All students playing a school owned instrument are required to pay a \$50 rental fee for each semester. This fee will cover annual cleaning and upkeep. **Each student is financially responsible for any damage incurred during the time that the instrument is checked out to them.** See your homeowner's insurance policy for what is covered.

Private Lessons

This is a district wide program that provides a high-quality enhancement to classroom instruction. Teachers are all specialists on their instrument. Most of our teachers are professional musicians in the Houston area and have advanced degrees in the performance of their instruments. Lessons are extremely valuable to the individual student and are highly encouraged.

1. Private lessons are optional unless a student has been issued a school owned instrument.
2. Private lessons are an expectation of students who are utilizing school owned instruments.
3. Lesson instructors are provided by the district and go through a background check.
4. Lessons will be given weekly, and payment is made directly to the instructor.

Band Fees and Costs Information Page

General Band Fee – All Band Students

ALL BAND STUDENTS

(Includes band binder, classroom supplies, and music)

PRICE

\$20.00

IU Fee – School Owned Instruments Students Only

Oboe, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Tenor/Bari Sax,
French horn, Euphonium, Tuba

Required for school instrument use

\$50.00 (Fall)

\$50.00 (Spring)

Additional Costs Information: (Some small yearly expenses not included)

Instrument Supplies

(Valve Oil, Cork Grease, Reeds, Swabs)

PRICE

\$3.00 - \$30.00+

Private Lessons

Highly Recommended for Student Success

\$30.00 (Per Week)