



E. Lawson Brown Middle School
Band Handbook 2024-2025
Mrs. Christina Carter, Mr. David Deese, Mr. Levi Moffe

Welcome, or welcome back, to the Band program at Brown Middle School! We are thrilled that you have decided to join one of our school's most elite organizations. Through dedication, hard work, and responsibility we can make this year one of the best ever! It is extremely important that you understand that band is unlike any other class you will take. Although you will receive a grade here, just as any of your other classes, your individual effort in band not only affects you; it ultimately affects the successes of the entire group. We must be willing to work together in order to achieve our goals. I fully expect that the band this year will uphold the high expectations this school has become accustomed to.

Grading Policy:

50% - MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:

Performances/Concerts, Playing Tests

30% - MINOR ASSIGNMENTS:

Quizzes and Assignments

20% - CLASS/HOMEWORK:

Daily Classroom Participation and Preparedness

Students will be allowed to 5 days to make up work if they should happen to miss a school day. It is, however, the student's responsibility to schedule a time with a director to make up any playing test missed.

Each student will receive a weekly participation grade, which will be determined by averaging their daily participation for the week. This grade will be based on the student's preparedness for class, as well as participation in all daily activities and behavior. Students will start the day off with a hundred, but may lose points due to lack of participation or preparedness. Below you will find examples of how students can lose points for their participation grade. This is not an all-inclusive list, but several examples.

- Forget instrument, or no reeds – minus 50
- Forget materials (music, book, pencil, etc) – minus 20
- Late to class – minus 15
- Disruption to class – 1st time warning, 2nd and beyond – minus 10
- Not following school/classroom rules – minus 10

Rules/Procedures for Classroom Participation:

In order for our band to be successful, it is essential that certain rules are established and maintained. By following these rules, we will set a standard that leads to excellence.

- Follow All School Rules! – this includes the cell phone policy
- Be on time! (that includes having all necessary materials out and ready before class starts)
- Treat all classmates, directors, instructors, and interns with respect.
- If it's not yours, don't touch it! (Students should handle only the instruments assigned to them. No sharing instruments, and only **percussionists** should touch the percussion equipment).
- ABSOLUTELY NO FOOD, DRINK, or GUM in the band wing. The only exception is water. We allow students to bring bottles of water – no flavored water.
- Treat instruments and equipment with care.



Materials Needed:

Students are expected to bring all materials needed with them to each class. Failure to do so will interfere with their ability to participate with the rest of the class, affecting their participation grade and success of the group. The following materials are needed EVERYDAY:

1. **Instrument in proper playing condition:** Each instrument case must have a name-tag!! There are many students in and out of the instrument storage rooms, and most cases look alike. It will be impossible to solve any confusion of whose instrument belongs to whom. Luggage tags are perfect for this!
2. **Music Book:** We will be using Essential Elements: Book 1 with all grades this year. 8th graders may move onto another book towards the later half of the year.
3. Students will be required to have a **3 ring binder with sheet protectors** dedicated for band. One half (1/2) inch will be large enough. Students will use this binder to store exercises, music, information sheets, etc. I have extra three ring binders that I can give to students who may need them. They are a little larger, and are used, but they would work. Let me know if your child is in need.
4. **A pencil:** NOT A PEN!! Some students decide to use dry erase markers to write on the sheet protectors (not directly on the paper) in their binder. This is allowed, but students will need to use their own dry erase markers, not Mrs. Carter's.
5. **Reeds (clarinet/saxes only):** Reed players **MUST** have 4, good playable reeds at all times! We cannot afford to waste time not playing because your only reed broke. Please be aware that reeds will not last forever. You will need to buy replacements throughout the course of the year, especially if they become broken or green.
 - If there is a financial concern about purchasing reeds, please speak to Mrs. Carter.

Pass Offs:

Beginning after the first few weeks of school, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned and what skills they have acquired. Students will play an example from the book, a part of their music, or a scale for a director. If they have adequately mastered the skills found in this exercise, it will be "passed off" and the student may move on to the next example. Students will be placed in chairs based on the number of pass-offs they have completed. With one or two exceptions, we will typically pass off on Thursday or Friday. **Students will not have an opportunity to make-up a pass off if they are absent on the day of pass-offs, but their grade will not be penalized.** If we do not finish pass-offs during that day, the students who did not get to pass off will have a chance to the following school day.

Homework:

The **ONLY** homework that will regularly be assigned in band is practicing your instrument. Playing your instrument should be FUN! You should WANT to practice your instrument and see how much you can improve. Sixth grade students will only be able to play around 10 minutes or so at a time in the beginning. The amount they can practice will expand as the year goes on. 7th and 8th grade students should practice a minimum of 100 minutes each week. This adds up to less than 20 minutes a day.

After-School Help:

I will be scheduling days that students can stay after school to get additional help. I typically stay after on Mondays and Thursdays. If I have meetings after school I will be unable to stay. I also have two



young children (aged 8 and 5), and may have to alter days that I stay after if they get sick or have appointments. I will provide the students with a calendar at the start of each month with the dates that I can stay after for the month. Please be patient with me if I have to cancel an after-school session due to a sick child. I will obviously do my very best to keep that to a minimum, as I know it is an inconvenience to have to make transportation adjustments mid-day.

Illness:

If your child is ill and contagious, please do not send them to school. However, **if a student is well enough to come to school, they are well enough to participate in band class.** Performing on a wind instrument with a cold, sore throat, or other minor ailment will not cause injury to the student or damage to the instrument. Just as they are expected to participate in every other class, they are expected to participate in band if they are present. Please do not send excuse notes with your children. Feel free to contact me if you have any concerns about this matter.

Concerts:

The bands will perform in several concerts throughout the school year. All required performance dates for the year are found at the end of this document. Since band is a performing organization, heavy emphasis is placed on every student's attendance at performances. **ATTENDANCE AT CONCERTS IS MANDATORY!** All of our concert dates are listed at the end of this handbook.

Transportation to and from concerts is the parent's responsibility. If you cannot provide your child with a ride, please let me know. I may be able to work out a ride for your child with another parent who lives near you. I will need **at least** a week's notice in order to make this happen.

Concert Dress:

The expected dress for band students for all performances is outlined below. Please take care of these dress needs **NOW!!** Do not wait until the last minute. If purchasing these clothes would represent a hardship for you, please feel free to contact me. I will work with you in anyway necessary to set your child up for success.

Gentlemen: Black dress pants, white button-down long-sleeved dress shirt with collar, a tie (any color), black dress shoes.

Ladies: Black dress pants or skirt with white dress top OR solid black top and bottom, black dress shoes. *Skirts should reach the knee when seated, no low cut, strapless, or spaghetti strap tops.

Individual Performance Opportunities:

Seventh and eighth grade students will have the opportunity to audition for All-County Band and All-District Band. Audition materials include a prepared solo and scales. Those selected for these honor bands will participate in a clinic with other band students from the county or district. The clinics conclude with a concert performance for parents, family, and friends. I am eager to have a good showing at the auditions this year. Let's fill those bands with Brown MS Eagles! Please let Mrs. Carter know if you are interested in this great opportunity. **All-County Auditions are scheduled at East Davidson High School on Monday, October 28th. All-County Band Clinic is November 18th and 19th at Thomasville MS. All-District Auditions are scheduled at Davie County HS on January 25th. There is plenty of time to prepare, but students need to start now!**



Private Lessons:

Students are encouraged to take private lessons throughout the year. Individualized instruction from a master on your student's instrument is an invaluable experience. Obviously, there is a cost to private lessons, but it is an investment. It will pay back in dividends, especially if your child is interested in All-County or All-District Band. Please let me know if your child is interested in private lessons. I can find names and contact info for professional private instructors. Mr. Deese, Mr. Moffe, and I hope to plan a tutor/lesson program that we will set up where high school students will tutor and teach middle school students after school one day a week. More information about that will be coming to you later.

Band Fees:

Each band member is asked to pay the county band fee. This fee is charged by the County. For sixth and seventh grade band the fee is \$6.00. The eighth grade band fee is \$12.00. Please pay this fee using School Cash Online, as you will your other fees. Families with financial needs may request that their child's fees be waived. Simply fill out and submit a fee waiver form (available from homeroom teacher). The funds collected through these fees help pay for music stands, concert music, bus and travel costs, and school owned equipment. It does not cover individual needs for things such as reeds and music books. This \$6 or \$12 does not purchase or rent an instrument from the school.

Switching Instruments:

There are a limited number of spots for students interested in switching to other instruments. Only students who show effort on their current instrument will be considered for these switches. Sixth grade students interested in percussion should begin on flute or clarinet. **No brass students will switch to a percussion instrument.** Speak to Mrs. Carter **immediately** if you need to change your initial instrument in an effort to play percussion. Sixth grade students will be given information later in the year about switching. Seventh and eighth grade students interested in switching should speak with Mrs. Carter to see if there are any availabilities in their classes.

Band Cadets:

Band Cadets is a program we have set up for 8th graders, and select 7th graders, to participate with the high school marching band. Students who join the cadets will participate with the marching band at all of their football games and competitions. Cadets help to move equipment, props, and some get a "part" in the show each year. Cadets will not play their instruments in the show. It is a heavy time commitment for Saturdays in the last week of September and through the month of October, but is a WONDERFUL opportunity for the kids. Mr. Deese and Mrs. Carter will be providing the students with information about the Cadet program within the first couple of weeks of school.

Pep Band:

7th and 8th grade students are invited to participate in the BMS Pep Band. We will play in two home football games in the fall. Participation in the pep band is entirely voluntary. We will be playing at the October 2nd game vs Central, and the October 16th game vs North. I will schedule 3 or 4 practices after school leading up to the first game. Students should attend as many practices as they can, but **MUST** attend **AT LEAST ONE** in order to play at the games.



Communication:

It is essential that parents and directors communicate in order to be the best band program that we can be. I will be sending information home often in an effort to keep you aware of the progress the band is making, upcoming fundraisers, upcoming performance dates, and anything else you may need to know. I will also post this information on my website, which can be found on the Brown Middle School site. This site will be available to me and updated soon. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact me with any questions, concerns, or comments you may have. I welcome open communication!

The best way to reach me is through my school email which is:

ChristinaCarter@davidson.k12.nc.us. Attached you will find a contract for the student and parent that requests a parent email address. **Please put your email address on this contract.** I have found that the parents that miss information about band concerts or updates are those who did not give me their emails. Please understand that if you choose not to provide an up-to-date email, you may miss information that I send home, including concert and performance dates.

I will send information home with your students. Because many students have a tendency to be unreliable about getting information home, I will also email information, and use "Remind" (information below) in order to be sure you are as updated as you can be. You can also find our Facebook page if you search for Brown Middle School Band.

"Remind"ers:

I have set up an account through "Remind." This is a program through which I can send text messages and/or emails out to anyone who signs up. I plan to use these in order to send home information about concert dates, fundraisers, along with other information.

In order to sign up for the service, simply text the appropriate code (found on the next page) to "81010". You can also download the app and use the "Remind" app rather than text messages. Please remember that standard text and data fees will apply. I will do my best to keep the messages to a limit, and only send the ones that apply to your group. For example, 6th and 7th grade parents will not receive messages about 8th grade band activities. All parents WILL need to sign up for Remind, even if you were on the list last year. In an effort to be sure the lists are up to date and I haven't included any parents whose children are no longer in band, I have archived last year's groups, and will start anew.

- **Brown 6th Grade Band 2024:** Text "@bms6bands" to 81010
- **Brown 7th Grade Band 2024:** Text "@bms7bands" to 81010
- **Brown 8th Grade Band 2024:** Text "@bms8bands" to 81010

Materials to Donate?:

I often have parents ask what materials the band needs donated. We definitely appreciate any materials that parents may be willing to send the bands' way. Please do not feel obligated in anyway, however the most common needs we have in the band room are:

- Tissues
- Clorox Wipes
- Sheet Protectors
- Pencils
- AA batteries

If you have any questions about anything included in this handbook, please feel free to contact Mrs. Carter (christinacarter@davidson.k12.nc.us or 336-475-8845)



Band Dates

Events may be added to this list, but these events are currently scheduled. Many of these are optional, or only open to select students. The ones in **BOLD** are the only REQUIRED events. Please look carefully to see what events your child is required to be a part of. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Oct 2nd – BMS Football vs. Central (Spirit Week)

Oct 19th – BMS Football vs. North (8th grade night)

Oct 28th – All County Band Auditions @ EDHS (7th and 8th grade only)

Nov 18th and 19th – All County Band Clinic (selected All-County Students only)

Dec 3rd – EDHS Band Concert (optional, but audience attendance recommended)

Dec 17th – Brown Middle School Band Concert @ Finch Auditorium (all grades, arrive at 6:30, begins at 7pm)

Jan 25th – All District Band Auditions @ Davie HS

Feb 21st and 22nd – All District Band Clinic @ Appalachian State University (All-District Students only)

Feb 25th – Pre MPA Concert (8th grade and selected 7th grade students only)

March 1st – Mattress Sale

March 6th – Music In Our Schools Concert (6th and 7th grade only)

March 8th – All State Band Auditions (only those eligible)

March 18th, 29th, or 20th (date TBD) – MPA (8th grade and selected 7th grade students only)

April 25th-26th – All Stand Band Clinic (only those eligible)

May 19th – Spring Band Concert (all grades)



Student Name: _____ Student Grade: _____

Handbook Contract:

(Turned in SIGNED to Mrs. Carter for your 1st assignment grade by 9/4/2024)

The purpose of this contract is to guarantee that all members of the E. Lawson Brown Band (student and parents) understand and accept the basic plan that will allow us to succeed. As members of a team, we have to commit time, patience, and dedication to all that we do.

I ask each STUDENT to read and sign the following statement:

As a member of the E. Lawson Brown Band, I have read the handbook in its entirety, and agree to all the terms and conditions stated. I also understand that I must follow all of this information to ensure that the group excels to its full potential.

Student Signature

Date

I ask each PARENT/GUARDIAN to read and sign the following statement:

By signing this contract, I state that I have read the handbook in its entirety, and understand and agree to all of the rules, procedures, and grading policies outlined.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I also ask each parent to provide us with your most current email address. This will help us to facilitate letters home and upcoming information. ***If you do not give me a current email address, you could miss out on important information.*** Please write legibly. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Email address