

Swiftwater Intermediate School

BAND HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO THE BAND!



Dear Parents/Guardians,

Mr. Orfanella and Mrs. Kresge are honored to be the 5th and 6th grade band teachers at Swiftwater Intermediate School. We believe all children have talent in music in their own special way, and it is our job to help them discover their musical gift. In order to do that, the students will be taking part in a variety of music activities. These are designed to help your child develop musical skills and to know, and appreciate many different styles of music.

Performing in instrumental music ensembles gives students so much more than just musical training. Students learn cooperation and teamwork, commitment and responsibility, tolerance and acceptance, and perseverance and self-discipline. Performing with a group that plays well helps build self-esteem, confidence and pride in accomplishment. Studying music also reinforces reading and math skills and enhances gross and fine motor skills.

Having high expectations and standards gives each student the benefit of enjoyment from their musical experiences. If you have any questions, please contact us at any time!

Mrs. Jennifer Kresge – JKresge@pmd.org

Mr. Miles Orfanella – MOrfanella@pmsd.org

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

As a member of the Band you are an important part of a team. The rest of the group is relying on you to arrive prepared and on time to practice, to have a positive attitude and to always do your best. Because lessons are during the day, you will be responsible to make up the work that you have missed in your regular class. Please check with your class teacher prior to attending a band lesson.

Student Responsibilities

1. Be prepared- Have your music instrument, method book, and a pencil at every lesson.
2. Be on time – Know your lesson schedule, you need to attend every lesson unless authorized by your classroom teacher.
3. Make-up your missed work – Be sure to always find out and make up what you missed. Speak to your classroom teacher.
4. Treat your instruments and the instruments of others with respect. Music instruments are fragile and can break easily.
5. Take your instrument home regularly and practice.
6. If you miss more than half of your scheduled lessons in a marking period, you may be removed from the program. Please attend a make-up lesson if you miss your scheduled time.
7. Get help if you need it and whatever you do, don't give up! If you have practiced and still need some extra help, don't hesitate to ask questions.

Student Classroom Expectations

1. No food or drink (including gum) is allowed in the band room.
2. Please be courteous of the other students in the band program and arrive to your lesson on time and be prepared to begin working.
3. Classroom objectives will be written on the whiteboard for each lesson. Please read the board when you enter the room so you can prepare for the day's lesson.
4. Please respect the teacher and do not talk while they are talking or working with other students.
5. You will be taught basic maintenance and will be responsible for your instrument's upkeep. Keep a good supply of reeds, grease, and oil on hand to keep your instrument in good shape.
6. All students should have a pencil for their own use.
7. Use the bathroom and get a drink before coming to class.
8. Remember the instrument you hold in your hands is very valuable. Please be careful in the band room and respect your classmates and their space. Instruments can dent and break easily and aren't always easily or cheaply fixed.
9. You will be expected to try your best 100 percent of the time.

Materials You May Need For Your Instrument

Flutes: Flute tuning rod (should come with instrument) Handkerchief or small cloth for cleaning inside of instrument	Clarinets: 3 extra reeds Cork grease and a clarinet swab Mouthpiece cap
Saxophones: 3 extra reeds Reed case that holds 4 reeds Cork grease and a Sax swab	Trumpets, Baritones and Tubas: Valve Oil Soft cloth for cleaning
French Horns: One bottle of rotary oil Soft cloth for cleaning	Trombones: Slide Grease Slide oil Water spray bottle Soft cloth for cleaning

DRUMMERS: Size 5B sticks

Suggested Materials:

The following materials are not required, but would be beneficial.

Private Lessons

Private lessons are enthusiastically recommended for dedicated students.

Chromatic Tuners (good to have, but OPTIONAL)

These are recommended for all students except percussionists. These devices help train students to center pitches and learn how to adjust their instruments to match with everyone in the band.

Step-up Mouthpieces

For beginners, the mouthpiece that comes with your instrument is just fine. Clarinet, Saxophone, French Horn, and Trumpet players who have a year or more experience should consider moving up to the next level of mouthpiece. This allows for a better sound and centered pitch. Do not upgrade until you have been playing for at least one year and have spoken with your teacher first. Here are recommended upgrades that will last up through high school:

Clarinet: Van Doran B 45, 5Rv or Hite

Saxophone: Selmer C*

Trumpet: Bach 3C

French Horn: Holton Farkas MDC

Trombone: Bach 6 ½ AL (if still on a 12 student should go to a 7 next)

Tuba: Bach 18

Home Practice Tips for Success

Home practice is band's homework. Here are some tips on how to get the most out of your home practice time:

Students (see practice steps on the next page on how to practice at home):

1. Find a quiet, distraction-free place.
2. Schedule a set time to practice each day. Just as you schedule a set time for your homework, you should choose a specific time each day to practice at home. Some students like to practice in the morning before school, where other students prefer to practice as soon as they get home from school.
3. Always play with correct Breath Support. Take a deep relaxed breath into your lower lungs every time you play a note. You need to be sitting up straight with proper posture in order to play with the correct breath support. To play with correct posture, you may need a music stand when you practice. Wire stands are inexpensive and can be a big aid during home practice.
4. Break it down! Start with small sections of the music. Clap through rhythms you are not sure about. Identify notes you do not know, and look them up in your method book. Sing through the note names while figuring out the fingerings on your instrument.
5. Three times is a charm. Before moving from one phrase or section to another, be sure you can play the phrase or section correctly three times in a row, then you can move on.

Parents:

1. Help your child schedule a practice time.
2. Become involved with what your child is doing. Listen to what your child is playing. You will be amazed how far your child will go in just one year.
3. Encourage your child not to give up when practicing gets tough.
4. Help to foster a musical environment in your home.
5. Help your child to persevere. There are times when your child will feel less interested and not very motivated. This is normal. Try to withstand the tough times by reaffirming how far your child has come. Remind your child that they are a very important part of a team and that the rest of the band is counting on them to practice and attend lessons. While music can be an exciting and unique experience, learning to play an instrument requires a lot of discipline, perseverance, dedication, and determination.

Practice Tips

Please use these basic steps when practicing your instrument at home. You may find it helpful to place this page near or on your practice stand.

Steps	With Pencil	With Hands	With Foot	With Mouth
1. Label	Write in measure numbers in the music			
2. Clap		Clap the rhythms of the music	Tap foot silently on every beat	Say the counts out loud
3. Finger		Push keys/valves or move slides	Tap foot silently on every beat	Sing/say the note names out loud
4. Play		Push keys/valves or move slide	Tap foot silently on every beat	Play with correct embouchure and clear articulation