

Swiftwater Intermediate School

Band Handbook



Name: _____

Instrument: _____

Swiftwater Intermediate School

Band Handbook

SIS Band Handbook

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Swiftwater Intermediate School

Band Handbook

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Hello! I am Mrs. Kresge and I am honored to be the 5th grade band teacher at Swiftwater Intermediate School. Mr. Hamilton will be teaching the 6th grade band and is looking forward to an exciting year. After meeting with your child we know it will be a wonderful year in music 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.

You can help reinforce what your child is learning in school in several ways:

- Listen to music together
- Attend school and community concerts, including local junior high and high school concerts
- Check out CD's from the public library, or download from iTunes
- Encourage your child to share with you some of the things they are learning in music class

These are just a few ways music can be extended from school to your home.

Having high expectations and standards gives each student the benefit of enjoyment from their musical experiences. This handbook will explain those expectations and also the policies regarding your child's participation in the 5th and 6th grade band program at Swiftwater Intermediate School. Please read through this handbook with your child and sign and return the last page.

If you have any questions, please contact us at any time!!

Mrs. Jennifer Kresge / Mr. Thomas Hamilton

JKresge@pmsd.org / THamilton@pmsd.org

(570)839-7121 (EXT. 60400)

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jennifer Kresge / Mr. Thomas Hamilton

Swiftwater Intermediate School Band

Grading Policy

Your grade in Instrumental Music will be determined by the following areas:

I. All Students

- **Participation/Effort/Preparedness**
Each student starts with an A for this portion of his or her grade. If a student does not try his or her best in rehearsal, or is unprepared for class, his or her grade will be reflected accordingly. Students are expected to show up to every class and every lesson with a pencil, instrument, and music folder/Tradition of Excellence (Grade 5), Essential Elements 2000 Book(Grade 6). Every student receives a grade in this area during every class.
- **Lesson Attendance and Practice Habits**
Each student will have one small group lesson every 6 day cycle in addition to the daily band class. It is absolutely essential that students attend class and weekly lessons prepared with all materials and assignments. If students are unable to attend lessons, they must attend a make-up lesson before their next scheduled lesson. Students are designated two make-up lessons per grading period as a result of forgetfulness; all other make-up lessons require a note from the student's classroom teacher. Fifth grade students are required to complete a practice chart, to be checked at every lesson. All fifth and sixth grade students are expected to practice at least five times a cycle...
- **Performance Attendance**
Sixth grade students have two concerts this year. One concert will be in January and the other will be in May. Fifth grade students will have one concert in May. One hundred percent participation at each concert is vital, as we all depend on each other to create the final musical product. Every child is important and needed. **Attendance at performances is required** by the Pocono Mountain School District Curriculum. A non pre-approved absence will lower the student's marking period grade.
- **Quizzes and Worksheets**
Each student will have several written worksheets or quizzes which they must complete prior to the end of the each quarter. Most of these sheets will be completed in class; however, absent students will have to make up work.
- **Performance Assessments**
Playing tests will be administered during lesson times. These may include band music or assignments from the lesson book. During playing tests, the grade will be based on the following learning targets: embouchures, hand and body posture, articulation, tone quality, fingerings/slide position and accuracy of rhythm and pitch.

Your student will be graded on the above areas using the following scale:

Quarters 1 and 3		Quarters 2 and 4	
Daily Participation/Effort/Preparedness	45%	Performance Attendance	30%
Lesson Attendance and Practice Habits	35%	Daily Participation/Effort/Preparedness	10%
Quizzes and Worksheets	20%	Lesson Attendance and Practice Habits	50%
		Quizzes and Worksheets	10%

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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. Teachers must be reminded prior to the beginning of the lesson, and must sign off on a make-up work log.

Student Responsibilities

1. Be prepared – Have your music instrument, notebook, method book and all supplies at every lesson and class period.
2. Be on time – Know your lesson schedule, you must 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, and have them sign your work log.
4. Treat your instruments and the instruments of others with respect. They are fragile and 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 sign-up for 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, I will be more than willing to work with you
8. Always do your best!

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 class and/or lesson on time and prepared to begin working.
3. Classroom instructions will be written on the whiteboard for each rehearsal. 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 he/she is 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. Students are expected to create a safe environment, be organized, accept others, and learn respectfully.
10. You will be expected to try your best 100 percent of the time.

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Required Materials

The following is a list of **required** materials for band. You may want to rent or lease your child's selected instrument from a local music store. The following is a list of the required accessories you will need to succeed:

All Students:

1. Instrument in good playing condition
2. A pencil with erasers stored in your instrument case
3. Lesson Books:
 - Grade 5 – Tradition of Excellence Book One
 - Grade 6 – Essential Elements Book One

Flutes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flute tuning rod (should come with instrument) 2. Handkerchief or bandanna for cleaning inside of instrument 	Clarinets: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 extra reeds AT ALL TIMES (Mitchell Lurie, Rico or Vandoren 2 1/2 strength) 2. Cork grease and Clarinet Swab 3. Mouthpiece cap
Oboes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 extra handmade reeds AT ALL TIMES 2. Reed case 3. Cork Grease, Silk Swab, Water Container 	Bassoons: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2 extra handmade reeds AT ALL TIMES 2. Reed case 3. Cleaning swab 4. Seat Strap, Crutch, Silk Swab and Paraffin
Saxophones: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3 extra reeds AT ALL TIMES Mitchell Lurie or Vandoren 2 or medium soft strength) 2. Reed case that holds 4 reeds 3. Cork grease 4. Sax swab or Pad saver 	Trumpets, Baritones and Tubas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Valve Oil 2. Soft cloth for cleaning
French Horns: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One bottle of Rotary Oil 2. Soft cloth for cleaning 	Trombones: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slide Grease 2. Slide Oil 3. Water Spray bottle 4. Soft cloth for cleaning

***** When renting or purchasing an instrument, we recommend brands such as Bach, Selmer, Conn and Yamaha. Instruments purchased at local discount stores can come with flaws that many local instrument technicians will not fix, and will need to be replaced after one or two years.**

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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 to learn how to adjust their instruments to match pitch 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 1/2 A L (if still on a 12 student should go to a 7 next)

Euphonium: Bach 6 1/2 AL (if still on a 12 student should go to a 7 next)

Tuba: Bach 18

Step-Up Instruments (Do not purchase an instrument before consulting with your teacher)

Flute: Yamaha YFL391 with B Foot

Oboe: Fox Renard

Bb Soprano Clarinet: Buffet R13 or E11, Yamaha YCL64 or YCL52, Selmer

Bass Clarinet: Buffet

Bassoon: Fox Renard

Eb Alto Saxophone: Selmer Series II or Series III, Yamaha YAS62 or YAS Custom

Bb Tenor Saxophone: Selmer Series II or Mark VI, Yamaha YTS62 or YTS Custom

Eb Baritone Saxophone: Selmer Series II or Series III, Yamaha YBS62 or YBS Custom

Bb Trumpet: Bach LR180S-37, Yamaha 8345 or Xeno models

French Horn: Yamaha YHR461D, YHR567D, YHR668D or Conn 6D or 8D

Trombone: Bach 42TG "Thayer" Valve with Gold Brass Bell or Yamaha YSL682B

Euphonium: Yamaha YEP642

Tuba: Yamaha YBB621

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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 every 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 music 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 the 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 he or she 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. Attending local concerts, listening to recordings of professional musicians, and having your child give concerts for family members and friends are all great ways to encourage your up-and-coming musician.
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 he or she is a very important part of a team and that the rest of the band is counting on him or her to practice, attend lessons, etc. While music can be an exciting and unique experience, learning to play an instrument requires a lot of discipline, perseverance, dedication and determination.

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Practice Steps

Please use these basic steps when practicing your instrument at home. Incorrect practice habits are harmful to a musician's progress. 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 above all measures in band 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 slide	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

Practice Grades

Remember, practice includes written homework as well as practicing your instrument. Grade 5 students will be given a practice chart that they will be required to turn into the teacher on a periodic basis. The practice grades will be determined by the following days practiced in each week:

A	5 or more times per cycle
B	4 times per cycle
C	3 times per cycle
F	0 times per week without a written excuse from parent/guardian