

WHY I TEACH MUSIC

MUSIC IS A SCIENCE: It is exact, specific and must be 100% correct - 99% is no good. It is unalterable. It demands exact acoustics.

MUSIC IS MATHEMATICAL: It is rhythmically based on the subdivision of time in space into fractions, which must be done instantaneously and not worked out on paper.

MUSIC IS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French, and the notation of notes certainly is not English, but a highly developed kind of shorthand.

MUSIC IS HISTORY: Since music has always reflected the environment and times of its creation - often even the country or racial feeling.

MUSIC IS PHYSICAL EDUCATION: It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lip, cheek, and facial muscles in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragm, back, stomach and chest muscles which must respond instantly to the sounds the ear hears and mind interprets.

MUSIC IS ALL OF THESE THINGS, BUT MOST OF ALL MUSIC IS ART.

It allows a human being to take all of these dry, technically boring (but fantastically difficult) techniques and use them to create emotion.

That is the one thing that science cannot duplicate - humanism or feeling or emotion or call it what you will.

THAT IS WHY I TEACH MUSIC.

not because we expect you to major in music
not because we expect you to play music all your life
not so you can relax
not so you can have fun
not so you can trot around the football field in uniform

BUT: so you will be human
so you will recognize beauty
so you will be sensitive
so you will be closer to an infinite beyond our world
so that you'll have something to cling to
so that you will have more love, more compassion,
more gentleness, more good.....in short, more life.

Of what value will it be to make a prosperous living unless you know how to live.

THAT'S WHY I TEACH MUSIC.

(Author Unknown)

Responsibility

Every musician in every band assumes certain responsibilities simply by being a member. Unlike your other classes, everything you do affects every other person in the ensemble, as well as how the public perceives the group. When you appear with the band, whether it is in rehearsal, in performance, or riding a bus, you are no longer identified by your name, but as part of the Madisonville Jr. High School Band. Do everything you can to earn the privilege of being a member of our organization. Make sure you know the exact dates, times, and places of future activities, exactly where and when you have to report, and what you are to wear.

Things you can do to help the MJHS Band have a successful year:

- Be able to play your part well. Practice!
- Be respectful of your officers and captains. Give them a chance to do their jobs well.
- Keep extra reeds, oils, strings, etc., available at all times.
- Be courteous to musical organizations from other schools. If you don't have something positive to say - don't say it!
- Be courteous and friendly to your classmates. You will receive back exactly what you give out.
- Conduct yourself as an outstanding representative of Madisonville Jr. High School.
- Obey the bus drivers and adults in charge.
- Be sure your parents know of your schedule, your commitments, and your responsibilities. Share all announcements and calendars with them well ahead of time.
- Practice!

Rules for Band and Related Activities

All rules and regulations described in the MJHS Student Handbook will be enforced not only during the school day, but also in all out of school performances, practices, and field trips. It is expected that all band members are familiar with them and follow these guidelines.

Attendance

The guidelines governing attendance (both during school and for after-school activities) and the effect it has on grading is described below. The only excused absences are for personal illness, death in the family, a “once in a lifetime event,” or a school related activity. An absence from an after school rehearsal or performance is **not** excused unless the student was absent from school on that day.

Some give and take on all parts will be necessary when a student is involved in athletics or other school-sponsored activities as well as band. Mr. Messina will work with the students and sponsors to coordinate practice schedules, but it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that **equal time** is allotted for band rehearsals. Performances and competitions will take precedence over rehearsals and practices.

During rehearsals and performances, the student is expected to have all of his/her equipment and to be on time. Rehearsals will move rather quickly. It is important for students to stay focused at all times. Under no circumstances will talking or moving about be allowed during rehearsals.

Transportation Policy

All students are expected to ride the bus to and from field trip destinations.

If a student misses a bus, the parent is responsible for making sure the student is driven to the performance. The parent will find Mr. Messina upon arriving at the performance, to explain the situation and leave the student. The student will ride home on the bus with the band.

Because these rules allow for accurate roll to be checked, they will ensure that your child's whereabouts can be accounted for during any trip. Rest assured that we will not leave a field trip site until all students who are supposed to be on the bus are, indeed, on the bus.

School-Owned Instruments

Some students may be issued school-owned instruments for use at home and/or at school. These instruments must be signed out through the Band Director. A form is used, listing the make and brand of instrument, serial number, and condition of the instrument, along with any accessories that are with the instrument. Both the student and a parent are required to sign the check out form.

When a student signs out a school-owned instrument, he or she accepts the full responsibility for that instrument. In the event of any damage to the instrument, the student will be responsible for paying for repairs. In the event of a loss or theft or excessive damage, the student will replace the instrument with one of the same brand and model.

Practice

To be successful in any area means to have achieved your greatest potential. Success in music will come only to those who practice regularly. It's that simple. The band's most successful students are those that practice daily. As with any area of study, independent homework builds necessary skills. It is assumed that students who sign up for band want to improve their musical abilities and learn more about music. This involves regular practice. Each student should work to schedule one-half hour of solid practice daily. Students who practice regularly find their skills increasing to such a degree that they view their practice time as enjoyable, not as "work."

Punctuality

Because band activities involve the coordinated efforts of all members, punctuality is an especially important trait for the individual member.

Whenever a rehearsal is occurring, it goes without saying that all members must be in attendance to maximize the efficiency of the rehearsal. Whenever instrumentalists are missing from rehearsals, balance and blend cannot be adequately addressed. All material covered and progress made by the group is canceled when absentees return and need to be "caught up" on missed achievements.

Productive rehearsals can only begin once every member of the team is present and ready to fully participate. It is out of common courtesy for the other members of the organization that you should arrive before rehearsal starts to get equipment ready and get in place for the start of rehearsal. We will start every rehearsal warming up together unless otherwise instructed.

Punctuality with respect to deadlines is also a highly regarded virtue in band. There are numerous administrative tasks connected with the smooth operation of classes. Often, information or money must be obtained from members before these tasks can be completed. It is out of both a mature sense of responsibility and a regard for doing one's part to avoid the wasted

time involved in redoing or delaying the completion of administrative projects that all members respect and meet all deadlines.

In any team activity, every member must recognize that each individual is very important to the team. Everyone must do his or her part. Every member must realize also that individual privileges above and beyond those extended to the rest of the team are unfair.

The Importance of the Instrument in Achieving Success

Parents and students are urged to carefully evaluate the instrument that the student is playing in band. In order to be successful at making quality music, a musician must be working with a quality instrument. There are many analogies available, but the point is many students in band continue to play on instruments that may have been appropriate for a beginner. Frequently, however these "low end" instruments are holding back students whose current ability far out distances the capabilities of the instrument being played. For a jr. high school music student, careful consideration should be given to purchasing a professional quality instrument.

Grading Policy

First Nine Weeks

50% of grade: Rhythm Charts

First year band students (6th-8th grade) must complete Charts #2 - #8. All other students must complete three additional charts through Chart #32. After Chart #32, students must complete one chart per nine weeks. Each class will be tested three or four times throughout the nine weeks depending on the size of the class. If a student is absent or fails to pass an assigned rhythm chart(s), then he or she will be expected to make an appointment with Mr. Messina in order for completion.

50% of grade: Performance- Classroom Music, Scales, Materials, Participation, and Fundamentals

Second Nine Weeks

50% of grade: Rhythm Charts

Students must complete three additional charts through Chart #32. After Chart #32, students must complete one chart per nine weeks. Each class will be tested three or four times throughout the nine weeks depending on the size of the class. If a student is absent or fails to pass an assigned rhythm chart(s), then he or she will be expected to make an appointment with Mr. Messina in order for completion.

50% of grade: Performance- Winter Concert Music, Materials, Participation, and Scales

Third Nine Weeks

50% of grade: Rhythm Charts

Students must complete three additional charts through Chart #32. After Chart #32, students must complete one chart per nine weeks. Each class will be tested three or four times throughout the nine weeks depending on the size of the class. If a student is absent or fails to pass an assigned rhythm chart(s), then he or she will be expected to make an appointment with Mr. Messina in order for completion.

50% of grade: Performance- Festival Music, Materials, and Participation

Fourth Nine Weeks

50% of grade: Rhythm Charts

Students must complete three additional charts through Chart #32. After Chart #32, students must complete one chart per nine weeks. Each class will be tested three or four times throughout the nine weeks depending on the size of the class. If a student is absent or fails to pass an assigned rhythm chart(s), then he or she will be expected to make an appointment with Mr. Messina in order for completion.

50% of grade: Performance- Spring Concert Music, Materials, Participation, and Scales

After the grade is averaged for each quarter, points will be deducted for absences, tardiness and other infractions as follows:

Performance (unexcused absence)	10 points
Performance (tardy)	2 points

Classroom Expectations

In order for effective learning to occur, band classes must be organized and structured. Students are expected to be committed, respectful, responsible, and disciplined.

Students are expected to arrive in the classroom before the tardy bell. They will have two minutes to be in their seat, with their instrument assemble and ready for warm-ups. Failure to accomplish both will result in a warning. A lunch detention will be given for two and more tardies per nine weeks.

Students are expected to come to class prepared, with required materials, such as band instrument, accessories (reeds, valve oil, neck strap, cork grease, cleaning swab), band book/music, and a pencil. They should enter quietly, sit down, and do not play until instructed to do so. Consequences shall include a warning, lunch detention, parent conference, referral to the principal. Repeated infractions could ultimately result in a student's removal from the band program.

Students will be assigned a cubby to store their **instruments**. Anything other than an instrument is prohibited, i.e. music, trash, books, etc. Failure to comply will result in a lunch detention and the possibility of losing the privilege of storing his or her instrument in the band room.

Throughout the year, students will be given multiple copies of music. It is important to not bend, crinkle, etc. the music as we may use the same piece at a later time. At the appropriate time, students will return all of the music. Student will be charge **\$1.50** for every damage (beyond future use) and/or unreturned song.

**MADISONVILLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL BAND
INSTRUMENT LOAN AGREEMENT FORM**

Date: _____

_____ has been loaned the following instrument:

_____ Serial Number _____

Brand _____ Model _____ Condition _____

with the following accessories:

_____ Mouthpiece

_____ Ligature

_____ Lyre

_____ Neck Strap

_____ Mouthpiece Cap

_____ Flip folder

Parent's Consent and Student Agreement

My child, _____, has my permission to borrow a musical instrument from the Madisonville Jr. High School Band. I/We will be responsible to maintain the instrument in good working order.

- If any damage is done to the instrument while it is checked out to my child, I/We will be responsible for the payment of all necessary repairs.
- If any repairs are necessary, I/We will contact Mr. Messina before having repairs performed.
- If the instrument is lost or stolen, I/We, the parents, will pay for replacement of the instrument.

Parent/Guardian Signature

**MADSIONVILLE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
BAND AGREEMENT FORM
2008-2009**

In becoming a member of the Madisonville Junior High School Band, I agree to do my personal best to carry on the tradition of excellence and success both musically and personally. I realize that conscientious attendance and preparation for rehearsals and performances are essential for the Madisonville Junior High School Band to operate successfully. I fully understand the conditions set forth in this handbook, grading policies and agree to abide by them.

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student's Name (Please Print)

This agreement must be signed by both the student and the parent and turned in with the Madisonville Junior High School Band Travel Permission and Medical Information Form upon becoming a member of the Madisonville Junior High School Band each year. Students will not participate in any extracurricular band activities (activities held outside of the school day, i.e. football games, concerts, etc.) until the Band Agreement Form is signed and turned in.

