

MURPHY MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019 – 2020 EDITION

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PREFACE

The Murphy Middle School bands have a tradition of excellence! Our goals for students in this band program:

- 1) to develop musicianship
- 2) foster responsibility
- 3) instill pride
- 4) strive for excellence

The Murphy Middle School Band program is one part of the **PISD East Cluster Band Program** (Murphy M.S., McMillen H.S., and Plano East Senior High School). All skills and knowledge gained from participation in our band program are continued and expanded upon in the high school bands. We expect that our students will take their talents to the high school and senior high school. Students who participate in our program will not only enjoy their time with us, but also can look forward to many exciting years in a **nationally recognized** band cluster program.

As a member of Murphy Middle School Bands, you are a part of one of the school's largest and most respected teams. As with all other teams, the success of the Murphy Band will depend on the loyalty, cooperation, and dedication of each and every member. Give all you can in your effort to improve yourself and the group of which you are a **vital** part.

ORGANIZATIONS

All Advanced Bands

- 1) Open by audition only, by director's consent
- 2) Members generally consist of 7th-8th graders.
- 3) Rehearses every day.
- 4) One weekly section rehearsal required (before school, after school, or during class).
- 5) Occasional full band rehearsals may be required (before or after school)
- 6) Performs at school functions, local concerts, and festivals.
- 7) Members must turn in practice reports on a consistent basis.

Wind Ensemble

- 1) Members should participate in the Private Lesson Music Program
- 2) Members participate in All Region Band Auditions
- 3) Members participate in the Chamber Music Recital
- 4) Members participate in the Solo Music Festival

Symphonic and Concert Bands

- 1) Members are encouraged to participate in the Private Lesson Music Program
- 2) Members are encouraged to participate in All Region Band Auditions
- 3) Members participate in the Chamber Music Recital
- 4) Members are encouraged to participate in the Solo Music Festival

CLASSROOM RULES

- 1) Any gum, food, or drink is not permitted in the band hall.
- 2) Raise your hand to ask a question, otherwise there is no need to talk.
- 3) Have your necessary supplies for class.
- 4) Follow directions the first time they are given to you.
- 5) **ACTIVELY** participate in the improvement of your band!

MANAGEMENT OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

“Your life is the sum result of all the choices you make, both consciously and unconsciously. If you can control the process of choosing, you can take control of all aspects of your life. You can find the freedom that comes from being in charge of yourself.” - Robert F. Bennett

It is very important that all students contribute productively to the progress of the group and to the goals of the music program. Responsibility for behavior lies directly with the individual band members. Anyone who interferes with the effectiveness of the classroom, performance, travel situations, or the learning environment in general, must accept the consequences of their choice.

Specific consequences for your actions will be determined by the needs of the individual student and the circumstances involved in the situation.

Students who continually choose to disrupt the learning environment of their fellow band members risk being removed from band. *Be in a habit of making good choices – this determines your character, and your character determines your destiny!*

TARDY POLICY

Students have a FOUR (4) minute passing period, which is plenty of time to move between classes. In order to encourage our students to be prompt but careful with their expensive instruments, the Murphy Band Tardy Policy for performing bands is as follows:

Students must be inside the classroom when the bell rings (walking in through the door while the bell is ringing is NOT acceptable). Students then have ONE (1) minute to be in their assigned seat with all necessary supplies. While you are getting to your seat, please be very careful with your instrument.

Students who are not in their seat ONE (1) minute past the bell will be marked tardy. The instructor keeps track of the time and determines if a student is tardy.

SECTION REHEARSALS

Individual and small group teaching is important to help promote and improve positive playing habits. In most cases, this teaching is not possible within the large band classes. To accommodate this need, each student in the band program will participate in regularly scheduled sectionals for his or her instrument.

Students will be expected to come to one section rehearsal per week. Sectionals will be held in the morning, in the afternoon, and sometimes during class. The purpose of the section rehearsal is to help the student improve on his/her instrument in a more concentrated and individualized manner than the large band rehearsal allows. We find that by breaking the band up into its "parts", we can work on difficult problems in a more relaxed environment. As a result, full band rehearsals move along much more quickly.

Attendance at each sectional is expected of every student. Due to the specific instructions given for each instrument during sectionals, MAKE-UP SECTIONALS with another section are NOT possible. Please schedule medical and other appointments at times other than the regularly scheduled sectional.

We set our schedules for our availability and to avoid as many athletic practices as possible. Our coaches have a long-standing tradition of allowing students to miss practices for section rehearsals if necessary. We in turn do not penalize students who miss for games

A STUDENT WHO MISSES SECTIONALS MAY FACE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES, including not being permitted to perform in a concert and doing an alternate written assignment, being placed in a different band, or being removed from the program. Each case will be handled individually.

Sectionals will be set far enough in advance to avoid most conflicts that arise.

PERFORMANCES

A performance is any event in which the students, individually, or as a group, play their instruments for an audience, judge, or clinician. As stated in the PISD curriculum guide, attendance is required at all scheduled band performances. Performances are a vital extension of the academic class, and are a culminating activity that serves as an evaluation tool for all the learning that takes place leading up to a performance. The directors will do everything possible to avoid a conflict between a performance and another school activity.

A student who misses a required performance for reasons other than an emergency risks serious consequences. Not only would this be extremely detrimental to a student's grade, but this lets down every other student in the band. **Missing a performance is a serious matter, and a student can be placed in a different band or removed from the band program as a result.** Each case will be handled individually.

PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

Appropriate dress for performances will be required as shown below.

INFORMAL ATTIRE:

- Band T-Shirt worn tucked in
- Jeans
- Athletic or street shoes (no flip-flops or sandals)

BOYS FORMAL ATTIRE:

- Black, collared long-sleeved dress shirt with no logo. Must be worn buttoned and tucked in.
- Black dress slacks with belt
- Black Socks crew length or longer. No skin should show when the student is seated.
- Black dress shoes. No athletic shoes or sandals

GIRLS FORMAL ATTIRE:

- Girls may follow the same requirement as boys, but long sleeves and collar are not required.
- Black dress or skirt/blouse combination. Must be knee length or longer WHEN SEATED.
- Black hose or tights (if wearing skirt or dress)
- Black dress shoes. No athletic shoes or sandals.

CONCERT ETIQUETTE

Performances are the culmination of much student effort and are necessary to meet state, district, and school requirements for band. More importantly, concerts are an opportunity for students to demonstrate their talents for an appreciative audience. For this reason, it is very important that both students and listeners observe appropriate concert etiquette during any musical performance:

- Dress appropriately for the performance. Concerts are formal events unless noted otherwise.
- Turn off all mobile phone devices and other electronic devices during the performance
- Food, drink, and gum should never be brought into a performance area.
- Refrain from talking while the director is on the stage.
- Only enter or leave the seating area during applause.
- Do not take flash photographs while the group is playing.
- Crying or fussy children should be removed from the performance area immediately.

Students and directors have worked very hard for each performance and gratefully value your approval as demonstrated by your applause. The following are some guidelines to consider in recognizing a quality performance:

- It is appropriate and polite to applaud as the conductor approaches the podium
- During a multi-movement work, applaud at the conclusion of the final movement.
- Do not shout, heckle or whistle during the applause.

GRADING POLICIES

MAJOR GRADES (75%)

PLAYING TESTS will be assigned periodically throughout the year. They may be taken during sectionals, during the student's regular band class, or submitted as a recording.

- Any student who misses a playing grade for any school-approved reason must make-up that grade within one week. Any student who misses a playing grade for a reason that is not school-approved must make-up the assignment by a date specified by the band director.

SECTIONAL ATTENDANCE GRADES will be given at each sectional. To receive full credit, students must be ready to perform on time. Points will be deducted for tardiness.

SECTIONAL PERFORMANCE GRADES may be given at each sectional. They may cover a technical exercise or a selection of music.

WRITTEN TESTS (music theory, vocabulary tests, etc.) may be given periodically.

PERFORMANCE GRADES are given for all curricular performances. Students will receive grades for attendance, behavior, and performance. Performance grades count as THREE major grades in the grading term the performance takes place.

PLEASE NOTE: An unexcused absence from a performance will result in the student receiving 3 zeros as major grades. This might cause a student to fail for the grading period. Excuses are accepted only in event of illness (with doctor's note), or a major family emergency.

DAILY GRADES (25%)

PARTICIPATION grades are based on daily participation in class. Points may be deducted for the following reasons:

- Lack of productive participation in class
- Not having required supplies
- Lack of music
- Not having a pencil
- Lack of instrument, reeds, mouthpiece, mallets, etc.

PRACTICE REPORTS will be issued each week.

- A parent's signature is required on Practice Reports in order to receive credit.
- Grades will be given based on the number of minutes practiced per week. Students should aim for a weekly total of 180 minutes. Try to spread this out into 6 days, 30 minutes a day.

PRACTICE HABITS

“Practice is the BEST of all instructors.” Publilius Syrus c. 42 B.C.

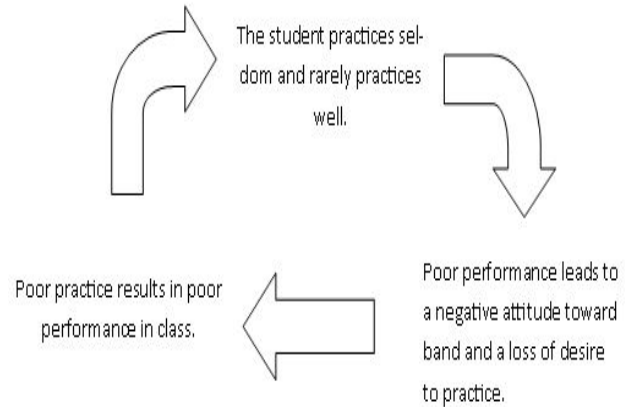
The best way to make practice more enjoyable and more productive is to get in a regular habit of practice. Students are expected to take their instruments home every day. Each student should plan to practice at least 30 minutes each night. Make certain you listen for improvement -- don't just "put in time". You'll notice progress if you practice consistently and wisely.

The directors understand that students occasionally lose interest in practicing. During these low points in interest, it is both the directors' and the parents' responsibility to help motivate the student to continue practicing until their interest returns. Some parents are concerned that "forcing" their child to practice will negatively affect their attitude toward music. This is untrue, however, since the single most detrimental influence on a child's attitude toward music is their inability to perform successfully. Reducing practice time only perpetuates a negative cycle

Positive Cycle of a Successful Student



Negative Cycle of an Unsuccessful Student



SCHOOL-OWNED INSTRUMENTS

School-owned instruments will be issued only to students who exhibit responsibility for their instrument and dedication to our program. Neglect or abuse of the instrument will result in the student being required to turn in the instrument.

Plano ISD has a policy that any student who plays a school-owned instrument must pay a \$85.00 instrument maintenance fee. This fee is necessary to help defray the cost of maintenance and upkeep that is required of the many musical instruments that the school district owns. In the event of students who use more than one school-owned instrument (percussion, school/home instruments), only one fee will be charged.

This fee must be paid by the first Friday in September.

The parent and student will fill out a form that specifies the condition of the instrument at the time of checkout. The form also shows your acknowledgement of responsibility for that instrument. Periodic inspections will be conducted. The student **MUST** treat the instrument with great care – as though you and your parents have made the investment and own the instrument.

Students are at **ALL** times responsible for the instrument and its case. Any damage resulting from carelessness or abuse will be charged to the student responsible.

BAND LOCKERS

The Murphy Band Hall has lockers where instruments must be stored during the day. We strongly encourage all students to use these lockers to insure the safety of your instruments. Locks are available on each locker, and will be activated upon request. These locks must remain locked at all times, and be returned at the end of the year, or the student will be charged for the replacement of the lock. The Murphy Band Department supplies **all** locks.

Lockers are not to be used for storage of anything other than supplies necessary for band class. Students cannot keep books for other classes, lunches, science projects, etc. in their band lockers.

REPAIRS

If an instrument should need repair, please consult a director. The director can do many repairs at the school. If the director is unable to repair the instrument, please take it to one of the local music dealers. **School-owned instrument repairs should always be handled through the director.**

To protect your investment and ensure your participation in class, instrument repairs should be done promptly.

INSURANCE

Voluntary accident insurance for injuries which may be sustained during practices and/or performances of the music program is available from an independent carrier. This information is currently provided by the athletic department, and further information may be attained at <http://www.pisd.edu/parents>.

Plano ISD, Murphy Middle School, and the Murphy Band Staff are not responsible for loss or damage to any instrument. Parents are encouraged to consider musical instrument insurance to protect their investment in the event of theft, vandalism, or other types of loss.

In many cases, your homeowner's policy or renter's insurance may cover your instrument. Parents may also seek insurance through an independent carrier.

SUPPLIES

All students will bring the following supplies to band everyday.

- ***FOUNDATIONS FOR SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE*** by Richard Williams and Jeff King (for your specific instrument)
- Black 1” capacity 3-ring binder
- 5 or more index dividers
- Loose leaf paper
- Pencil pouch that fits in the three rings of the binder
- Several pencils
- Individual instrument supplies (reeds, mallets, mouthpieces, valve oil, slide/cork grease, swabs, stick bags, etc.)
- Luggage Tag (to label instrument with name and school)
- Lyre (for clarinet, sax, trumpet, french horn, trombone, euphonium, and tuba players)

PRIVATE LESSONS

Individual study with a specialist on the student’s instrument is vital to ensure the development and continuation of proper playing habits. Although private study is not required, we **strongly recommend** it as a means of achieving greater musical growth for ALL students.

We are fortunate to be able to offer our students a highly qualified faculty from whom private lessons are available. Each faculty member is approved by PISD and is an authority on his or her instrument.

Private lessons are \$20.00 per week for one 20-minute lesson every week. Payment for lessons will be arranged with the individual private lesson teacher. These lessons can be taught during the student’s band class or before/after school (if schedules permit.) Some private teachers also have time available to teach lessons out of their homes. If you are interested, please see your director.

STEP-UP INSTRUMENTS

As band students reach their second or third year of playing in band, many of them have reached a level of playing that could be greatly aided by a higher quality instrument. This is especially true if a student wishes to be a “competitive” player. As the student’s commitment to band increases, parents are encouraged to investigate purchasing an instrument that will allow the student to grow to his/her fullest potential. Changing

instruments from a beginner model to an advanced model is often called “stepping-up,” and is HIGHLY recommended for students planning to continue playing at Murphy, and especially in high school.

There are numerous models, with varying degrees of quality, available to students who are “stepping-up.” **Always contact us or your child’s private teacher before you make any purchase.** We will have recommendations and resources for you to consider.

Flute: Miyazawa 102 (or higher), Yamaha YFL-461H, YFL-574H, or YFL-674H. Flutists are encouraged to visit Carolyn Nussbaum Flutes before purchasing

Clarinet: Buffet R-13

Alto Saxophone: Yamaha YAS-875 or Selmer Super Action 80

Trumpet: Yamaha YTR8335 Xeno or Bach Stradivarius 180-37

Trombone: Bach Stradivarius 42BO, Getzen 1047F or 3047F, or Conn 88HO

MUSIC STORES

The following is a list of stores frequently used by Murphy families.

Music & Arts Center-Garland
5435 N. Garland Avenue, Suite 150
(972) 530-9083
Music & Arts Center – Plano
701 N. Central Expressway, Suite 200
(972) 424-1317
www.musicarts.com

Williamson’s Music Co.
701 E. Plano Pkwy Suite 100
Plano, TX 75074
(972) 516-1331
www.williamsonmusicco.com

Brook Mays Music
6921 Independence Pkwy Suite 120
Plano, TX 75023
(972) 618-3222
www.brookmays.com

Carolyn Nussbaum Flutes
625 Digital Drive Suite 300
Plano, TX 75075
(972) 985-2662
www.flute4u.com

Lone Star Percussion
10611 Control Place
Dallas, TX 75238
(214) 340-0835
www.lonestarpercussion.com

Nadine’s Music Manor
(Sheet music and some music supplies)
3031 West 15th Street
Plano, TX
972-985-7884
www.nadinesmusicmanor.com

In addition, the following mail-order companies may be contacted to purchase sheet music and books:

Pender’s Music Co.
www.penders.com

J. W. Pepper & Sons Music
www.jwpepper.com

Shattering Music Co.
www.shatteringmusic.com

FUNDRAISING

Our band program has expenses not supported by local or district funds. We must rely on our students and parents to fundraise or donate money for our program needs. All funds raised by students are placed in our Activity Account and used for the direct benefit of our students. Expenses for our program include: clinicians, judges, entry fees, bus transportation, music, staffing for specific aspects of our program, and instrument/supply purchases.

TRIPS

A Murphy Band member represents his or her school, home, community, and self when on a band trip. Conduct at all times must be such that at no time could it be considered a negative reflection on the school, the home, the community, or the individual.

As an individual, you will often be passed unnoticed; however, as a member of a group, the public will observe your every action with interest.

With this in mind, some students will disqualify themselves from going on trips due to problem behavior in school or as a consequence to poor choices.

SOCIAL EVENTS

In order to participate in any social event, students must have demonstrated good citizenship during class. Students who have demonstrated behavior problems may be excluded from social activities as deemed appropriate by the band directors or campus administration.

Social events may require fees, and attendance is always optional.

IMPORTANT: Students need to be picked up on time from all social events. Any students who cannot be picked up at the indicated time for the social event should not attend the event.

CUTTIE

At the time of publication of this document, the Plano ISD is shifting from a communications/program management system called CharmsOffice to a different system called CutTime. We will notify you on how we can all use this system to send receive timely information as soon as possible.

Plano Independent School District Guidelines for District Extracurricular Activities

Students involved in extracurricular activities are held to a higher standard of conduct than the general student body. Plano ISD views participation in extracurricular activities as a privilege not a right. Any student who violates the Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to extracurricular discipline and/or regular school district disciplinary action. This includes any misconduct, regardless of time or location, that would reflect negatively upon representing Plano ISD in an extracurricular activity. Students clearly involved in major disciplinary infractions (i.e. including, but not limited to, drugs, alcohol, and violent behavior) will be placed on probation, removed temporarily or permanently from extracurricular activities. Seasons of extracurricular activities may vary and could extend into the next school year. Discipline action may affect tryout eligibility for the next season.

Disciplinary measures taken by the sponsor/principal may be in one or more of three forms, defined as special assignments, probation, and dismissal.

Special assignments may consist of extra duties and may be assigned for minor disciplinary infractions.

Probation and/or dismissal from extracurricular activities will be for infractions involving alcohol, smoking, drugs, use of profanity, violence, and other serious offenses when the sponsor/principal believes the integrity and credibility of the organization has been jeopardized by the student's action. Probation may also be assigned when the student fails to comply with rules and regulations of the extracurricular activity. (Probation is defined as: A trial period in which a student is permitted to redeem bad conduct.)

The student may be dismissed from the extracurricular activity upon any major infraction, or during a probationary period. Prior to being dismissed from extracurricular activities, the student and parents will be notified of the reasons for the action. The student or his/her parents will be afforded the opportunity of a hearing with the sponsor and principal. The appeals process will be outlined at that time. Request for an appeal must be done in writing within 5 school days at each level of the appeals process. The student will not be eligible for any individual or team recognitions or awards that occur after the date of dismissal.