



MURPHY MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND

BEGINNING 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 are:

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

The success of our students depends on a three-way partnership between teachers, parents, and students. The teachers will do everything they can to effectively explain, demonstrate, and instill good habits. We will provide every opportunity possible for students to experience success on their instrument.

We feel strongly that parents will need to be involved in the musical lives of their children if meaningful progress is to occur. Parents cannot practice for the students, but they can help students learn to budget their time and generally support the efforts of their children in music. We appreciate the investment you have made in your child's musical life!

Students will quickly realize that learning to play an instrument is a gradual and rewarding process. A student can't learn everything at once -- a student's SUCCESS will depend largely on his/her PATIENCE and PERSISTENCE.

The Murphy Middle School Band program is one part of the **Plano 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.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE AND PROCEDURES

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit." - Aristotle

It is each student's right and privilege to receive the best instruction possible, and this will only happen when students are quiet and attentive. No student will be allowed to interfere with the learning of others or with the progress of the class.

EXPECTATIONS

- 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 (Instrument, pencil, mouthpiece, reeds, valve oil, music, binder, etc.).
- 4) Follow directions the first time they are given to you.
- 5) **ACTIVELY** participate in class!

PROCEDURES

BEFORE SCHOOL:

- 1) Please do not play your instrument or allow others to use it. You are responsible for your instrument!
- 2) Please do not enter the Band Hall until after hallway dismissal. – you will be interrupting a class if you do.
- 3) Walk behind the furniture – do not move through the chairs and stands to get to your locker.
- 4) Carefully put your instrument and binder in your band locker.
- 5) Our band room gets crowded in the morning, so please ask your friends to wait outside for you.

WHEN YOU ENTER FOR CLASS:

- 1) Enter the Band Hall calmly and in an orderly manner.
- 2) Space is very limited in our band hall – leave your backpack and books in your school lockers. If you must bring books to class, please leave them on the limited shelf space we have at the entrances.

BEFORE CLASS:

- 1) These procedures will evolve depending on the class and the time of year. Your director will be very specific about how you should get ready for class.

DURING CLASS:

- 1) *Strive for perfection, but give yourself permission to fail.*
- 2) Keep your eyes on the director whenever he/she is talking. This shows that you are listening.
- 3) **ALWAYS HAVE A PENCIL.**
- 4) Sharpen your pencil before class – doing this during class is very distracting to other students.
- 5) Restroom trips will only be permitted in the last 5 minutes of class except in case of emergency.
- 6) ***ALWAYS TRY HARD! SUCCESS ONLY COMES THROUGH EFFORT! Sometimes you will fail, but keep on trying!***

AFTER CLASS:

- 1) Your director will have specific instructions on how to pack-up your instrument so that it remains in good repair.
- 2) Before you leave your area, make sure you have all of your belongings.
- 3) **CAREFULLY** put your instrument in your locker. Remember: your instrument is valuable – treat it with respect.
- 4) Your teacher dismisses you, not the bell. Exit the Band Hall in an orderly manner.

AFTER SCHOOL:

- 1) Please have friends wait outside our room – it gets quite crowded in our band room!
- 2) You may be in a hurry, but please be careful as you come through to pick up your instrument.
- 3) Do not rearrange the furniture to get to your locker.
- 4) Be mindful of others. If someone needs to get by you, make some room.
- 5) **CLOSE YOUR LOCKER** – leaving it open could hurt someone!
- 6) Feel free to use the rear exit – this door is for band students only.

MANAGEMENT OF PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

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, 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.

- First Problem:** A consequence will be determined by the band director.
This could include a simple warning, however the consequence assigned will be determined by the situation.
- Second Problem:** A consequence will be determined by the band director.
This could include a 30-minute detention; however the consequence assigned will be determined by the situation.
- Third Problem:** Student/Teacher Conference
An alternate consequence may be assigned by the band director, depending on the student and the situation.
- Fourth Problem:** Instrument put away and alternate assignment given
Parent Contact and Student/Teacher Conference
An alternate consequence may be assigned by the band director depending on the student and the situation.
- Fifth Problem** (or 3rd occurrence in a grading term reaching the 3rd offense):
Parent/Student/Teacher Conference
Loss of privileges for trips and socials for the semester
2-day alternate assignment given
An alternate consequence may be assigned by the band director depending on the student and the situation.
- Sixth Problem** (or 4th occurrence in a grading term reaching the 3rd offense):
3-day alternate assignment given
An alternate consequence may be assigned by the band director depending on the student and 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.

- 1) First tardy results in a warning.
- 2) Second tardy results in a second warning.
- 3) Third tardy results in a half-hour detention with your band director.
- 4) Fourth tardy results in an hour detention and parent contact.
- 5) Fifth tardy results in an hour detention and parent contact.
- 6) Sixth tardy results in referral to the front office for legal action. On the sixth tardy, a student is considered truant by Texas law.

REHEARSALS

There will be a few rehearsals during the school year in preparation for our performances. These rehearsals will be held either before or after school, and you will be notified well in advance of these events. **Since a rehearsal is an extension of our curriculum, we are obligated to issue grades for student attendance to these rehearsals.**

Should your child miss a rehearsal for reasons other than illness or family emergency, it is likely that they will not be permitted to participate in the performance and will do an alternate assignment for the performance grade. The directors will handle each case individually, considering the circumstances involved.

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 will more than likely fail the grading term of the performance as a result.**

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.

GRADING POLICIES

GRADES ARE THE **STUDENT'S** RESPONSIBILITY! The band directors are **scorekeepers** who will be as objective as possible in all evaluations. It is the **STUDENT** who determines the grade he or she **earns through preparation.**

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 submit a recording.

- Any student who misses a playing grade for any school-approved reason must make-up that grade within one week. Make-up playing tests may be performed for the director or submitted on audiotape.
- 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.

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

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.
- **Follow classroom procedures and rules, and your participation grade will be EXCELLENT!**

PRACTICE REPORTS will be issued each grading period.

- 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 eventually 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.” Pubilius 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.

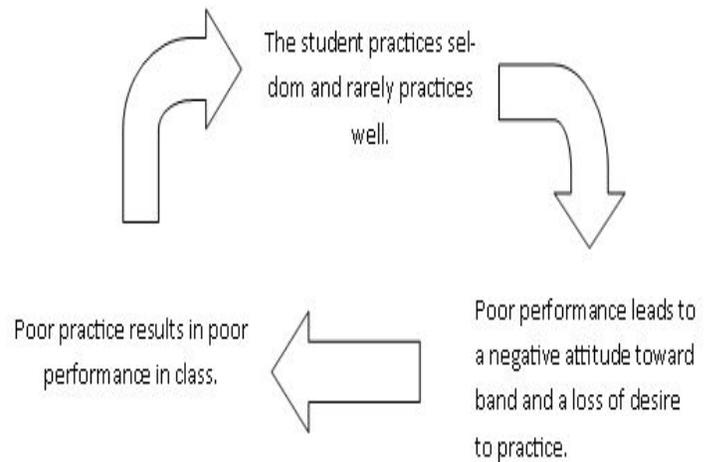
Students are expected to take their instruments home every day. Each student should plan to practice at least 30 minutes each night. Make certain you listen for improvement -- don't just "put in time". You'll notice progress if you practice consistently and wisely.

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 requires any student who plays a school-owned instrument to 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.

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.

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 supplies to band everyday.

- For all students **except** percussion– **Accent on Achievement, Book 1** for your specific instrument
- For all percussion students – **A Fresh Approach to Snare Drum** by Mark Wessels, and **A Fresh Approach to Mallet Percussion** by Mark Wessels
- 1” capacity 3-ring binder
- Index dividers
- Loose leaf paper
- Pencil – **PEN IS NOT ACCEPTABLE**
- Individual instrument supplies (reeds, mallets, mouthpieces, valve oil, slide/cork grease, swabs, stick bags, etc.)
- Luggage tag (to label instrument case with your name and school).

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, return the pink enrollment form or contact a 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

SIXTH GRADE HONOR BAND TRIP

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. Students who consistently earn citizenship grades below satisfactory will likely not be permitted to go on this trip.

To qualify to go on this trip, students must achieve a set number of objectives as defined by the directors.

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.

SOCIAL EVENTS

In order to participate in any social event, students must be academically eligible. 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.

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)
910 W. Parker Rd, Ste 160
(facing Alma)
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

Shattinger Music Co.
www.shattingermusic.com

CUTTIME

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.