

# Southwestern Wisconsin High School Band Handbook



**Southwestern School District**

Po Box 368  
Hazel Green, WI 53811

Director, Kyle Manley  
[manleykt@gmail.com](mailto:manleykt@gmail.com)

# Welcome!

Dear Southwest High Band Members, Parents & Friends:

Welcome to the pride, excitement and fun of the Southwest Band Program! This Band Handbook provides information regarding policies, organizational structure, awards, grades and other information necessary to give Band members and their families a clear and concise picture of what is expected of a Southwest High School Band member.

Becoming a member of the Southwest High School Band requires commitment, hard work and a positive attitude on the part of every individual. These are all essential ingredients that are necessary for success and enjoyment, and are educational outcomes developed in each individual Band member. The rewards of membership in the Southwest High School Band are fun and memorable experiences, a large group of terrific friends, opportunities for significant musical and personal growth, and the pride of membership in a respected organization committed to excellence!

Please read all of the information in this Band Handbook, and save it for future reference. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please feel free to contact me at [manleyk@swsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:manleyk@swsd.k12.wi.us).

Again, we welcome you to the pride, excitement and fun of the Southwest High School Band Program! May all of your experiences be musically satisfying, personally meaningful, and a source of great pride!

Thank you for your investment in music education!

Musically yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Manley', written in a cursive style.

Kyle Manley – Southwest WI High School Band Director

[manleyk@swsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:manleyk@swsd.k12.wi.us)

# Grading Policy

**Grading Element.....% of Semester Grade**

**Lessons.....35%**

All Band members are expected to participate in four lessons per quarter. Each lesson is assessed/graded based on the quality of the student's performance in that lesson, which is a direct result of adequate and quality preparation/practice at home. Regular and correct practice (as taught in the band lessons) is the "homework" for successful band lessons that earn good grades! Band lessons are equivalent to "weekly quizzes" that occur in all other academic classes.

We do not require a "set amount" of practice time each day, and there are no "practice cards" to complete. However, we highly encourage daily practice! A student will improve their musical abilities significantly more by practicing a little each day instead of practicing for a longer period of time once or twice a week. Much of practicing involves the building up of muscle memory and if we leave that training for even a few days the muscles will "forget" what they learned. As a result, music practice cannot be "crammed" like a person might do for a test. Success in music can only be achieved through the repetitions that a daily practice routine brings! Regular consistent practice insures musical growth, successful lessons and a good grade in Band!

**Quality Regular Practice =  
Quality lessons =  
Quality Grade in Band**

**Required Performances.....35%**

Students are required to attend all performing events for full credit. If there is a conflict due to family emergency, family vacation, or other reason please fill out an "Absence Form" with a parent signature and turn into the band director. **Work conflicts will not be excused.**

**Daily Participation & Formal Assessment.....25%**

Attends class on time, with instrument & music, actively participating. Students should be ready to play three minutes after the bell rings. There will be deductions for inappropriate behavior or tardiness. This also includes Play Tests and/or Auditions. Scale auditions (required of all Band members) will occur near the end of Semester 1 and 2, and will serve as the final exam and chair placement in each section.

**Special Projects.....5%**

Special projects includes written work and/or special projects that don't include any performance aspect. These will be for the development and appreciation of music and will involve higher cognitive processes when thinking about music.

**% of Semester Grade Total .....100%**

### **GRADING SCALE:**

- A** 90% - of total possible
- A-** 86% - of total possible
- B+** 82% - of total possible
- B** 80% - of total possible
- B-** 76% - of total possible
- C+** 72% - of total possible
- C** 70% - of total possible
- C-** 66% - of total possible
- D+** 62% - of total possible
- D** 60% - of total possible
- D-** 50% - of total possible
- F** Below 50% - of total possible

## **Band Lessons**

Band Lessons are the foundation of the SWHS Band program. Lessons are an opportunity for each student to receive individual help in developing individual instrumental music skills, knowledge and understanding. Band class is an opportunity for you to apply those skills in an ensemble setting. Practicing is your homework for Band. You are responsible for being able to perform your assigned lesson material and Band music to the best of your abilities. You decide how much practicing is necessary for you to accomplish this and earn the grade you want.

**1.) Band Lesson Frequency** - All Band students are scheduled for one private 20-minute lesson every. There are also ample opportunities to have more lessons than the required minimum.

**2.) Lesson Scheduling** - Students are scheduled out of their study halls whenever possible, or before and after school. All other students are placed on a week schedule, and will miss 20 minutes of a study hall for their lesson. Lessons are always the same day every week.

**3.) Make-up lessons** - If a student misses a lesson (for whatever reason) it is the student's responsibility to make-up that lesson as soon as possible (within two weeks of the absence) by simply signing your name to a new lesson appointment/time on your lesson instructors schedule (posted in the Band room). Students may not receive more than two lessons in one week. In the case of an unexcused absence, lessons will be made up at the discretion of the instructor.

### **4.) Communication of student progress in Band -**

"Grade Sheet"- A record is located inside the lesson book of each student stating the date the lesson occurred, assignments and grades for each lesson attended. This is the primary indicator of student progress in Band.

Progress reports - will be handed out as well to students every 2 months.

Report Cards - are mailed home after the conclusion of each semester.

Electronic web based grade book- for which parents have access to view online, "Skyward."

**5.) Students are responsible for purchasing lesson books** - These may be purchased through the SWHS Band Office, make checks payable to Southwestern Wisconsin School District.

**6.) The Band Director will record your lessons in their grade book** - There are eight weeks in a quarter. You may only make up one lesson per week. **It is the student's responsibility to make sure they have attended all required lessons.** Additional lessons beyond the required minimum during a quarter would serve as extra credit to "boost" the overall grade for that semester.

**7.) Student Expectations for Lesson Attendance –**

**A.** Inform your teacher of a scheduled lesson one day in advance. Ask about what you will miss and make arrangements to stay current.

**B.** If your teacher wants you to remain in class, respect that teacher's decision. Schedule a make-up lesson within the week by simply signing your name to a new lesson appointment on your lesson instructor's schedule (posted in the Band room).

**C.** Be on time for your lesson and return directly to class after the lesson. No loitering in the halls or no other stops along the way back to class! Please do not abuse this privilege to attend lessons!

**D. Be responsible.** The privilege of being released from class to attend a music lesson carries with it the responsibility to communicate effectively with your teachers.

**E.** On the day of your lesson, before school begins, stop in the Band room to get your pass excusing you from class to attend your lesson. Passes will be on the Band room table prior to 7:10 AM.

## **Attendance at Concerts/Performances**

Attendance at all scheduled concerts/performances is required and is part of the grading criteria in Band classes.

This is a fundamental and integral part of your membership in Band. Concerts and performances are a public demonstration of what has been learned in Band, they are considered the final exams for the Band class. Music is meant to be heard. Each performer in the ensemble is dependent on each Band member being present to perform their specific and integral part. Because the Band is more than just a collection of individual performers, it is necessary that we rehearse and perform as a unified group. Problems with individual attendance performances seriously limit our ability to be consistent and strive for excellence.

Every attempt has been made to structure a performance calendar that includes a reasonable number of performances.

**If *WE* are to be successful, *YOU* must be there.  
Every member is a "starter." There are no "benchwarmers!"**

**The only excused absences from a *scheduled rehearsal* are:**

- You are ill the day of the rehearsal, and if school were in session you would be absent from school. Please call the Band Director in advance to report your illness/absence.
- A family emergency occurs. Please email the Band Director
- Regarding summer Band events, you are participating in a family vacation. Please notify the Band Directors at least one week in advance, in writing.
- Regarding summer Band events, you are attending a summer camp. Please notify the Band Directors at least one week in advance, in writing.

**The only excused absences from a *scheduled performance* are:**

- You are ill the day of the rehearsal/performance, and are absent from school. Please call the Band director in advance
- A family emergency occurs. Please call/email the Band director

**Email at any hour of the day/night. The email is [manleyk@swsd.k12.wi.us](mailto:manleyk@swsd.k12.wi.us)**

- Any other absence from a rehearsal or performance is unexcused. Failure to notify the Band Directors in a timely manner of your absence is also unexcused.

Unexcused absences from rehearsals or performances will:

- Negatively affect your grade in Band
  - Restrict your opportunity to earn a Varsity Letter in Band
  - Will result in meeting with you and your parents and with a Band Directors to discuss your continued participation in Band
  - May lead to the loss of Band membership
- Student jobs, or work conflicts, are absolutely no excuse for missing a rehearsal or performance.**

**Use your planner to stay organized in  
managing your schedule & time!**

A complete Band Calendar is enclosed. Read and share this calendar information with your parents, employer, coaches, etc. and check for possible conflicts. **In the event of a conflict, communication is they key!** Talk to your Band Directors, we support YOU! Every attempt will be made to be fair and understanding in the event of unusual circumstances.

If a scheduling conflict should occur with a Band event and another school event you are involved with, we will utilize the following guidelines:

### **SWHS In-School Scheduling-Conflict Resolution Policy -**

If you are in a school activity that runs concurrently during the same season as Marching Band or concert band, here are fair and reasonable guidelines to resolve any scheduling conflicts that may occur:

**1.)** If you have a Band practice and an ACTIVITY practice

Action: Communicate with adults in charge

Resolution: Split time with each 50/50

**2.)** If you have a Band practice and a VARSITY ACTIVITY game/event

Action: Communicate with adults in charge

Resolution: Attend varsity game/event

**3.)** If you have a Band performance and an ACTIVITY practice

Action: Communicate with adults in charge

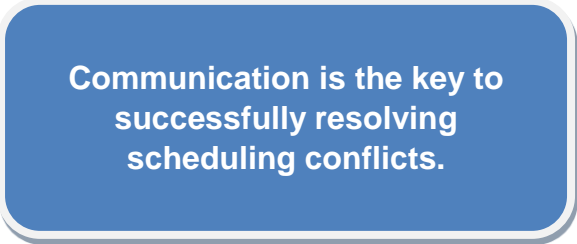
Resolution: Attend Band performance

**4.)** If you have a Band performance and an VARSITY ACTIVITY game/event

Action: Communicate with adults in charge

Resolution: You must objectively determine where you believe you are most needed, and which situation will allow you to make the greatest contribution to your peers and do the "greatest good"

We will respect and support whatever thoughtful decision you make



**Communication is the key to  
successfully resolving  
scheduling conflicts.**

## **Marching Band Information**

**Attendance:** Band members are expected to attend all practices and performances indicated on the schedule. A calendar of Marching Band performances is listed in the back of this Handbook.

A complete schedule of all summer and fall practices and performances is distributed in May. **This is also true for Pep Band events as they are required as well.**

**Starting and ending practice times are just that** - starting and ending practice. Members should be ready to practice at the designated time. At the conclusion of practice all students are expected to help put away instruments, equipment, and props before leaving.

**Dress appropriately for the weather** - Layering works best for cool weather, while T-shirts and hats are recommended for sun protection. Each member should have their own water bottle so they do not become dehydrated; sunglasses, sunscreen and bug spray are essential.

**Occasional sectionals** - Occasional sectionals for your individual performance area will be added periodically to the practice schedule in addition to full Band rehearsals - Prior notice will be given for these practices which will be run by student section leaders.

**Parents are invited to attend any and/or all practice sessions**

### **Marching Band - Punctuality**

In order to be punctual, a good general rule to follow is - 5 minutes early is on time. This allows you time to get your instrument/equipment out and prepare so that the actual rehearsal (teaching and learning) may begin promptly at the designated start time.

Because the Band is a large ensemble, being on time in order to get to your assigned place with your instrument/equipment ready-to-perform is important. Band members coming in late to rehearsal cause problems for the other members of the Band. The opportunity for announcements and proper warm-ups will also be missed



## **Behavioral Expectations**

Whenever and wherever the Band appears in public we are representatives of the entire music program at Southwestern Wisconsin High School, the school itself, and all citizens and alumni who are in any way associated with this great school. Whether in uniform or out, at a performance or a practice, on the road or at home, in an official capacity or in a social setting, members of the Southwestern Wisconsin High School Band Program must conduct themselves in a mature, responsible, courteous, respectful and professional manner. Anything done by a member of the Band reflects (positively or negatively) upon the entire Band organization, its leaders, and the school and community. Just as we strive for excellence in our musicianship and performance standards, we must also strive for excellence in our behavior and the manner in which we conduct ourselves.

### **1.) Respect your fellow band members, Teachers, and Staff**

- Use appropriate and courteous language
- Be honest, fair and nice
- Treat the school facilities with care
- Pick up trash
- Take good care of school-owned equipment
- Respect the private property of others

**Respect** is an essential ingredient of the SWHS Band Program. This includes respect for the Band room, your and others' instrument, your folder, music and books, and each other. The Band room is in use by students all day. Proper care of the room and your equipment is a must at all times. Hats are not allowed in rehearsals to aid non-verbal communication.

**2.) Be on time** - This generally means 5 minutes early is on time!

**3.) Be positive** - Look for creative solutions when you see problems, and contact the Band Directors for help.

### **4.) Cooperate fully with Band Directors/Staff or anyone else who is in a position of leadership -**

- No talking when anyone is "on the podium" working with the group
- You are held accountable for any information presented in a rehearsal, or is posted on the board
- When in a sectional, your section leader is in charge and is to be treated in the same manner as your Band Directors

### **5.) All Wisconsin State High School League Rules, and Southwestern Wisconsin High School Rules will be followed and enforced, at home and "on the road:"**

- Smoking, use and/or possession of any alcohol, tobacco, weapons, or any mood altering chemical substances, is strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated!
- Violation of MSHSL & RHS Rules will result in suspension from ALL school activities.

### **6.) You are responsible for the safekeeping of your music, instrument, uniform and any other**

**school owned equipment you may use** - Loss or damage of school owned equipment will become your financial responsibility (repair and/or new replacement).

7.) Absolutely NO food, gum, or beverages (bottled water is ok) in the Band room at any time. This includes after school and evenings.

8.) **A definition of Integrity** - Making good decisions and doing what is right, especially when nobody is watching you.

## **Instruments**

### **Instrument Storage**

Band instruments should be stored in Band Instrument Lockers or on the shelves in the Band room storage area. People owning smaller instruments such as clarinets, oboes and flutes will share instrument lockers. Make sure your instrument case is clearly marked with your name, address, and phone number. In addition, because many instrument cases look identical, a unique sticker or name tag prevents other students from accidentally taking the wrong instrument home. It is recommended that you record the serial number of your instrument, brand name and model, for safekeeping at home (in the highly unlikely event that your instrument were ever missing).

### **Instrument Repair**

An instrument that is not working properly is extremely frustrating to the student and is a major obstacle to student progress and success!

If your instrument is not working correctly we can send it in to a local instrument repair shop or you phone one of the instrument repair shops listed below to make arrangements with them to have your instrument inspected and repaired. Most repair technicians will give you an approximate cost of repairs when asked to do so. All fees or billings for repair of personally owned instruments, are handled directly between the music store and the customer. If it is sent through the school the bill will be passed on to the student. Always ask for a firm completion date & time of the work to be done, and if they have a loaner instrument for you to use until the work on your instrument is complete. Also, be sure to remove the mouthpiece from your case, to use with the "loaner" instrument. A few "loaner" instruments are available at SWHS.

A store representative from West Music visits the SWHS Band office weekly. Instruments can be sent with this person, and are generally returned in approximately one week. They offer excellent repair service!

### **School Owned Instruments and Equipment**

If you do not own an instruments you can use one of the school instruments.

During the last week of school, all school owned instruments will be collected for inspection and/or routine scheduled maintenance.

Equipment that is polished and clean adds a great deal to the overall appearance of the Band. Take pride in your equipment!

Percussion instruments may not be checked out to go home unless advance approval is given by your Band Directors and/or Percussion Instructor.

NOTE: Privately owned instruments are not insured by the school. Individuals must check their homeowners insurance policies to get these instruments insured.

## **Awards and Recognition**

All band members have the opportunity to earn a varsity letter in the SWHS Band program. This award is for recognizing additional service and musical achievement, both in furthering the band organization and their own personal growth, through their participation in band co-curricular activities, (co-curricular: band activities that take place outside of the curricular school day, but relate to the daily band class/curricular experiences). The points can be earned primarily in these co-curricular band activities:

Marching Band, Summer Band Camp and Pep Band.

Other band co-curricular activities in which students can earn and accumulate points include:

Jazz Bands, Solo & Ensemble Contest, Percussion Ensemble, Musical Pit Band, State Honors Band, Southwestern Wisconsin community service performances, participation in Summer Music Camps, music library work and other band activities listed in the SWHS Band Handbook (found on the SWHS Band website).

The SWHS Band Program is under the governing rules of the Wisconsin State High School League and Southwestern Wisconsin School District. Band members are subject to the same policies regarding grades, attendance, chemical/tobacco use and sexual/religious/racial harassment policies as set by these institutions. Violations of the policies/rules could result in suspension from band activities, and/or loss of co-curricular points.

Students must be a member of SWHS bands four consecutive quarters during the school year, and have been consistently working toward the advancement of excellence and personal musical achievement in the SWHS Band program in order to qualify for the above awards. (Transfer students new to SWHS should see the Band Directors regarding all awards).

Points can be earned in a variety of co-curricular band activities, as listed below. These points accumulate in one year (June to May) and cannot be accumulated beyond one year.

**Varsity Letter** - The chenille "W" is awarded to any SWHS Band student who accumulates at least 425 band co-curricular points in two years or one year, representing outstanding work and dedication in instrumental music.

**"Honor" Varsity Letter** - This award certificate recognizes any SWHS Band student who has far exceeded the expectations and requirements for a Varsity Letter Award in Band, and represents outstanding work, loyalty and dedication in instrumental music. Awarded to those band members who have accumulated at least 525 co-curricular band points in one year.

**Service Bars** - awarded to any band member who has earned another Varsity Letter in Band (one bar for each year after the first chenille "W" Letter).

**Solo and Ensemble Medal** - The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) awards this medal to all students who earn a superior rating at the Region 1AA Solo and Ensemble Contest.

**State Honors** - Each year students audition for the Wisconsin Music Educators Association (WMEA) State Honors Band, Orchestra, and Jazz Ensemble. Those chosen through the audition process are named as All-State musicians, attend a summer camp and perform at Overture Center (downtown Madison) at the WMEA Conference.

## **Why Band?**

In today's society there is much conversation about school curriculum, and the use of academic time. With an emphasis on "back to basics," it becomes increasingly more important to focus on Band as it relates to this ongoing educational discussion.

*Why should a young person join the Band, or continue participating in Band? What will it mean to her/his life?*

University studies show that music education instills students with responsibility, discipline, maturing social skills, communication and analytical skills. Music students tend to possess the qualities that employers consider essential. Simply put, learning a musical instrument is a positive preparation for life.

**Music appeals to the part of the mind that opens new horizons.** The study of music supports wonderment, imagination, appreciation and sensitivity. This creativity leads to an inventive thinking style allowing the individual greater personal choices.

Music is a language unto itself. It allows the human to experience and express feelings and personal understandings generated from the soul, unlike any other form of communication.

**Music is one of the few disciplines that requires the individual to access both the cognitive and affective sides of the mind.** Critical assessment, the ability to conceptualize and respond to any given situation, is the foundation of intelligence as it applies to living a full rich life, and music is a pathway to this intellectual pattern.

The key to success is completion of the tasks at hand. Positive, productive living is based on the establishment of habits of tenacity and personal persistence; commitment. In music, commitment is fundamental. It becomes a part of the musician's personality and transfers to every avenue of life.

**Participation at the level of excellence is not a personal preference in music, it is a requisite.** The musician quickly discovers that it is not the destination, but the journey that counts. It is not the product, but the process. The joy of music generates further growth and understanding of our very existence.

## **Music Advocacy Information**

### **Music Students Are Scoring**

Music students are outperforming non-music students on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). College-bound seniors with coursework or experience in music performance scored 52 points higher on the verbal portion and 37 points higher on the math portion of the SAT than students with no coursework or experience in the arts. (Source: The College Board, September 1997)

### **Music Is Beating Computers at Enhancing Early Childhood Development**

Music training, specifically piano instruction, is far superior to computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills necessary for learning math and science. Learning music at an early age causes long-term enhancement of spatial-temporal reasoning. (Source: Frances Rauscher, Ph.D., Gordon Shaw, Ph.D., University of California, Irvine, 1997)

### **Music Enhances Linguistic Skills**

Music -- specifically song -- is one of the best training grounds for babies learning to recognize the tones that add up to spoken language. (Source: Sandra Trehub, University of Toronto, 1997)

### **America Is A Country Full Of Music-Makers**

113 million, or 53%, of Americans over the age of 12 are current or former music makers. (Source: 1997 "American Attitudes Towards Music" poll conducted by the Gallup Organization)

### **Studying Music Strengthens Students' Academic Performance**

Rhode Island studies have indicated that sequential, skill-building instruction in art and music integrated with the rest of the curriculum can greatly improve children's performance in reading and math. (Source: "Learning Improved by Arts Training" by Martin Gardiner, Alan Fox, Faith Knowles, and Donna Jeffrey, Nature, May 23, 1996)

### **Music and Spatial Task Performance: A Causal Relationship**

Music lessons, and even **simply listening to music, can enhance spatial reasoning performance**, a critical higher-brain function necessary to perform complex tasks including mathematics. (Source: Frances Rauscher, Ph.D., Gordon Shaw, Ph.D., University of California, Irvine, 1994)

### **Music Is One of Our Greatest Economic Exports**

"The arts are an economic plus -- second only to aerospace as our most lucrative national export." (Source: Michael Greene of The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences)

**Arts Education aids students in skills needed in the workplace:** flexibility, the ability to solve problems and communicate; the ability to learn new skills, to be creative and innovative, and to strive for excellence.

- Joseph M. Calahan, Band Band Directors of Corporate Communications, Xerox. Corporation

**Participation in the fine arts engenders discipline, a sense of community, trust, and teamwork.** All of these qualities are essential to a student's potential success in the workplace.

- Dr. Mike Moses Texas Commissioner of Education

**The Southwestern Wisconsin High School Band program is an organization whose purpose is to provide life-expanding educational opportunities to students and be able to provide them with the human experience through sound by an array of musical activities and events embracing all aspects of instrumental music education. (Concert Bands, Marching Band, 9th Grade Band, Jazz Bands, Summer Band Camp, numerous solo & ensemble opportunities, Color Guard, Percussion Ensemble, travel opportunities and Pep Bands).**