



Mill Pond Elementary School  
Band Handbook

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## Table of Contents:

Mission Statement.....	2
Vision Statement.....	2
Goals.....	2
Objectives.....	3
Rules and Expectations.....	3
Lessons.....	4
Lesson Attendance Policy.....	4
Rehearsals.....	5
Rehearsal Attendance Policy.....	6
Behavior and Consequences.....	6
Concert Attendance Policy.....	7
Concert Dates.....	7
Concert Dress Attire.....	8
Progress Reports.....	8
Student Practicing Information.....	9,10

## **Mission Statement**

To provide a quality instrumental music education to eager students, and build upon the musical concepts they have previously learned as novice musicians.

## **Vision Statement**

Every student will be challenged to improve as a musician to the best of his/her ability, while learning valuable life skills such as timeliness, attention to detail, working with others, and self-critique.

## **Goals**

My goals for each student in the band program include:

1. To discover, appreciate, and value his/her talents, the talents of others, and the beauty of all types of music.
2. To improve his/her skills in the areas of tone production, music theory, and general knowledge of music.
3. To gain a desire to continually improve upon past performance...to be the best he/she can be.
4. To experience self-fulfillment after having communicated to others through music.
5. To experience music in a way which will bring lasting enjoyment and be pursued long after leaving Mill Pond.

It is to these ends that I ask each student to give his/her best effort and cooperation so that we can work together to have a positive and rewarding year.

## Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Play rhythms to include quarter, half, whole, eighth, sixteenth, and dotted.
- Play all diatonic notes and some chromatic notes within a comfortable range of their instrument.
- Identify and implement key signatures.
- Define tempo, dynamics, and articulation.
- Identify and implement tempo, dynamic, and articulation markings
- (Percussion only) Play most rudiments independently and within the context of given pieces of music.

## Rules and Expectations

- Students are expected to attend all weekly lessons and all band rehearsals.
- Students are expected to arrive on time for lessons and rehearsals.
- Students are expected to have all necessary equipment and materials for lessons and rehearsals to include instrument, lesson book, folder, music, pencil, sticks or mallets for percussionists, reeds and cork grease for woodwind players, valve oil for brass players.
- Students are expected to pay attention and not talk during lessons and rehearsals, except to ask questions or clarify a statement.
- Students are expected to fully participate in the lessons and rehearsals.
- Students are expected to practice their instrument at home between lessons and rehearsals. ***Becoming a great musician takes time, effort and practice. It just doesn't happen on its own.***
- Students are expected to notify the director in advance if they cannot make a lesson or rehearsal. **A note or email from the parent/guardian must accompany the student notification.**

## Lessons

Students will receive a weekly lesson. Students will be placed in small lesson groups and given a lesson time. It is the student's responsibility to remember the lesson time and report to the band room promptly. Mr. Holmberg will not come get any student from his/her classroom.

Students may enter the band room, **if a teacher is present in the room** and begin setting up quietly (if the previous lesson is still in progress.) **If a teacher is not in the room, students MUST wait outside the band room door quietly.** Mr. Holmberg will arrive shortly to let the students in and begin instruction.

Students who arrive without their instrument will not be allowed to participate in the lesson. They will be sent back to class and marked as an unexcused absence. Those who forget their book or music often will also be sent back to class.

Lessons are critical to becoming better musicians, and as such, they must be attended in full. Students are expected to arrive on time to begin promptly at their start time, and they are expected to stay until the lesson is complete. Special circumstances may dictate that a student arrive late or leave early, such as finishing a test, seeing a counselor, etc., but those circumstances should be limited.

## Lesson Attendance Policy

Students will be allowed no more than three excused absences per concert season or two unexcused absences per concert season. A concert season is defined as September to December (Winter Concert Season), and January to May (Spring Concert Season).

When students miss a lesson, they will receive a *MISSED LESSON* form via their homeroom teacher. Students must return the form to Mr. Holmberg via their homeroom teacher within three days of the missed lesson. Failure to fill out and return the form will automatically count as an unexcused absence.

Excused absences are defined as students who are absent from school, students who are unable to attend because they are in the nurse's or the main office during the time of their lesson, and students who are not allowed to attend their lesson because their teacher will not allow them to leave class. Unexcused absences include students who do not want to attend, forget to attend, or forget their instrument.

## Rehearsals

All full band rehearsals will be held after school in the band room. Students, when dismissed from their homeroom, should report immediately to the band room. All coats, book bags, instrument cases, etc. must stay in the hallway outside the band and art rooms against the lockers. Ample room must be left in the center of the hallway for people to walk through. The only things that should be brought into the band room for rehearsal is an instrument, music, lesson book, and a pencil. All instrument maintenance should be done before rehearsal (greasing corks, oiling valves, etc.).

While in rehearsal, students are expected to maintain proper rehearsal decorum. That means,

- talking should be limited to asking questions of the directors
- playing should only occur when the directors ask for the students to play
- touching of any other person or their instrument or equipment is forbidden
- students are not to play another student's instrument

Occasionally, students will be involved in another club that conflicts with band rehearsal. Arrangements will be made between the band director and the other club's advisor on a case by case basis to accommodate the student as much as possible, however, students who miss too many rehearsals *may* not be allowed to participate in the concert.

At the end of rehearsal, students are expected to help clean up the band room before dismissal. Once dismissed, students must go home via the transportation method previously told to Mr. Holmberg, unless his/her parent/guardian notifies the main office of a transportation change. The main office will then notify Mr. Holmberg of your request.

Students riding the late bus will be escorted to the bus pick up platform. Proper behavior must be exhibited at all times while waiting for the bus and while riding the bus.

### **Rehearsal Attendance Policy**

Students will be allowed no more than three excused absences per concert season or two unexcused absences per concert season. A concert season is defined as September to December (Winter Concert Season), and January to May (Spring Concert Season).

When students miss a rehearsal, they will receive a *MISSED REHEARSAL* form via their homeroom teacher. Students must return the form to Mr. Holmberg via their homeroom teacher within three days of the missed rehearsal. Failure to return the form will automatically count as an unexcused absence.

Excused absences are defined as students who are absent from school, students who are serving detention, and students who leave early for a doctor's appointment.

**Students who DO leave early for a doctor's appointment must give Mr. Holmberg a doctor's note for the absence to be counted as excused.**

Unexcused absences include students who do not want to attend, forget to attend, or forget their instrument.

### **Behavior and Consequences**

#### *During lessons:*

Students are expected to be respectful of others in the lesson group and to be on their best behavior at all times. Being in band and playing an instrument is fun, but being disruptive in a lesson is not fun for those who are trying to learn and improve as a musician. To that end, a three strike system for behavior will be in place during all lessons. Any student who misbehaves will be given two warnings before being asked to pack up their instrument and go back to class on the third strike. Students who are sent back to class will have their parents called afterwards. Future behavior problems in class may result in students being referred to administration for corrective action. Hopefully this will not be necessary.

#### *During rehearsals:*

The environment in the band room during rehearsals is already very hectic due to the large amount of students in the room and the short amount of time to rehearse. It is more important than ever to maintain proper behavior. Students who are displaying poor behavior will be given one warning before being removed from the rehearsal. Future behavior problems in rehearsal may result in students being referred to administration for corrective action and/or removal from band.

## **Concert Attendance Policy**

While band is an elective "Performance-based" activity, it is important to note that when an ensemble member is missing, it affects everyone around them because their unique sound and contributions to the group are missing.

Concert attendance is required for students choosing to take band. All mandatory concert dates are given to band members at the beginning of the school year. However, there are instances (illness, death in family) that occasionally arise, and these absences are considered 'excused'.

1. **Prior Commitment** - The director must be notified immediately upon noticing the conflict. All attempts to rectify the situation should be made, however, if the student is unable to attend the concert, he/she may be removed from band for the year, as it is unfair to the students who are committing their time to being at the concert.
2. **Illness/Family Emergency** - Parents/Guardians must email or call and notify the directors of the situation as soon as possible and as well as provide a written excuse.
3. **No Advance Warning/Unacceptable Excuse** - Students may be removed from band for the remainder of the school year.

### **Concert Dates:**

Winter Concert - December 18, 2019

Spring Concert - May 20, 2020



## Concert Dress Attire

Concerts are **formal** events. As a result, every student is required to be in the proper band uniform for **all** performances. The following is a list of the required concert dress for each performing group.

### **ALL BLACK - NO WHITE SHIRTS!!!**

Black SHOES (NO sneakers)

Black Socks

Black Pants (NO stripes, NO jeans)

**OR**

Black dress or skirt - **MUST BE FINGERTIP LENGTH**

Tie (OPTIONAL)

### **THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE NOT PERMITTED AS CONCERT DRESS:**

T-shirts, Shorts, Sweat/Athletic Pants, Cargo Pants, Leather, Suede, Sneakers, Boots (unless covered by pants), Flip-Flops, Sandals. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT TO WEAR - ASK!

## Progress Reports

All band students will receive two progress reports per marking period, one at progress report time and one at report card time. Using the same grading scale all special area teachers use, Outstanding (O), Satisfactory (S), and Needs Improvement (N), I can let you know how your child is doing in band in the following categories:

- Attendance
- Behavior
- Preparation

## Student Practicing Information

*The following information is given to your child in their activity book to help them set up good practice habits.*

### An Important Note About Practicing

Practice is the **MOST** important part of learning any instrument. If you do not practice, you will feel that learning your instrument is difficult. We will discuss and review how to properly practice in your lessons. I am encouraging all students and parents to set up a consistent practicing schedule.

#### Helpful Tips for Practicing:

- **Find a time that is free for you every day.** Even if it is only 15 minutes, you will be strengthening your musical skills. Just like athletes, musicians must practice their skills to make them strong! Examples: Right after school, before/after supper, after your favorite television show.
- **Make sure there is enough light where you are practicing.**
- **Find a location that has no distractions.** It will be easier to concentrate on your playing.
- **Make sure to use a music stand so you can stand/sit with the correct posture and easily see your music.**
- **From time to time, play for an audience.** Find someone to play for! Who knows, maybe you could teach them a thing or two!

**As you begin to practice, ask yourself:**

- What pieces/exercises do I need to work on or review?
- What parts are easiest? The hardest?


## Then...

- Set priorities. What should I work on First? Second? Third? I suggest working on the harder parts first and then put it together with easier parts.
- Work on hard parts slowly at first and then increase speed.
- After you have conquered one trouble spot, move on to another.
- Always set aside time to review your favorite songs and play for others!!

## Things to avoid doing when practicing:

- Just playing straight through music without stopping to fix mistakes.
- Repeating the same mistakes over and over again! Do your best to fix problems as soon as you notice them.

## Follow us on...

→  **twitter** @MPS Band

→ or Sign up for Remind texts from Mr. Holmberg. Text **@mpondband** to **81010**.

→ or check Mr. Holmberg's class page on the Mill Pond website at [www.mps.laceyschools.org](http://www.mps.laceyschools.org)