

# Hale Area Schools Band Handbook



2009-2010

September 8, 2009

Dear Parents,

I hope your child has a wonderful learning experience in band this year! This is one of the most exciting times of their life, and I would like them to develop an appreciation for a variety of music. We are going to continue instruction that will provide a more comprehensive music education—band will not be a place to simply learn to play an instrument, but to really learn about music in accordance with the National Standards in Music Education.

To create an atmosphere where there is cooperation and teamwork, I have designed a band handbook so everyone knows what their responsibilities are in band. Everything is very simple to follow, it gives the students security in knowing what the procedures are, and it allows the class to run efficiently. As a result, students will have a great learning experience, and develop pride in themselves and their band.

Please encourage your young musician to practice at home. The more individual practicing everyone does, the more we can focus on band-related issues rather than practicing issues. This will help the band progress much faster to a higher level (a more fun level!), and increases the likelihood that your son or daughter will continue band in the future. I also highly recommend that students attend college or community concerts and prepare a solo, duet, trio, or quartet for Solo & Ensemble Festival. As band events arise, a letter containing vital information will be sent home with the students.

In order for this plan to have its greatest effect, I need your support. Please read and discuss this handbook with your son or daughter, fill out the information on the last page, sign it, and return it to me by Friday, September 5, 2008. This information is very important to our understanding of our commitment to the band program. If you need to contact me, I can be reached at the Middle School (728-3551) or at the High School (728-2861).

Sincerely,

*Ms. Donze*

Ms. Donze  
Band Teacher,  
Hale Area Schools

## **Mission Statement**

*In partnership with the family and community, it is the mission of Hale High School to provide learning for all in a safe and positive environment.* To further advance the mission of the High School, the mission of the Hale band program strives create experiences that help students develop music skills and knowledge, helping them to perceive music keenly so they can experience deeply the unique human expression of music and art.

## **An Overview of the Band Program**

The band program starts in the **fifth grade**. Students will have full band every day. Students will learn how to read and notate music, play and memorize melodies, develop aural skills, and properly care for their instruments. They will also learn posture, embouchure, breathing, tone, articulation, and how to put all these things together to make music. We will listen to and learn about a variety of music to that will serve model examples of musicianship. They will perform two main concerts, as well as have the opportunity to perform in after school ensembles.

The **6<sup>th</sup> grade band** is going to continue exploring the basics of playing their instruments. Our focus will be on learning how to balance, blend, play in tune, and play different parts simultaneously through small ensembles, sectionals, and band sheet music. These are all skills that build fine musicianship, preparing the way for festivals in future years. We will listen to a variety of music so we have clear musical goals. They will perform two main concerts, as well as have the opportunity to play in other venues. 6<sup>th</sup> grade band members can also join after school ensembles with other students in different grades.

The **Hale Middle School Concert Band** is composed of seventh and eighth graders who have taken one or two years of band. Students will be working towards a higher level of musicianship through solo, ensemble and band literature. Specifically, students will refine their ears as they work on tone, balance, blend, and intonation. Rhythmic precision, phrasing, dynamics, and style are very important to the musicians at this level. They will begin memorizing major and minor scales and chords, as well as start working on their chromatic scale (all their notes on the instrument in ascending and descending forms). They will be listening to a variety of music to expand their musical horizons as well as critically evaluating their own playing. Besides the winter and spring concerts, students also perform at Band Festival. Students have the opportunity to audition for junior high All Star Band and attend Solo & Ensemble Festival. This band provides school spirit for various assemblies or events for the School.

The **Hale High School Band** is composed of students in grades nine through twelve. They will continue to grow in musicianship and in knowledge of theory, composition, history, culture, analytical listening, and performance evaluation. They have many performance opportunities including marching band for football games, basketball games, assemblies, concerts, festival, and other school and community events. As a result of the various types of functions they perform at, they play a variety of styles of music. Students in grades 10-12 can audition for the High School All Star Band, and attend Solo & Ensemble for proficiency ratings if they receive a I-rating at district festival. Students in 9<sup>th</sup> grade can audition for the Junior All Star Band, and attend either junior high *or* high school Solo & Ensemble Festival. A freshman attending high school Solo & Ensemble and receiving a I-rating at district may go on to state festival.

## After School Practice

After school practices are usually from 3:30 until the last person leaves, every day *except* Tuesday. Some time slots are for group activities (jazz band, volunteer band, ensembles, sectionals, sight-reading sessions, etc.) Students can sign up for a time slot to ensure they receive a practice session one week prior to the date/time they want. In addition to these scheduled times, there will be open times, where students can sign up for a time based on when they have to leave and their goals. While they are waiting, they can practice ensembles, tutor or be tutored by an older student, practice new or fun materials, etc. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me so we can try to make arrangements to meet your schedule.

## Attendance

Attendance and participation at concerts (including marching band) and rehearsals is a mandatory part of band class. Our rehearsal time is spent building our team so we function as a whole unit in making music. Everyone is vital to the music making process – if someone is absent, it changes everything we are working for. A concert cannot be made up – there is only one time and place for a musical performance. A performance can never be duplicated. The concert is the learning outcome of everything we have done in class. Grading at a concert is more than just being present – it is demonstrating growth in performance.

If there is a conflict with a concert date, please be courteous and let the teacher know as soon as possible. **If the teacher does not know of the conflict two weeks before the event (this means a written note from the parents explaining the situation) and the student does not attend the concert, it is unexcused. If there is an emergency the night of the concert, I must have a written note from a parent explaining the situation by the next day the student comes to class (or the following Monday after graduation if that performance is missed).** There are no excuses for no-shows! **In the event of an unexcused absence, the maximum grade you can achieve for that marking period is a 'C' on your report card, and you lose any awards that you may have otherwise earned.** Please read the grading section for information on excused absences.

## Tardies

All students should have their materials, (chair, stand, music, instrument, **pencil**, etc.) in the band room by the time the bell rings or at the time the class is to begin. They should be ready for warm-up at their designated times.

	<b>In-room</b>	<b>Warm-up</b>
<b>Grade 5:</b>	8:20	8:20
<b>Grade 6</b>	9:15	9:18
<b>Grades 7-8:</b>	10:11	10:14
<b>Grades 9-12</b>	2:14	2:17

Tardiness will be handled according to the policies in the school handbook.

## Rules for Successful Learning

- 1. Respect yourself, your property, others and their property.**
- 2. Have all materials ready for class learning.**
- 3. Successful classes presume that everyone follows all classroom procedures.**
- 4. Good posture and positive music environment requires keeping the chair, stand and floor area clean.**

## Consequences\*

- Step 1:** Nonverbal or verbal signal and acknowledgement of re-involvement. Students will be given the choice to be self-responsible\*\*.
- Step 2:** Positive time out (near the pencil sharpener) – a short time to think, and then rejoin the group with appropriate behavior/attitude.
- Step 3:** Fill out a behavior action plan.
- Step 4:** Private student-teacher discussion about steps needed to be successful. Monitor and provide feedback of successful learning.
- Step 5:** A meeting with parent, principal, teacher and student to come up with a plan for successful learning. This may result in an individualized written contract that will aid in successful learning.

\* Any infraction may result in having to earn extra point(s). See grading section.

\*\*The consequence is dependent on the situation.

## Classroom Procedures

### What does pre-rehearsal look like?

1. Walk into the room quietly and respectfully.
2. Listen to music if it is playing.
3. Read the messages on the board.
4. Get your chair and your stand and put it in place.
5. Open your combination lock, take your materials out of your locker, then *lock your combination on your locker appropriately*.
6. Take all your materials you will need for class and sit in your chair (or percussionists, get music and instruments organized).

**Materials include:** instrument(s) (valve oil, neck strap, etc.), music, pencil, etc.

- a. Put your instruments together, leave small instrument cases under your chair (large instruments, leave cases where the instruments are stored).
  - b. If there is a music order on the board, put the music in order.
6. If there is an assignment, do it now. If not, wait for further instruction.
  7. Each class will have a specified time that full-group rehearsal begins.

### What does post-rehearsal look like?

1. The teacher will indicate when class is over.
2. Clean your instrument, and put your instrument in its case.
3. Carefully walk to your locker. Unlock your combination lock.
4. Put your instrument and music folder in the locker.
5. Put chairs and stands in their proper place.
6. Make sure there is nothing left out and the floor is clean.
7. Walk quietly and respectfully out of the room and prepare for your next class.

### Leaving the Room

There will be no passes unless it is an absolute emergency. Our class periods are too short – use the hallway time wisely! If there is an emergency, in your **planner**, write in the date, time, and destination, then the teacher may initial it. Please be as discreet as possible to not break the flow of learning. If you are sick, signal the teacher and leave.

### Sheet Music Policy

- **Music must be marked in pencil only.**
- All extra music must be checked out by the teacher, and the student is responsible for its return.
- **Fines will be issued at the cost of the music if:**
  - Music is not turned in
  - Music is written on in ink or damaged

### Reeds/Instrument Repair

Every reed player needs to have three reeds. Students who need reeds or an instrument repaired must talk to the teacher outside instruction time. If a student wants to purchase something from Marshall Music, they must put their request on the Marshall sheet. The Marshall Music Representative comes on Monday mornings. **No items may be charged!**  
**Note: if a student is sending in an instrument for repair, he or she must fill out a repair tag and leave it by the teacher's desk prior to the representative's arrival.**

### Dropping Band Class (Middle School Only)

When a student signs up for band, it should be a year long commitment because while there are many good times, there are also frustrating moments for every student. Usually, with time and practice, these frustrating moments pass and are forgotten, and the young adult stays in the band program. It is best to have a parent-student-teacher conference immediately when these frustrations occur to prevent what could possibly be a lifelong mistake, and to plan for a way to solve the problem.

Last year's band students are automatically enrolled in band for the following year based on what they told me their wishes were at the end of the 2007-08 school year. If a student wishes to drop band, the student needs a note from his or her parents by the end of the first week of school, and this note must be signed by the band teacher in order for another teacher to take him or her into their class. If a student wishes to drop band at any other time during the year, the student must fill out a form from the teacher and there must be a meeting with the student, parent, teacher, and principal to determine if it is in the student's best interest to drop.

### Locker Policy

A band locker and lock will be issued to each student. **These lockers are for music and instruments in their cases only.** Locks are \$5.00 if they are lost. Once a student chooses a locker, it may not be changed later.

### Uniform Policy

**5<sup>th</sup> grade:** wear something nice (no tennis shoes or jeans)

**6<sup>th</sup> grade:** wear something nice (no tennis shoes or jeans)

**Middle School Concert Band:** black shoes, black socks, black pants, white shirt.

**\* High School Band:** black shoes, black socks, white tuxedo shirt. Pants, cummerbund, tie, and jacket are provided.

**\* Out of respect for yourself and the Hale Band, uniforms must be worn in their entirety properly.**

- Uniforms will be issued prior to the first performance.
- They will stay in slots in the uniform cabinet. Students will be responsible for knowing their slot and uniform numbers.
- Uniforms are dry clean only.
- Uniforms should only be worn to band performances.

## Assessment

Grading for bands 5-12 for each marking period are the same. Every student is given 7 of the 10 points they need to earn (which is a 'C'). Every individual must earn the other three points to earn an 'A.' If a student earns 11 points or more, they have earned an 'A+.' If a student does not comply with the rules for successful learning, point(s) will be deducted. If a student misses a concert or festival, 5 points are deducted. If a football game, graduation, parade, etc. is missed, 3 points are deducted. Please see the "Activities that Earn Points" section of this handbook for information on how to earn your points back. Please remember, **for a no-show, the maximum grade you can achieve on your report card for the marking period is a 'C'.** If a high school student has extra points, they can have them applied toward their semester or final exam, which is 10% of their final semester grade.

## Awards

**John Philip Sousa** - this award goes to an outstanding member of the concert band.

**Louis Armstrong** – this award goes to an outstanding jazz enthusiast or creative musician.

**Director's Award** – this award is presented to one person in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade and high school who has done an exceptional job.

**High School Service Bars and Band Letters** – earned by all students completing two semesters with a grade of 'C' or higher.

**Various awards for special activities** – All Star, Music Theory, Set-up Crew, Composer, Points, etc.

## Festivals

The Hale Area Schools are part of the **MSBOA** (Michigan School Band & Orchestra Association). This is a professional organization dedicated to improving instrumental music in Michigan. The MSBOA Mission Statement is: "Our mission is to provide each student intellectual and creative experiences expressed through emotional and artistic communication".

The MSBOA is divided into districts and we are in District IX with other schools of northern Michigan. Every year, there is a **District IX Band Festival** where bands prepare a march, a selected piece and a required piece for three judges in a twenty-five minute performance. These judges provide the bands with helpful advice on how to improve and then give a rating. The band also has to sight-read an overture and a march for a different judge who also gives a rating. If the overall rating is a 'I', then the band goes on to the state level.

Where Band Festival is for the entire band, **Solo & Ensemble** is for the serious individual students who wish to perform and receive helpful advice on their own or in small groups. Students prepare a piece for a judge to hear, they receive advice on how to improve their playing, and receive a rating. High school students who receive a 'I' go on to the state level. Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors have an opportunity to attend festival at a proficiency of one, two or three, respectively. On the third level (seniors), the student needs to be able to play all twelve major and minor scales, the chromatic scale, sight read, and play their prepared piece. Ensembles have an opportunity to go on to the state level for further advice and a rating, but there is no proficiency. There is no state level for middle school (going to district is an accomplishment in itself).

**All Star Band** for junior high and high school is sponsored by District IX. Students need to prepare a required selection and the chromatic scale for a taped audition. It has always been rewarding for the students who work hard to be able to play in a band with the best of the north. They rehearse on a Friday evening and Saturday and perform a concert that Saturday afternoon.

## Trips

Everyone must ride the bus as a band to all events. If a student wishes to ride home with a parent, the teacher must have a note in advance and the student must check out before leaving. Remember, when we go anywhere, we are representing Hale Area Schools and our band program.

## 2009-10 Band Calendar

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
Friday, September 18	5:30 P.M.	HS Band	Football vs. Atlanta	HS
Friday, September 25	5:30 P.M.	HS Band	Homecoming vs. Alcona	HS
Wednesday, October 7		5-12 Band	Little Caesar's Kick-off	MS/HS
Friday, October 9	5:00 P.M.	7-12 Bands	50 Year Celebration vs. Posen	HS
Friday, October 9		Volunteers Grades 7-9	MS S&E \$ Deadline	
Wednesday, November 11	11:00 A.M.	HS Band	Veteran's Day	Hale
Thursday, November 12	2:00 P.M.	5-12 Band	Little Caesar's Delivery	MS
Friday, December 4		9-12 Volunteers	HS S&E \$ Deadline	
Saturday, December 5		7-9 Attendees	JH S&E Festival	Alpena
Tuesday, December 8	1:00 - 2:00	Grades K, 3 & HS Band	Winter School Program	MS
Wednesday, December 9	7:00	5-8 Bands/Choirs	Winter Concert	MS
Thursday, December 10	6:30	1,2,4 & Volunteer Band	Winter Concert	MS
Wednesday, December 16	7:00	HS Band/Choir	Winter Concert	HS

Thursday, January 7	Recommend December 22 due date	7-12 Volunteers; conflicts with state choir S&E	All-Star Auditions Due	MS/HS
Saturday, February 6		9-12 Attendees	S&E Festival	Beaverton
Friday, February 26 Option 1	TBA	7-12 Band Members	Band Festival	Gladwin
Friday, March 12 Option 2***	TBA	7-12 Band Members	Band Festival	Oscoda
Friday, Saturday, April 16-17	6:00 – 9:00 8:30 – 4:00	7-12 Band Awardees	All Star Band Rehearsal and Performance	Houghton Lake?
Wednesday, May 12	7:00 P.M.	5-12 Bands	Spring Fest 2010	HS Gym
Friday, May 7	1:00 – 1:45 2:15 – 3:00	TBA Volunteer Ensembles	Our Heritage V	MS Gym
Monday, May 31	9:00 A.M.	7-12 Band	Memorial Day Parade	Meet @ HS
Sunday, June 6	1:00 P.M.	7-12 Band	Graduation	HS

TBA

- Volunteer Band rehearsals and concerts
  - May 12 – 8:30 – 10:30 A.M. dress rehearsal (all bands @ HS); gym stays set up for concert
  - Memorial Day Parade/Graduation combined rehearsal TBA
  - Band Party and Concert Field Trip
  - Senior Center/Nursing home trips for MS/HS Ensembles
  - In-school assemblies the bands participate in
- **All dates are subject to change as conflicts and other opportunities may arise. Students and parents will be notified as soon as possible when this occurs.**

# Activities that Earn Points

All activities require teacher approval.

## 3 Points (\$25)

- Rehearse with and perform in a group outside Hale Area Bands
- Perform a solo or ensemble
- Prepare for an audition
- Attend a concert or jazz band performance outside Hale and submit a signed program
- Compose **and** perform (or have someone perform) your composition
- Present a researched musical topic (using PowerPoint?)
- Perform a concert of at least 5 pieces for your family and bring back a signed program of your performance, complete with their comments

## 2 Points (\$10)

- Listen to and evaluate a performance using a score
- Listen to and learn about a major piece of music and present the information orally or in written form
- PowerPoint presentation for a concert or class information
- Do a report on a musical topic (composer, band, instrument, etc.)
- Compose a piece of music
- Tutor (or give lessons) to another band member
- Perform a band piece with 2 or less mistakes

## 1 Point (\$5)

- Complete a music theory or history worksheet with 80% or higher accuracy
- Play your instrument after school (needs teacher approval)
- Submit a practice card for two weeks time (receive card from teacher)
- Receive tutoring or lessons from an approved person
- Draw a poster, write a story, etc. that has something to do with music
- Help with band library, set-up crew, uniforms, etc. for a minimum of one hour outside class time
- Learn and perform a new scale, technique, or song

**Student Commitment**

Please indicate the grade you are working for.

\_\_\_\_\_ A

\_\_\_\_\_ B

\_\_\_\_\_ C

\_\_\_\_\_ D

\_\_\_\_\_ E

**Parent Commitment**

Check all that apply.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to drive to or pick up my child from out-of-class practices.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to make sure my child is present and on time for band events.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to watch my child perform.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to chaperone for band trips when available.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to help out with uniform fitting for the high school.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to help out with fundraising or other activities.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to encourage my child to exceed his or her goals in band.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to attend performances with my child when the opportunity arises (eg. professional concerts, college bands, community adult concert bands).

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to help out during a band or music class.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Evening Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date