

# 2010 - 2011 Hazel Park Junior High School Band Handbook

## Preface

Every fine band has high standards in performance and behavior. Our bands are no exception. This handbook of expectations and procedures was prepared to inform both band members and their parents of the obligations which must be accepted by members of the Hazel Park Junior High School Bands.

**READ THE HANDBOOK CAREFULLY!** The handbook will prepare you for the responsibilities that are yours as a member of this organization. When a question arises, first consult this handbook. If you cannot find the answer, consult the director.

## Purposes of Concert Band

- ❖ To study concert band literature from many periods and styles of music through effective classroom performance and public concerts.
- ❖ To develop skills, to understand, and to appreciate music as a discipline, as a means of communication, and as a way to develop a positive self-image.
- ❖ To implement the course of study prescribed by the district.

## Auditions

Students will be assigned one of the HPJH bands based upon a combination of grade level, playing ability, and other scheduling issues. Regardless of which band a student is assigned, the opportunities for involvement remain the same. All students, regardless of which band assigned, have the opportunity to participate in band concerts, Solo & Ensemble Festival, District Honors Band, Jazz Band, Hand Drumming Ensemble, Select Woodwind Ensemble, Marching Band, and Color Guard. Symphonic Winds members will also perform concerts at the elementary schools and Band Festival.

Band auditions are a way for the director to assess the playing level of each individual student and act as a starting point for the future technique development of the student. They are the standard against which future individual performances will be measured. They also serve as the way to establish a seating order for the bands.

Auditions will begin as soon as possible at the beginning of the year. Until seats are assigned, the director will determine the seating order. An audition will consist of: a short excerpt of music, scales, and sight-reading. The audition sheet will be made available to the students for practice at least one week before auditions take place.

## Challenges

The challenge system was designed to allow motivated students to improve their seating order after auditions. You will receive detailed challenge information as soon as your seating assignment has been established. This system is seen by the director as a tool for improvement for everyone involved and should provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery. There will be no challenges two weeks prior to a performance.

## Grading Policy

Grades will be calculated according to the school scale. The following factors will be considered when determining each student's grade:

❖ **Attendance and Participation** – Both are crucial for the success of each individual member and for the entire band. Each day the student may earn a total of 10 points. If the student does not bring his or her instrument and the required materials to play it (neckstrap, mouthpiece, sticks, etc.), the student will not receive any points for that day. A student's participation level will determine the daily grade. An unexcused absence from a concert will result in a lowering of a student's grade by two letter grades. Attendance will be a portion of the student's final grade.

❖ **Ability** – Each student will have the opportunity to demonstrate his or her proficiency on his or her instrument in both small group and individual settings several times during each grading period. These opportunities occur in band class by simply checking a group of instrumentalists' progress using an informal "down the line" fashion, and by a slightly more formal process of video and audio recording of student assignments. **At times, students will be required to play individually in front of the group. This is always done in a supportive and non-threatening manner.** These processes allow the director the best opportunity to provide comments aimed at individualized instruction. Ability will be a portion of the student's final grade.

### **Criteria for evaluation of ability:**

Tone quality / sound production

Intonation

Rhythmic accuracy

Knowledge of music

Improvement in all of the above areas from previous individual performances

❖ **Attitude** – Attitude represents the student's desire to become a better musician. Attitude will be a portion of the student's final grade.

### **Criteria for evaluation of attitude:**

Practice logs

Seriousness concerning quality of individual and group performances

Willingness to follow instruction

Showing proper respect at all times for other individuals and groups

Attentiveness

Care of equipment, uniforms, music, and facilities

Following rehearsal procedures

❖ **Benchmarks**

▫ Benchmarks are a system of short tests in which students demonstrate mastery of musical concepts. It is a self-paced system for musical growth.

▫ Students will receive information about the benchmark expectations for each grading period in a separate handout.

## **Excused/Unexcused Absences**

Every student is a valuable member of our band “team” and as such must be present at every band function. The unique nature of the band class has, as part of the curriculum, performances outside of the scheduled school day. The director has carefully chosen the performances that they feel contain the most educational merit, and have listed those at the end of this handbook. Please mark your calendars now so that students can participate in every performance and that any flexible family plans can be arranged with the students’ school commitments in mind. Any changes in this performance list will be communicated in writing.

When a student absence is necessary, parents/guardians are asked to inform the director in writing no less than one week before a performance. This allows the director to make the necessary changes in personnel. We understand that emergencies do occur, and these will be handled on a case by case basis. Unexcused absences from performances will result in the lowering of a students’ grade by two letter grades. If an absence is deemed excused, the student will have a unique opportunity to make-up their missed performance by playing the concert music for the director before or after school within one week of the performance date. It is the students’ responsibility to arrange for and complete the required “make-up” (not the directors’). Any student suspended from school during a band performance will NOT be able to perform, and the absence will be considered unexcused.

## **Concert Band Rehearsal Rules**

1. No gum, food, or drink (other than water in a capped, transparent bottle) during rehearsal.
2. Students have until the tardy bell to be in the room unless they have a valid pass. Unexcused tardies will result in detentions.
3. Upon entering the room, students are to immediately get their music and instrument and go to their assigned seat. The rehearsal begins when the director is on the podium.
4. Hall passes will be issued for emergencies only.
5. Students will have their instrument, music, and classroom materials at all rehearsals unless their instrument is in repair. Damaged instruments should be brought to the attention of the director as soon as possible to avoid a lowered participation grade. Students with instruments in repair are required to sit quietly in their seats, follow along with their music, and practice their parts even without their instrument, or use a school-owned one if available.
6. All band members will play using the proper posture for their particular instrument (both feet on the floor, instrument held up by both hands, and sitting up straight in the chair).
7. There is no talking or disruptive behavior during class rehearsal. Behavior deemed counterproductive to learning will be warned first, and then issued a detention, and possibly a conference with parents or guardians.
8. Seating and placement will be decided by the director based on an audition. You will have an opportunity to better your seating position by the challenge system.
9. All band members must have a pencil (not a pen) in their music folders for marking corrections and special rehearsal directions.
10. All music folders, music, and instruments will be put away in their proper places after each rehearsal or performance.

11. Only percussionists should play (or touch) the percussion instruments. Also, nothing may be placed upon the timpani or other percussion instruments.
12. Students will stay in the room with the doors closed until the bell rings for dismissal.
13. Students at all times will remain respectful of staff members, other students, as well as school and personal property. Disrespect to other students is counterproductive to the collaborative nature of our band, and will not be tolerated. Likewise, we are extremely fortunate to have a school district that values band as a class, and that provides us with quality facilities and equipment. Students must remain mindful of these facts, and their behavior should be appropriately respectful. Disrespect of others or property will be dealt with on a case by case basis, and punishments can include detentions, suspensions, and, in the case of damage to property, appropriate fines.

## Fundraiser

In the fall the bands will participate in a fundraising effort to provide much needed funds to supplement our fine programs. Please know that our bands are well funded by the school district, but the funds that we raise allow for many of the “extras” that directly help band students and their experience in band without adding a financial burden to the district. It also allows the students to have ownership in the band program by helping with the costs. These include items that the director does not feel comfortable asking the district to fund. In the past, fundraisers have defrayed uniform costs, funded reed and mouthpiece scholarships, instrument cleaning kit scholarships, master class instruction by professional musicians, recording equipment, flag corps, and even philanthropic endeavors. As is tradition, this is not a requirement, but is rather a show of commitment by the students (in the past, almost 100% student participation). Students who choose to not participate in the fundraiser will not be eligible to receive the many scholarships and benefits that the fundraisers allow.

## School Equipment

Students will be held responsible for any equipment issued to them by the school. This includes instruments, music, accessories, uniforms, and any type of school property. Careless handling of school property will not be tolerated, and students will be subject to a fine and detentions if found guilty of irresponsible handling of equipment. Students using school owned instruments will complete a School Instrument Use Form to insure that proper care is taken of the instrument.

## Lockers

Band lockers and locks will be assigned by the director. It is extremely important that students use **only** the locker assigned to them. If there is a problem with that locker or lock, the student must report to the directors for help. Locks will be provided to students at no cost to be used during the school year. However, in the event that a student loses their lock, they are responsible for the replacement cost of \$10. Students should not use personal locks on band lockers.

**HPJH can not be responsible for personal items, including instruments, lost or stolen.**

### **Band Locker expectations:**

- \*Students should NOT share their locker combinations with anyone
- \*Lockers should remain locked
- \*Lockers must remain clean
- \*Only items necessary for band class should be kept in the band locker

## Uniform

The following attire will be the band uniform for each performance:

### Boys

Black dress shoes  
Black socks  
Black dress pants  
White HPJH band polo shirt

### Girls

Black dress shoes  
Black socks or black nylons  
Black dress pants or black skirt  
(Skirt must be at least knee length)  
White HPJH band polo shirt

This uniform must be worn by all band students at each performance. **We will order the band polo shirts in the autumn for those needing them, and are willing to order black shoes for students needing to purchase them.** We will have an order form with prices soon. Please take the time now to acquire these items - our first public appearance isn't until December, so you should have plenty of time to get everything that you need. See Mr. Ross or Mr. Hill immediately if you have any questions or need help.

## Public Appearances

Each member of the band will be required to attend every public appearance of this organization. Absences must have proper documentation prior to the event to be considered excused. When a student appears at a public performance, he or she is representing not only him or herself, but also our band, our school, and our community. Students should conduct themselves in such a way that they will reflect credit upon yourself and the band.

## Schedule of HPJH Band Events 2010 - 2011

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
Tuesday, December 7	7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade Band Winter Concert	6:00 p.m.
January 6 - 8	District 16 Junior High Honor's Band (select students)	TBA
Saturday, January 29	J.H. Solo & Ensemble Contest (select students)	TBA
Friday, March 4	Band Festival (4 <sup>th</sup> hour band)	TBA
Tuesday, May 3	7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade Band Spring Concert	6:00 p.m.
Monday, May 30	Memorial Day Parade	9:30 a.m.

You will be notified of any schedule changes in writing.

## **Final Thoughts**

A few words about the band events. All full-band performances are mandatory, as they represent the culmination of much class work. The District Solo and Ensemble Contest is open to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade band students, but is not required. It is an opportunity to prepare a solo and/or ensemble for performance before a judge who will then give comments for individual improvement. There is a nominal charge for participation in this event.

The Symphonic Winds class will participate in Band Festival, which will be held at an area High School (not Hazel Park High School). We will be assigned our performance location and times a few weeks before the event.

The Memorial Day Parade is a highlight of the year, as we get to show our community the pride we have as we march and play in our local parade. It is for this parade that band students are permitted to audition for the school's Color Guard (or Flag Corps), which requires additional after school practices. More information on Color Guard will be provided in April.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Ross at 658-2391 or Mr. Hill at 658-2390. This is going to be a wonderful year for all of our bands!

**Parents/guardians, please complete and have your child return the following page.**  
Parents, please complete this page and have your child return it as soon as possible.  
Please keep the handbook to use as a reference throughout the year. Thank you.

**We have received a copy of the Hazel Park Band Handbook for 2010 – 2011 and are aware of and supportive of its contents.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Printed Name          Parent/Guardian Printed Name          Parent/Guardian Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature                                  Parent or Guardian Signature/Date

Please provide us with the following information so we can establish a database for mailings and communication. This information will remain confidential, and will only be used by the band director.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City and ZIP code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade                                  Students' birthday

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone #                          Name / Cell or Work Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent E-mail address(optional)          Name / Cell or Work Phone Number

Instrument information: (will be inserted into a database in case of loss, damage, or theft)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Instrument                                  Brand

\_\_\_\_\_  
Serial Number

You only need to return **this** page – keep the handbook for your reference.