

# STILL MIDDLE SCHOOL

2016-2017  
BAND  
HANDBOOK



Chris Niesluchowski  
Doug Ruhs  
*Directors*

[www.stillmusic.weebly.com](http://www.stillmusic.weebly.com)

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the Band Department at Still Middle School! We are very excited about the 2016-2017 school year! The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with an awareness and understanding of the policies, organizational structure, and general functioning of Still Middle School Bands. Please read this handbook in its entirety, discuss it with your family, and keep it for future reference.

Music in District 204 is a vibrant part of the curriculum. In addition to providing music education, our music program is designed to help meet the emotional, social, and cultural needs of every student.

Goals for students include:

1. To discover, appreciate, and value their talents, the talents of others, and the beauty of music.
2. To develop the desire to improve their musical performance as well as increase knowledge of music theory, composition, and improvisation.
3. To gain a sense of self-fulfillment by striving to reach their full potential.
4. To develop a life-long enjoyment and appreciation of music.

We hope you will share in these goals and help us provide the best possible experience for everyone. Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or concerns you may have.

We're looking forward to a great year!

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*Wind Ensemble/Explo Jazz Band*  
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# The Calendar

<http://stillmusic.weebly.com/calendar>

Please mark your own calendar to avoid conflicts.

**Dates in bold are graded performances**

## September

- 6-9 Wind/Jazz Ensemble Auditions—@ Still, by appointment
- 15 First Day of Wind Ensemble for those who made it
- 16 First Day of Jazz Ensemble for those who made it
- 16 8th Grade Marching Night @ MVHS (optional)
- 23 8th Grade Marching Warrior Night @ WVHS (optional)

## October

- 1 IMEA District Band/Jazz Band auditions in Yorkville (optional)
- 24 6th & 7th Grade Band Concert at 6:30 pm**
- 29 IMEA Jr. Jazz Festival – for students that were selected

## November

- 5 IMEA District Band Festival – for students that were selected
- 9 8th Grade Fall Band Concert @ WVHS 7:30 pm (8th Grade Band ONLY)**

## December

- 6 Winter Honors Concert 7:30 pm (Wind Ensemble & Jazz Ensemble)

## January

- TBA 8th Grade Pep Band Night @ WVHS Main (optional)
- 14 Day of Percussion at Waubonsie Valley High School 9am – 5pm
- 31 7th grade Band Concert 7:30 pm**

## February

- 6 6th Grade Band Concert 7:30 pm**
- 15 8th Grade Band Concert 7:30 pm**
- 18 Solo & Ensemble Festival at Gregory Middle School (select students)

## March

- 11 District 204 Band Festival at Scullen Middle School (MANDATORY for Wind/Jazz Ensemble members)
- 20 Metea Valley Jazz Showcase 7:00 pm (Jazz Ensemble members only)

## April

- 27-28 Spring Musical

## May

- 3 6th, 7th, & 8th Gr. Spring Band Concerts 7:30 pm (all band students)**
- 4 Waubonsie Valley Jazz Showcase 7:00 pm (Jazz Ensemble members only)
- 17-19 Marching Percussion & Color Guard Camp (all 6/7/8 parade perc., 3:10-4:30pm)
- 18-19 6th Grade Marching Camp (all 6th grade parade participants, 3:10 – 4:30pm)
- 20 Fine Arts Festival (all band students) At Waubonsie Valley High School**
- 22-26 Marching Band Practice (all parade participants, 3:10 pm – 4:30 pm)
- 29 Memorial Day Parade in Naperville (please reserve 7:00 am - 3:00 pm)**

## June

- 1 Funway trip
- 2 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL (with no emergency days)

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

These policies are designed to create a sense of community within our large classrooms. We emphasize the effort of our students in building self-esteem, teamwork skills, and respect for others.

1. Students should be seated with all materials (music, book, pencil, binder, and instrument) and ready to play when class begins.
2. Tardiness is unacceptable, and consequences will be per the Still Middle School Student Handbook.
3. No gum, food, or drinks will be allowed in the band room.
4. Students must show respect for their teachers, themselves, their peers, their environment, and the music. Talking during class, playing out of turn, or causing any other disruptions is unacceptable. Appropriate consequences will be explained by the teacher.
5. Markings in the music should be made lightly in pencil. That's right, ONLY in pencil. **In the event that students cause irreversible damage to, or lose the music, they are responsible for paying for the replacement of the piece!!!**

## GRADING

With band being a curricular class in the student's day, a quarterly grade will be given to each student. A major portion of the band grade is based upon performance tests given during technique class. The grading process also considers rehearsal participation, attendance, concerts, written and performance tests, home practice, and daily effort. Attendance at all performances is a crucial part of the curriculum, and consequently a large part of students' grades.

## PERFORMANCES

All band members perform at least four times per year. These events are the culmination of daily rehearsals and give students the opportunity to share what they've learned. Our Concert Attendance Policy is located on the next page.

# Still Middle School Music Department



## Concert Attendance Policy

- Students are expected to attend all performances. Failure to attend a required concert without a valid, written excuse via the Absence Request Form (available on [www.stillmusic.weebly.com](http://www.stillmusic.weebly.com)), fully explaining the absence will result in the lowering of the student's grade. The Absence Excuse Form must be received **at least 2 weeks prior** to the event in order for the excuse to be considered. Ideally all excused absences will be reported by the time the handbook is due. (Notification of emergency conflicts will be received up to one week following the concert.)

- Upon notification of an absence via the Absence Request Form, **the director will acknowledge on the form that the absence is either Excused or Unexcused.** An excused absence allows the student to make up the grade in the form of an alternative assignment for a possible 100%. In the case of an unexcused absence, the student will be given the opportunity to make up the event however, the highest possible grade a student can receive will be 50%.

- For Fine Arts Festival and February BCO concerts, Combo students must complete two separate Absence Request Forms: one submitted to their Choir Director and one submitted to their Instrumental Director.

Although it would be impossible to include a complete list, the following items are examples of **unexcused absences.**

1. Commitments accepted after a rehearsal or concert date is announced.
  - a. This includes all sports, dance, theater, etc...(not held at Still MS)
2. Homework
3. Transportation problems.
4. Babysitting.
5. Watching TV.
6. Falling asleep
7. Forgetting instrument and/or music.
8. A family member's birthday.
9. Your birthday

## TECHNIQUE CLASS

In conjunction to the daily rehearsal, the District 204 music curriculum provides an opportunity for instrumental music students to have technique classes during their ensemble rehearsal. They will be excused from a rehearsal on a rotating schedule. The benefit of technique class is that it allows for small group instruction that addresses students' specific needs.

## HOME PRACTICE

Home practice helps make it possible to play a musical instrument to the best of one's ability. All band members must practice regularly at home to insure progress. The benefits of home practice include building self-confidence and pride in one's performance. *PRACTICE IS HOMEWORK!!!* The recommended practice goal is 20 minutes per day. Please try to include practicing in your daily homework routine. This will help maintain consistency in practicing at home.

## PRIVATE LESSONS

It is **impossible** for us to overemphasize the positive impact of private lessons. Individual instruction is the best way to help students fulfill their potential. The main benefit of a private lesson is weekly one on one instruction with an expert on your particular instrument. A private instructor will immediately reinforce strengths and give specific instruction for improvement. Please request our recommended list of private instructors if this is an advantage you wish to offer your child.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR BAND ACTIVITIES

The Still Middle School **Wind Ensemble**, **Jazz Ensemble**, and **Exploratory Jazz Band** are designed for students wishing to broaden their musical development and participation. Membership for these ensembles is based upon student desire, musical ability, and instrumentation needs. Rehearsal times are 6:45 a.m.-7:50 a.m. The Wind Ensemble meets on Mondays & Thursdays. The Jazz Ensemble meets on Tuesdays and Fridays. **Students should arrive at 6:45 a.m. in order for rehearsals to start promptly.** Participation in the Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble is determined by student auditions in the fall. Audition information and materials may be obtained from the directors. The Exploratory Jazz Band will begin rehearsing after school later in the year, further information will be shared in class (no audition required).

Band students are given the opportunity to perform solos and/or ensembles at the Illinois Grade School Music Association (IGSMA) contest in February. More experienced band members also have the opportunity to audition for and perform in the Illinois Music Educator Association (IMEA) festival bands. Information for these events will be made available as they approach.

## MUSIC UNIFORM

All students should have the following for performances:

- Music department polo – to be ordered through the band department  
*Please Note: alterations to the uniform polo are NOT permitted; students may be asked to replace an altered polo at their cost.*
- Black pants – no jeans, shorts, or skirts
- Black socks – Must be high enough to cover the ankles when seated.
- Black shoes - shoes must be 100% BLACK, there are no exceptions. No flip-flops, and also no open-toed shoes. Completely black gym shoes are fine.

\*\*Please refer to the music department polo order form found on [www.stillmusic.weebly.com](http://www.stillmusic.weebly.com) to order your Still Middle School Music polo.

## LOCKERS

Band lockers are available for each student and will be assigned during the first week of school. We ask that students store only their instrument and band related materials in their band locker. Any student wishing to use a band locker **MUST** purchase a **STILL MIDDLE SCHOOL** combination lock. Locks bought from anywhere other than the band room will not be acceptable and will be removed. Locks cost \$5.00, and checks should be made payable to Still Middle School.

# BOOKS AND MATERIALS

## ALL BAND STUDENTS

Each student will need an instrument to practice at home, Pencil, 2-inch **BLACK** 3-ring binder, paper to put into the binder, 10-15 page protectors, tabs for labeling sections, flash drive (can be used with other classes).

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

- ~ BOOK 1 - TRADITIONS OF EXCELLENCE (red book for your instrument)
- ~ FRESH APPROACH TO THE SNARE DRUM (percussion only)\*
- ~ FRESH APPROACH TO Mallet PERCUSSION (percussion only)\*
- ~ WINNING RHYTHMS
- ~ STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FESTIVAL SOLOS BOOK 1  
(percussion please DO NOT buy this book)

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

- ~ BOOK 2 - STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE (blue book for your instrument)
- ~ ALFRED'S DRUM METHOD BOOK 1 (percussion only)\*\*
- ~ WINNING RHYTHMS (same as 6<sup>th</sup> grade)
- ~ STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FESTIVAL SOLOS BOOK 2  
(percussion please DO NOT buy this book)

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

- ~ BOOK 3 - STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE (green book for your instrument)
- ~ ALFRED'S DRUM METHOD BOOK 2 (percussion only)\*\*
- ~ STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FESTIVAL SOLOS BOOK 2  
(percussion please DO NOT buy this book)

*\*6<sup>th</sup> Gr. percussionists need to have this book **in addition** to the other books listed.*

*\*\*7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Gr. percussionists need to have this book **in addition** to the other books listed; **purchase the DVD version if possible.***



# SUPPLIES

[www.QANDF.COM](http://www.QANDF.COM)

YOU ORDER IT ONLINE, THEY DELIVER IT TO THE SCHOOL

## Woodwinds

- Reed guard
- Cork grease
- Cleaning swab
- Neck Strap (saxes only)
  - Clarinets & Saxes - At least **three good reeds at all times.**
    - 6th Gr. Van Doren 2.5
    - 7th & 8th Gr. Van Doren 3 or higher
  - Oboes - At least **three good reeds at all times.**
    - [www.nielsen-woodwinds.com](http://www.nielsen-woodwinds.com)
    - 6th gr. Red string
    - 7th gr, Black string
    - 8th gr. Green string

## Brass

- Mouthpiece brush
- “Snake” internal slide cleaner made for brass instruments
  - Trumpets, Baritones & Tubas
    - Valve oil
    - Tuning Slide Grease
  - Trombones
    - Superslick Slide cream or slide-o-mix
    - Small spray bottle (filled with water)
    - Tuning Slide Grease
  - French Horns
    - Rotary Valve Oil
    - Tuning Slide Grease
    - A chromatic tuner is a good idea!!!

## Percussion – Please put your name on all equipment

- Percussion Stick Bag
- Tomahawk Practice Sticks
- Vic Firth SD 1 Snare Sticks
- Xylophone/bell mallets – Hard rubber
- Timpani mallets – Labeled “General”
- Yarn mallets

# SMARTMUSIC!!!

Do you ever get BORED practicing at home? Wish that you could PLAY-ALONG with the music, at your OWN PACE? Ever need to make up a simple playing assignment at lunch, wishing you could just do it at home?

IF SO...THEN SMARTMUSIC IS FOR YOU!

SMARTMUSIC is an electronic subscription service that allows students to use their home computers to assist with their home practicing. As District 204 students, they will have access to a huge library of play-along accompaniments, including Standard of Excellence assignments, concert band selections, scale exercises, and solo works. In addition, they can purchase a microphone that records them as they play along, showing them exactly how well they are matching the music. Finally, students who use SMARTMUSIC will be able to record their playing assignments at home and email them directly to their teacher...simple and fun! This truly AMAZING software subscription is only \$40 year for District 204 students. At \$40 a year, the price of this software is equal to approximately 2 private lessons.

Students will see a demonstration in class...Feel free to contact the directors with any questions.

[www.smartmusic.com](http://www.smartmusic.com)