

2020 – 2021 Band Handbook

Morristown Jr./Sr. High School Bands

**Please Keep and Refer To This Handbook All
Year Long**

Band website: www.MorristownBands.weebly.com

COVID-19 Letter:

Dear parents,

Due to the circumstances stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the items contained in this handbook should be read as tentative and therefore subject to change. Much of what we normally do in band class will look different this year. Here are some specific changes that we are making to keep everyone safe in band during these unprecedented times:

- Students will not be permitted to share any materials, including music, folders, supplies, instruments, sticks, mallets, etc.
- Students should maintain a distance of at least 3 feet (ideally no less than 6 feet) between themselves and others whenever possible. In particular, students should not congregate in the instrument room or around the classroom doors at the beginning or end of class.
- Brass players should empty their water keys ONLY in the designated areas within the band room, and they should do so one person at a time.
- To help prevent the spread of disease through the air, students should wear their masks whenever they are not playing, especially in the instrument room.
- In general:
 - When instruments come up, masks go down.
 - When instruments go down, masks come up.
- Percussionists should minimize shared surfaces by staying around their own instrument and only handling their own sticks/mallets.
- Students will have an assigned seat and music stand that they are to use every day. Students will not be allowed to move or replace either of these without permission from Ms. Pickett.

I am truly pleased to be able to make music together again this year! As always, my goal is to communicate any changes to our routines or schedules to you in as much detail as possible, as quickly as possible. If you have any questions about our COVID-19 precautions in band class or about any of the contents of this handbook, please do not hesitate to reach me using my contact information listed near the end of this document.

Thank you for your enduring patience and flexibility!

Ms. Pickett

Procedure for starting class:

Students are expected to be in the band room or instrument room at the start of class, otherwise they are tardy. As soon as students enter the room, they should grab their instrument and music. Go directly to your seat. Percussionists should be in their area. If you are not in your seat within one minute after the beginning of class, then you are tardy. Percussionists are expected to use this time for set-up as well. The white board at the front of the room will contain the order of songs or lessons that we will be covering that day.

General rehearsal expectations:

Being prepared for class: Every rehearsal, students are expected to have their instruments, all of their music, a working pencil, and any personal equipment needed (i.e. mutes, reeds, mallets, valve oil). The first offense for not being prepared will result in a warning. The next two offenses in the same grading period will result in loss participation points for that term. Any added offenses after three, within the same grading period, will result in discipline referrals.

Podium Rule: General soft talking is ok at the beginning of class and during “down time” within the rehearsal. This is a privilege and will be monitored strictly by the director. When the director steps onto the podium, **all** talking and playing must cease immediately. This signals the band that it is time to rehearse. This technique is in place of the director raising his/her voice to gain the students’ attention. By the time the director raises his/her baton, there should be silence throughout the band. When the director steps off the podium, this is when soft talking may resume. (When the director puts down his/her baton, this is *not* the signal to start talking.)

Rehearsing one section at a time: When the director is working with a section of the band, the rest of the band should be listening and following along in their parts. This helps the other sections know what else is going on during that passage of music and also helps transition from section to section so everyone knows where we are. This is not time to use cell phones/devices or do homework from other classes! (At no time should materials from other classes be out during rehearsals unless explicitly permitted by the band director.)

Students are not permitted to use cell phones during rehearsals.

Procedure for ending class:

The director will try to give students enough time at the end of the rehearsal to pack up their things before the class ends. This time does not start until the director specifically says so. All woodwind players should take off their reed, remove their neck strap, and swab their instruments before putting them away, and all brass players should empty water keys and push in all slides. Percussionists are expected to put back and cover all of their instruments, mallets, etc., at the end of each rehearsal.

Students are expected to put away all of their music, folders, and instruments in the appropriate places. There should be no trash, book bags, or personal belongings left in the band room after class. Failure to do any of these things will result in the same disciplinary action as “*Being prepared for class*” from above. We must keep the band room clean and treat it with respect!

Performances:

There is a calendar on the band website (www.MorristownBands.weebly.com) with all of the tentative dates of concerts and other various performances and rehearsals.*

*Due to COVID-19-related cancellations, this calendar is not yet up to date as of August 5th. Once our performance schedule has been set, those dates and times will be communicated via email and the band website in a timely manner.

As dates and times are made available, they should be put on personal calendars as things that cannot be missed. Other performances and rehearsals may be added throughout the year. The last page is also a commitment contract that should be signed by both the student and a parent/guardian. It is expected that if a student makes a commitment to the band and a conflict arises, the student will pursue every possible alternative rather than miss an event. Performances are the reason why the band rehearses every day for such an extended period of time. **Attendance at all performances is required** and very important. Being absent for a performance hurts the entire band. Every person and instrument is vital to the whole group.

Ensemble Descriptions

Marching Band: 7-12 grade band members have the opportunity to participate in the Pride of Morristown. This group participates in parades and marching band competitions. For competitions, we will wear marching uniforms, long black socks, and marching shoes. Absolutely no eating is ever allowed while in uniform!

Pep Band: The high school band will perform at some home varsity basketball games in the stands. These are important performances as the pep band is a vital part of the game. Each student is expected to attend at least 4 of these scheduled games (see calendar). Students are expected to arrive early and be in the band room ready to play at the specified time. Band t-shirts must be worn at every game. Please eat before you come to a game. **No food or drinks, with the exception of water, will be allowed in the pep band area in the bleachers.** Band members must sit in their instrument sections so we can be ready to play at a moment's notice. No other students are allowed to sit with the band, unless approved by the director. This is a great experience for the students. Please be in the high school band room ready to play at 6:00 p.m.

Jazz Band: High School Jazz Band is an optional, extra-curricular activity outside the school day for students in 9th-12th grade. The jazz band will meet 1-3 times per week beginning in late October. The days and times have not yet been decided. More information will be given later in the fall.

Concerts: Most concert dates/times are in the band Google calendar on the band website (www.MorristownBands.weebly.com). Certain concerts and performances may be added throughout the year. The concerts have no admission charge, however, donations are accepted. This money helps support the band program and is vital to our growth and success. Any donation is greatly appreciated! Junior High students will wear black bottoms with a white top. High School Band members will dress in ALL black. Gentlemen must wear black dress pants, black socks, black dress shoes, and a dress shirt (white for junior high, black for high school). Ladies may wear black dress pants or skirt with a dress shirt/blouse (white for junior high, black for high school) or a black dress. Ladies and/or gentlemen may wear button-down dress shirts, sweaters, turtlenecks, etc. Please make sure your outfit is school-appropriate and professional. **Skirts and dresses must rest below the knee while seated.**

ISSMA (Indiana State School Music Association): All band students will perform at ISSMA solo and ensemble once again this year on Saturday, February 6th. Students may perform a solo with piano accompaniment or in a small ensemble of 3 or more like instruments. All middle school and high school bands will also be attending ISSMA organizational contest in the spring. This is a chance for the bands to receive comments and critique from three judges. This will either be a Friday evening or Saturday (March 12th or 13th for junior high; April 16th or 17th for high school). These performances are required for all band members. Parents are permitted (and encouraged) to attend these ISSMA events for free!

IBA (Indiana Bandmasters Association): There is an opportunity for excelling middle school and high school band students to participate in the IBA All-Region Honor Bands. This gives students from area schools the opportunity to play in a high quality large concert band. This will require extra time and effort to prepare. If you are interested, you must fill out an online application at www.IndianaBandmasters.org. This information must be sent in by September 1.

Practice Time and Extra Credit:

Each student is expected to individually practice at least 100 minutes every calendar week on his/her main band instrument. For Junior High students, we will use Practice Sheets to monitor your progress. The only exceptions are for Fall Break, Christmas Break, and Spring Break. Every Monday, students will turn in a Practice Sheet detailing their practice time from the previous week. They will also pick up a new Practice Sheet at the same time. These assignments may be submitted up to two days late for

partial credit. Practice Sheets turned in on time will receive full credit, while Practice Sheets turned in one day late will receive 75% credit and Practice Sheets turned in two days late will receive 50% credit. Practice time cannot be “made-up,” nor can extra practice time roll over from week to week.

There are other limited options for extra credit:

- *Prepare and play a solo (approved by the director) for the band*
- *Play in a worship team, or a solo, at church, or other public venue (can only receive extra credit once per 9 weeks)*
- *Participate in an Honor Band*
- *Attend a collegiate or professional concert (must submit a program from the event)*
- *Attend an instrumental conference, masterclass, or clinic*

Note: To obtain any of these extra credit assignments, fill out an “extra credit” form. A parent/guardian signature is required.

Written and Playing

Tests:

Written tests: Occasionally throughout the grading period, there will be written tests on information covered in class and on homework assignments. All the information on these tests will be covered in one of those two ways. This could include musical terms and concepts, composers, music history, etc. There will be a question and answer time the day before each test to ensure preparedness for the test. Test dates will be announced far enough in advance so that absences before the tests should not conflict with being able to take the test on the given date. Multiple absences before the test may call for a postponed date for that particular student. This will be decided by the director on a case-by-case basis. Written tests will be graded based on correct answers. Answers must be legible. If the answer cannot be read, it will be marked incorrect. If a student has an excused absence the day of the test, it can be taken for full- credit the next class day the student is present. If the absence is unexcused, students may still take the test for partial credit. There will also be note name tests throughout the year. These will be graded based on how well the student is progressing from test to test.

Playing tests: Each grading period, there will be playing tests for each student. These will be over scales and repertoire covered during band class. Playing tests will be done during class with occasional opportunities to complete them before or after school or during A Lab. Tests will be graded on accuracy of pitch, rhythm, and tempo. Playing tests may be submitted late for partial credit.

Grading:

The final grade for each grading period will be based on the following:

Junior High: Participation 30%, Performances 30%, Practice Sheets 20%, Tests 15%, Assignments 5%

Senior High: Participation 35%, Performances 35%, Tests 15%, Assignments 5%, Exams 10%

Participation: This includes rehearsal attendance and daily participation points. Being tardy more than three times in a semester will result in discipline referrals and negatively affect the final grade. Not being prepared for class, being tardy, not listening to directions, and breaking any rules will all result in losing participation points.

Performances: **An unexcused absence from a performance will result in a significant reduction of the final grade!** It is expected that if a student makes a commitment to the band and a conflict arises, the student will pursue every possible alternative rather than miss an event. If an unavoidable conflict arises, the student and parent/guardian must contact the director immediately at least **two weeks before** the performance. Last-minute emergencies which result in an absence will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Practice Sheets: The rules and requirements for practice sheets are explained in more detail in the Practice Time and Extra Credit Category.

Tests: All of the written tests and playing tests from each grading period will be averaged together for this category.

Assignments: All the assignments from each grading period will be averaged together. These include in-class assignments, worksheets, self-evaluations, and any other special projects the director assigns.

Exams: These are assessments given during specified final/mid-term exam periods during the school year. In general, these assessments allow students to display a culmination of what they have learned in band so far.

Disciplinary Procedure:

1st Offense- Warning

2nd Offense- Loss of Daily Participation Points

3rd Offense- Discipline Referral

4th Offense- Discipline Referral and Contact Parent

Note: Not being prepared for class has its own procedure. (Refer to the *General rehearsal expectations* section for more details.) **Any use of profanity or vulgar comments will immediately result in the student being removed from the classroom.**

Required Materials:

There are many required materials for band students. Some will be provided by the school, and some you will need to get on your own. If something is lost or broken, you will need to purchase a replacement. Students are responsible to purchase their own personal equipment needed for their instrument (i.e.: reeds, valve oil, sticks, mallets, etc.). Percussionists must have their own sticks and mallets, as well as a stick bag to store them (These may be purchased from Paige's Music for a discount). Brass players may use school mutes, although it is recommended that you purchase your own when needed. All students are required to have a method book (Measures of Success book 1 for 6th grade band, book 2 for 7th and 8th grade band). The first book will be provided by the school or by Paige's Music to those with instrument rentals. Students are also required to have a working pencil at every rehearsal. All school owned materials must be turned in at the end of the school year. If it is damaged or lost, the student is responsible for purchasing a replacement.

Instrument Rental:

Students may rent instruments from the school based on availability and need. Students who use a school instrument must pay a rental fee. The cost ranges from \$25-50 per semester, or \$50-100 per year. A rental agreement form must be filled out and payment should be made at the beginning of each semester. Students are responsible for taking care of these instruments and are responsible for any repairs needed for reasons other than regular use.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Email: BPickett@ses.k12.in.us

Phone: (765) 763-1221 ext. 3122

For more information, visit our website: www.MorristownBands.weebly.com

Performance Dates

IBA All-Region Honor Band (Optional) - TBA

IBA All-District Honor Band - TBA

Christmas Concert - December 7, 2020

Solo & Ensemble - February 6, 2021

State Solo & Ensemble - February 27, 2021 (Qualifying entries only)

ISSMA Jazz Contest - March 5 OR 6, 2021

ISSMA Organizational Contest (Jr. High only) - March 12th OR 13th, 2021

Shelby County Band Day - TBA

ISSMA Organizational Contest (Sr. High only) - April 16th OR 17th, 2021

Spring Concert - May 7, 2021

Graduation - June 5, 2021

Please note that these dates are tentative and are subject to change. Ms. Pickett will always inform families about any date/time changes as soon as possible. ISSMA events are scheduled by the ISSMA office, which will release exact dates/times approx. 2 weeks before each scheduled event.

For performances, students and parents must inform Ms. Pickett about any planned absences **at least two weeks in advance** in order to be excused from participating.

Student's Name: _____

Contact & Commitment Form

Please return to Ms. Pickett by Monday, August 10th

Parents'/Guardians' Names:

Telephone Numbers: Day _____ Evening _____

Parent Email Address: _____
(Required)

Mailing Address:

We have read the entire Morristown Jr./Sr. High School Band handbook (which can be found online at www.MorristownBands.weebly.com under the Resources tab) and understand the rules, procedures, and expectations outlined in it. We are also committing to make the greatest possible effort to attend all required rehearsals and performances as outlined in this handbook and in the online band calendar. We understand if an unavoidable conflict arises, we must notify the director at least two weeks **before** the conflict, or the absence will **not be excused**.

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date