

***2024 – 2025
Stafford Middle School
Band Handbook***



***Directors:
Mr. Wertz
Mr. Castillo
Mr. Chung
Mr. Schroeder
Mr. Rodriguez***

STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

2024 - 2025

BAND HANDBOOK

PURPOSE

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint all Stafford Band students and their parents with the procedures and regulations that will help keep the Stafford Band an organization that the community and students are proud of.

OUR MISSION AND GOALS

Our mission is to create a program that provides the students with a strong background in instrumental music performance through daily instruction and public performances. In addition to growth in musical ability, each student will develop skills in teamwork, citizenship, leadership, good sportsmanship, and responsibility. Our goal is to instill each student with a sense of pride for their band program and to develop an understanding of how hard work brings us closer to the accomplishment of our goals.

GENERAL CONDUCT/EXPECTATION

Band members will observe all policies set forth by the Stafford Municipal School District, in addition to the following, as they pertain to the music setting:

1. All students are expected to conduct themselves properly at all times. Display of profanity, bad temper, flagrant violation of rules, etc., will not be tolerated. Individual behavior during a band function is a reflection of the group and Stafford Middle School. Any behavior that does not represent the band program in a proper manner may result in the student's dismissal from the activity at hand, as well from the band program.
2. Students will follow the directors' instructions at all times!
3. Students will be in their assigned places and ready to work (with all required material) at the time assigned by the director at the beginning of the school year.
4. Students will bring all equipment, music, instrument, pencil, book and all supplies to rehearsal daily. We *must* have all materials in order to ensure the most productive rehearsal each time. Repeatedly missing supplies will result in after-school band detention.
5. Students will keep hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
6. Students will maintain a high level of good and acceptable behavior. Failure to meet this standard will result with an alternative assignment that will be due within a week.
7. Food, drinks, candy, or gum are not allowed in the Band Hall.
8. It is the Students' responsibility to relay any and all announcements/hand outs to their parents or guardians.
9. Students will not play on equipment they do not own or have permission from a director to use. Students will not touch, handle, borrow, or use anyone else's instrument, uniform, or personal belongings.
10. Student should ask for permission to speak by raising their hand and waiting to be acknowledged. All rehearsals are expected to be silent so that our time is utilized wisely.
11. The Band Hall is used for rehearsals, lessons, and after school practice. If you stay before or after school, you must be participating in one of these activities, unless you are given permission otherwise by a director. Bus passes will not be written unless you are participating in one of these activities.
12. Students will be allowed to use the student telephones before or after school with the permission of a director.
13. Students will respect the property of others and any school property in addition to returning all equipment to its proper storage area when not in use. Each student is assigned a locker and must keep their locker clean.
14. Students will not enter a director's office without permission.
15. Students will not deface or mark on music stands, walls, etc.

CONSEQUENCES OF BREAKING THE RULES

1st offense: Verbal Warning (This will be your only warning.)

2nd offense: Documented conference with student and call home.

3rd offense: Documented conference with student and call home.

4th offense: Parent Conference

5th offense: Removal from Band Program

Severe discipline problems will mandate immediate removal from class and may incur removal from the band program upon the band director's discretion.

TARDIES

Students will be tardy if they are outside the middle school band room when the bell rings. Students must provide a Doctor's note if they have a medical problem causing them to need extra time getting to the band room. All students will receive an extra two minutes after the bell to be ready for band class. If students are not ready to play within the extra two minutes, they will also be tardy to class. The following disciplinary actions will take place each semester for students who are tardy:

Every 5 times a student is tardy, that student will be required to attend a 1 hour after-school band detention to make up missed playing time as assigned by a band director. Students must sign in and sign out with a director for their after-school detention. If a student does not attend their after-school detention, further disciplinary actions will be taken.

GENERAL DAILY SUPPLIES

Students should have these materials on a daily basis:

- A. Instrument
- B. Folder with Music
- C. Pencil
- D. Anything related to the time of year and rehearsal

Brass Instruments

- A. Valve or slide oil
- B. Polishing cloth (in case)
- C. Mouthpiece

Woodwind Instruments

- A. 3-4 good playable reeds in the guard case (except flutes)
- B. Key oil
- C. Cleaning swab or rag
- D. Cork grease
- E. Screwdriver set

Percussion

- A. 2 pair of Snare sticks (labeled with your name)
- B. Stick bag

Fundraiser

The middle school band only does one fundraiser each year for the Stafford Band Boosters. We encourage all middle school band students to sell all the tickets their director gives them (or more!) If students are unable to sell their tickets, they must return them to their director. Students who lose their tickets are responsible for paying the band boosters for the lost tickets.

GENERAL GRADING POLICY

Students will be graded on the following scale:

- ♪ Daily participation
- ♪ Tests (playing and classroom tests)
- ♪ Extension of Class: Sectionals & Concerts
- ♪ Supply Checks

The band calendar of events is given to you to help avoid unnecessary conflicts and absences. If an absence is unavoidable, students will be expected to give the directors a written explanation signed by a parent 1 week in advance. Because of the group instruction and learning that take place in a music rehearsal or performance, it is impossible to “make up” an absence. If a student is absent from a performance, their make up assignment will be beneficial to that student and will meet performance requirements. Absence and failure to do the make-up work within the time allotted will affect the student’s six-week grade. Students who forget their instruments at school for a concert or performance are still required to attend the performance but will lose twenty points off their performance grade if a director has to transport the instrument themselves.

Sectionals are a great way for the directors to provide much needed help to our band students and are very important to the success of our program. Sectionals are also a great way for students to prepare for playing tests. When students are absent from after school sectionals, they often do not do well on playing tests compared to students that do attend sectionals. Students must communicate with the director of their band if they are unable to attend an after-school sectional. If a student is absent from an after-school sectional, they must make up the sectional within one week of the absence. Make-up sectionals will be provided at the discretion of the director.

In addition to sectionals and performances, students will receive scores on scheduled playing tests. These tests will include all music that is being taught in daily rehearsals, sight-reading and applied fundamentals work, and the All-Region audition materials. The scores will be used to determine chair assignment and six-week grades. If a student does not pass their chair test, they may retake the test after school to replace the previous grade. However, if a student is continually having issues falling behind, an evaluation of a student ability and effort will take place to determine what is the best solution for the student. This may result in a schedule change to another band or even possible removal from the program if needed.

ELIGIBILITY

Texas law requires that students maintain passing grades (70 or above) in all classes to participate in UIL or other extra-curricular activities. A failing grade brings a three-week non-participation penalty, beginning one week after the grading period ends. The eligibility rules begin with the second progress report (six weeks grading period). For a variety of reasons, each year seems to present some new challenge or circumstance when dealing with eligibility issues. To avoid any conflicts and questions about eligibility, ***JUST PASS YOUR CLASSES***. Teachers at Stafford Middle School are always willing to help a student succeed. Do the work required and turn it in on time, take advantage of tutorials when offered, and put forth honest and genuine effort in class.

BAND FEE

All Band students are required to pay a \$40 band fee. This fee goes toward the use of school supplied books, reeds, valve oil, a MS band shirt, a concert uniform and any other accessories students use during band.

PERSONAL OWNED INSTRUMENTS

All band students are encouraged to do the following:

1. Have a wire music stand as well as a tuner/metronome at home for daily practice.
2. Use a permanent marker to put your name and address on your instrument case and all the small articles inside your case as well.

Instruments must be kept in good playing condition at all times. Upkeep is an individual responsibility. Collins Music and others can be resources for repairs, supplies, and instrumental purchases. Consult the stores in advance to determine whether or not they will meet your needs. The school uses Collins Music for instrument repairs. If your instrument is repaired by Collins, please make a check out for the given amount to Collins Music.

SCHOOL OWNED/ISSUED INSTRUMENTS

Stafford Middle School will provide a limited number of instruments for student use. These instruments include highly expensive instruments such as the bassoon, oboe, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone, baritone saxophone, French horn, euphonium, tuba, and general percussion equipment. Part of the \$40 band fee for these students will go to the use and maintenance of school owned instruments. This equipment is generally purchased by the school district for student use because of its extremely high value. **Thus, all school owned equipment must be handled with optimum care.** If a student is neglectful of a school-owned instrument, he/she may be charged for the repair/replacement value. Students failing to care for their school issued instruments will lose the privilege to use such instruments and be removed from the band program.

The following are some guidelines for school owned instruments:

1. Students and parents must sign an instrument checkout form before the student can use the instrument. Make sure to read this form and understand your responsibility for the care and maintenance of the instrument.
2. Each instrument will be issued in good playing condition and will be checked prior to being released to a student. Students are expected to maintain their issued instruments accordingly.
3. The band member is financially responsible for all equipment and/or material checked out to them.
4. All equipment and materials must be kept in their proper storage location when not in use.
5. Stafford Municipal School District will assess a fee for routine cleaning and maintenance of school owned instruments. This fee will be \$50.00 for woodwinds, brass, and percussion.

CONCERT ATTIRE

For this year, we will be wearing a Stafford MS Band Polo and long khaki pants.

ALL REGION BAND / SOLO & ENSEMBLE CONTESTS

This year, students will have the opportunity to perform in other various music activities. These activities will help strengthen the Stafford Middle School Band. Participating in All Region Band and Solo & Ensemble Contest will build students' musical abilities, proficiency of their instrument, work ethic, and most of all, *self-discipline*. This is a great way to have our students involved in healthy competition not only with other students within the band, but also among other surrounding schools. The director will determine if their student is eligible to perform at these events, therefore they will be tested on the music for these events.

All Region Band audition music will be issued the first day of school. Students will be offered extra help on their audition music during school, before school, and after school. We are offering extra help, but you **MUST** take the initiative and self discipline to practice on you own at home!! Auditions will be held in person at Stafford High School.

All Students in Honor Band are *required* to try out for the All-Region Band. Symphonic and Concert Band students are encouraged to try out for All Region band. This does not mean that you have to make the band, but it does mean that you must prepare the music and try out.

Solo & Ensemble Contest After solos are assigned, students will be offered extra help on their solos during school, before school, and after school. We are offering extra help, but you **MUST** take the initiative and self-discipline to practice on you own at home!!!

All band students are *required* to perform a solo for the Solo & Ensemble Contest unless the student made an All-Region Band. This does not mean you must make a superior rating, but it does mean that you must prepare your solo and participate in the contest.