

# **Evergreen Park School District 124**



## **Band Handbook**

### **Directors**

**Will Carlson - [wicarlson@d124.org](mailto:wicarlson@d124.org)**

**Mark Dreyer - [mdreyer@d124.org](mailto:mdreyer@d124.org)**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Evergreen Park Community District 124 Band Program is to provide students and the community with musical experiences that change their outlook for the better and encourage them to make a positive impact both now and in the future.

## **Objectives / Goals of the Band Program**

1. To increase awareness of music as an art.
2. To give students the opportunity to learn a particular instrument and increase technical skills on that instrument.
3. To give students the opportunity to demonstrate skills on their instrument through performance.
4. To give students opportunities to meet other students from their community who share a common interest in music.
5. To acquaint students with concepts of music theory and history and how history and musical composition relate to students' current lives and musical experiences.
6. To provide students with opportunities for worthy use of their time, a means for self expression, and a healthy social experience.
7. To develop the ability to function as a responsible member of a group, enhance interaction, and develop unity and alliance among members.
8. To foster leadership skills within each student.
9. To help students become productive, responsible, and successful members of society.
10. To uplift and inspire the school and community through music.

## **Curricula**

### **❖ Fifth Grade Beginner Band**

As beginners, students will become familiar with how to play and care for their instrument, as well as what it means to be in band. Students rehearse twice a week, once in small groups at their school, once at a full band rehearsal with students from every section and school. The music played in this ensemble comes mainly from the assigned book, in which students learn beginning notes and rhythms for their instrument.

#### ❖ Sixth Grade Band

Once band students enter middle school, they have consistent rehearsals in which every member of the band is present. They may be pulled out for sectional rehearsals (just clarinets, just percussion, etc.) by whichever director is not working with the full band at present. This is also when students begin reading larger works of music- usually about one to two pages.

#### ❖ Seventh Grade Band

Students in Seventh Grade Band often find their favorite thing about band by this point. They have likely forged stronger friendships, expanded their musical skill, and may even fill in for select 8th Grade pieces when needed. At this point, students should know how to read, process, and practice longer, more complicated works.

#### ❖ Eighth Grade Band

By eighth grade, band students are being pushed to develop and perform with a sense of heightened musicality. As the pinnacle of CMS band students, their next step is preparing for high school marching and concert bands, which will stretch both their social and musical horizons. There are also strong opportunities for eighth grade students to show off their skills, such as: district contest, honor band, solo features, and more.

#### ❖ Jazz Band

This audition-based group meets after school to rehearse, and features jazz music, of course. Often made up of older students, this ensemble is smaller, and features a much different variety of songs and skills than normal concert band. Students will learn the basics of performing swing, latin, and funk big band jazz arrangements.

## **Rules/Expectations**

#### ❖ Rehearsal and performance etiquette

As representatives of the band program and the school, students will treat others with respect and dignity. This includes being punctual, and not distracting others during the learning process.

Students are expected not to talk or play while the director or their peers are doing so.

Students are expected to notate their music with a pencil when instructed.

Drinks other than water, food, and gum are not permitted in the band room or at performance events.

Students are expected to properly maintain and care for both school-owned and personal equipment. Families may be responsible for any damaged materials.

Finally, **students are expected to practice outside of the school day for at least two hours a week.** This truly makes a difference in your child and the entire band's skill level.

Failure to adhere to these policies may result in make-up assignments, a lower grade in the class, or removal from the program at both the director's and school administration's discretion.

#### ❖ Attendance

Students are expected to be in their seats with their instruments assembled, ready to play by the time the director begins rehearsal. Usually this will be within two minutes of the bell ringing for CMS.

For concerts and performances, students are expected to be in their seats with their instruments assembled, ready to play by their "call time". Call times will be communicated with students well in advance.

Any excused absence (illness, death in the family, emergencies, etc.), should be cleared with a director as soon as possible. The same policy applies to late arrival and early departure by students. Absence due to work, practice or games, and other school or community activities will not be excused.

Unless otherwise indicated, families are responsible for providing transportation to and from all rehearsals and performances.

The dates of all performances and events that require student attendance will be either notated on both the band and district calendars, or communicated with families in advance.

Failure to adhere to these attendance policies may result in make-up assignments or a lower grade in the class at the director's discretion.

## Concerts / Performances

**Performance functions as a summation of all of students' hard work during any given unit, so it is critical that we look, sound, and act our best.**

All previously listed rules and expectations apply to concerts and performances. During the year, students will learn about how to be not only a great performer, but an active and respectful audience member, as well. Students are expected to be on their best behavior while others perform.

### ❖ Dress code

For middle school students, **performance dress consists of the CMS Music Polo, as well as black formal wear on bottom** (slacks, skirts, dress shoes, etc.). CMS Music Polos can be purchased for \$20 from the directors.

In the event that a student forgets their CMS music polo, they may borrow one (if available) from directors. Borrowed polos must be washed and returned promptly after the event.

**Fifth grade band students** are expected to wear formal attire for performances. Collared shirts, dress shoes, dress pants, dresses, skirts, sweaters, and jackets are all acceptable. Sneakers, jeans, t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc. are not acceptable.

Failure to adhere to this dress code may result in a lower grade for the event at the discretion of the directors.

### ❖ List of events

Combined 8th Grade and EPCHS Marching Band Concert - students will perform fun songs alongside high schoolers for the middle school student body.

Veterans Day Concert - a medley of patriotic songs performed by middle school students to honor veterans.

Winter Concert - middle and elementary school students will show off their hard work during the first half of the year, featuring seasonal music.

Solo and Ensemble - students will prepare a solo or small group performance to be performed for judges at a district event, or for directors.

District Contest - 8th Graders perform their full band repertoire for an audience and set of judges and receive a score.

State Contest - if 8th Grade students earn a I, the highest rating at District Contest, they will be invited to perform at a contest event comprising the best middle school concert bands in Illinois.

Spring Concerts - usually split into two events in which the entire band program, including the 5th Grade and Jazz Band perform.

District Honor Band Concert - the best young musicians within our district will be selected to rehearse and perform a concert together.

## Required Materials

For rehearsals, students will need:

**Their instrument**

**Any instrument maintenance materials or accessories (reeds, valve oil, etc.)**

**Their music (including warm-ups)**

**A pencil with an eraser**

If your student has a financial issue that limits them from being able to bring these items, please let the directors know. We would be happy to help.

Middle school students will also need to turn in a one-time **\$25 Activity Fee (see school handbook for details)**

## Grading

Middle school students are graded based on the following:

- **Weekly participation (out of 10 points per week)**
- **Practice assignments / recordings (usually ranging from 10-50 points)**
- **Concerts (out of 50 points)**

Weekly participation points are determined by a student's level of engagement during rehearsals. Students who practice, have their materials, and are attentive and respectful will earn a 10/10 for the week. Long periods of excused absence for any given week will result in an exemption.

Practice assignments, often including recorded passages of a musical piece, may either earn students points simply by having the assignment turned in, or by a rubric such as the one below:

	GRADES				
CONCEPTS	A - 10 points	B - 8 Points	C - 6 Points	D - 4 Points	F - 2 or less points
Notes (N/A for unpitched percussion)	All notes played correctly and in tune.	1 wrong note played (wrong partial, fingering, or tuning).	2 wrong notes played (wrong partial, fingering, or tuning).	3 wrong notes played (wrong partial, fingering, or tuning).	4 or more wrong notes played (wrong partial, fingering, or tuning).
Rhythms	All rhythms played and counted correctly.	1 wrong rhythm played (missed rest, miscounted segment, rhythm played incorrectly).	2 wrong rhythms played (missed rest, miscounted segment, rhythm played incorrectly).	3 wrong rhythms played (missed rest, miscounted segment, rhythm played incorrectly).	4 or more wrong rhythms played (missed rest, miscounted segment, rhythm played incorrectly).
Tempo	Steady tempo is maintained throughout the entire passage.	Steady tempo is mostly maintained, with occasional push or pull.	Steady tempo is maintained in some sections, with difficulty during transitions.	Steady tempo is only maintained a few measures at a time.	Steady tempo is not maintained.
Tone	Passage is played with beautiful, nuanced, and consistent tone beyond that expected of an early musician.	Passage is played with beautiful and consistent tone.	Passage is played with mostly consistent tone, with an occasional fuzzy, weak, or overblown sound.	Passage is played with inconsistent tone, often sounding fuzzy, weak, or overblown.	Tone is completely weak, fuzzy, or overblown.
Expressiveness	All notes played with written and implied expressive qualities (dynamics, articulation, etc.).	All notes played with written expressive qualities (dynamics, articulation, etc.).	Many notes played with written expressive qualities (dynamics, articulation, etc.).	Few notes played with expressive qualities or some wrong expressive qualities applied (dynamics, articulation, etc.).	No expressive qualities or many wrong expressive qualities applied (dynamics, articulation, etc.).
Total Grade (D and F Grades are considered "failing")					
A: 41-50 points B: 31-40 points C: 21-30 points D: 11-20 points F: 0-10 points		For Percussion - A: 33-40 points B: 25-32 points C: 17-24 points D: 9-16 points F: 0-8 points		<b>Total Score:</b>	

Finally, concerts are worth 50 points. Barring absence or failure to meet earlier listed expectations, all students should earn 50 points for playing in select graded performances.

Missing work will earn students a make-up assignment or a zero in the gradebook. Late work will only be accepted under the discretion of the directors.

**Fifth grade students** will be given a progress report twice throughout the school year, before the end of each semester. This report details what the directors are seeing in regards to student practice, preparedness, behavior, and performance.

## Communication

As with any team sport, communication is key. Our program could not thrive without the support of families who lend us their wonderful students to create music. If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please contact us via the information below. Communicating through email is likely the most efficient way to reach us.

We will be sending updated information to families throughout the school year through email, so please continue to check your inbox when possible. We will also be updating our band website: [d124band.weebly.com](http://d124band.weebly.com) with relevant events and documents.

Please sign the bottom portion of this handbook once you have read through it, cut it off, and send it back to school with your child as soon as possible. Thank you for all you do, and we look forward to a great year!

Best regards,

**Will Carlson**

Director of Bands  
Evergreen Park School District 124  
wicarlson@d124.org  
Phone: 708-424-0148, Extension 2232

**Mark Dreyer**

Director of Bands  
Evergreen Park School District 124  
mdreyer@d124.org  
Phone: 708-424-0148, Extension 2282

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I have read and agree to the guidelines and policies outlined in this handbook:

**Student:**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_