

Mill Creek Middle School

Band Handbook

2023-2024

On behalf of the Dexter Bands, we welcome you to the Seventh and Eighth Grade bands here at Mill Creek for the 2023-2024 school year. This handbook has been designed to explain the policies of the Mill Creek band program, and hopefully clarify any questions you may have. If you have any questions regarding the information in the handbook, please feel free to contact a band director.

After you have read this handbook, please complete the “Handbook Form” on the last page and turn it in on the due date assigned. Please keep this handbook at home as a reference to answer questions that may come up throughout the year.

Band Handbook Checklist

- 1.) Read through the handbook.**
- 2.) Add this year’s band Mill Creek band performances to your home calendar.**
- 3.) Complete, detach, and return the Band Handbook Form.**

Thank you for taking the time to complete these important tasks. We look forward to a successful and exciting school year.

Mill Creek Band Teachers

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Mill Creek Band Performance Dates

- *Wednesday, December 6th - MS band winter concert 7pm High School CPA
- *Saturday, February 3rd - MS Solo and Ensemble – Livonia Franklin High School
- *Wednesday, February 21st – Festival Preview Concert 7pm High School CPA
- *Friday, March 1-2 OR 7-9- District Band and Orchestra Festival – Offsite
- *Saturday, March 16th, Band Extravaganza Rehearsal, 2:00pm to 4:30pm - DHS
- *Sunday, March 17th, Band Extravaganza Performance, 2:30-5pm- DHS
- *Wednesday, May 8th - MS band spring concert 7pm - CPA

Classroom Rules and Expectations

- **Be prepared!** – every class period you will need your instrument, method book, sheet music, pencil (and any other materials to keep the instrument in playing condition for example reeds, oils, etc). You will receive one new folder at the start of the year.
- **Be on time!** Be in the room before the bell rings and ready to start class one minute after the bell with all of your materials. Be early to performances as well.
- **Be respectful** of each other, materials and the classroom. Due to the size of the band and class, respect is essential at all times for others and the classroom.
- **Come to band with a great attitude!** A successful band always starts with having a great attitude!

Maintenance of Equipment

- **Student instruments** should be kept in top playing condition at all times. All instrument supplies (reeds, oils, grease, sticks, mallets, etc) need to be kept readily available.
- **School instruments** are provided to students who play larger instruments. The school pays for any general repairs. Any unnecessary damage to school instruments is responsible by you.
- **Percussion instruments** are only allowed to be played by percussionists. They will be responsible for transportation of equipment to festivals, and putting away of equipment daily.

Music

- **Method Books** are used to provide the basis for classroom learning. 7th grade will be using the Essential Elements book 2. 8th grade will be using the Essential Elements book 2. It is important you write your names in you book and keep it in good condition throughout the year.
- **Sheet music** is distributed to students for performance and belongs to the school. Music needs to be kept in great condition and only marked with pencil. Music will be collected after performances and issued for future ensembles. If music is not returned or in poor condition, then the students may be assessed for a replacement cost of \$1.00 per piece.

Uniforms

Uniform apparel must comply with the Mill Creek Middle School dress code. A performance is a formal affair. To present the band as attractively and distinctively as possibly, we have created expected uniform attire. Uniforms must be worn in their entirety for every major performance.

- **7th Grade Uniform** – School issued varsity band vest. Students provide their own white collared shirt or blouse, black pants or skirt (mid-knee length or longer), black shoes and sock or nylons.
- **8th Grade Uniform** – School issued varsity band blazer (and garment bag). Students provide their own white collared shirt or blouse, black pants or skirt (mid-knee length or longer), black shoes and sock or nylons.

Absolutely no sneakers or shoes with any color on them, flip flops, sandals, white socks. If you need help with these items, please contact a director.

Grading Policy

The band grade is determined by playing tests and performance attendance. This will also include the 8th grade marching band unit and end of the year final playing test, which is used as the high school audition results.

- **Playing Tests** – evaluation will include tone, intonation, rhythm, articulation, rudiments, clap-it tap-it say-it, scales, etc.
- **Performance Credit** – students will receive full credit who complete a required performance. Students must be on time, in proper, uniform, exhibit proper conduct, and stay for the entire performance.
- **Playing Checks** – Throughout the year there will be ‘pop-up’ playing checks in sheet music/method book. These will be much smaller than a standard playing test. (a few measures only)

Attendance Policy

Being a members of the Dexter Band Program carries with it the obligation to attend **ALL** rehearsals and performances outside the school day. Band is a performance-oriented class with performance outcomes. There is not a viable way to make up the experience of a missed performance. Notification of an absence is needed before a performance!

- **Excused Absences** – due to serious illness or a death in the family.
- **Unexcused Absences** – include, but are not limited to; work, babysitting, vacations, trips, forgetfulness, transportation problems, oversleeping, etc.
- An **Unexcused absence** from any performance will lead to a substantial lowering of a student’s band grade. If a student is to miss a performance, please contact a director right away.

Extension Activities

***Private Lessons:** All band students have an opportunity to take private lessons locally through the Dexter Bands. Lessons benefit the students by providing one-on-one instruction, which are not always possible through

regular band classes. Private lesson teachers may be found on your own, or you may sign up for lessons through the school program. Lessons are held after school hours at Dexter High School and are an additional charge. Fees for lessons start at \$21.00 per half-hour for undergraduate tutors. Tutors with degrees may charge up to \$27.00 per half-hour. Payments are made weekly at lessons to the private teacher. These prices compare favorably with prices in our area. We hope that the competitive pricing plus the convenience of lessons at DHS will allow more students to study.

***MSBOA Solo and Ensemble/Band and Orchestra Festival:** Solo and Ensemble is a festival that allows students to excel musically as individuals and/or a small group. Solos will require a piano accompaniment and ensembles will take coordination of each member. Registration will be distributed in October. Band and Orchestra is a festival where the whole band will travel to perform to received feedback for the betterment of the band. This festival takes place usually in March.

***Middle School Honors Band:** The Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association (MSBOA) organizes an All-State Honors Band that performs at the Michigan Music Conference in Grand Rapids. Applicants will need to pay an audition fee and auditions take place in late October/early November. It is encouraged that all students audition for this ensemble!

***Scholarship Auditions:** We hold two auditions for scholarship money to attend summer music camps. A representative from Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp will come here auditions during class for those wanting to attend Blue Lake, and in February the Dexter Band Boosters will hold auditions for the Boosters Scholarship to attend a camp of a student's choice (excluding the Dexter High School band camp).

***DHS Bands & Band Camp:** Students who complete Eighth Grade Band are encouraged to move on to the high school bands. The high school bands combine to make the Dreadnaught Marching Band and band camp is held during the summer. Info will be sent out at a later date.

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2023-2024 Band Handbook Form

Due Friday, September 29, 2023

“I verify that I have read and understand the policies within the Mill Creek Middle School 2022-2023 Band Handbook.”

Dexter Bands Private Lesson Program:

Yes, I want my child to take private lessons on their instrument.
(Parents, you will be contacted by the private lesson instructor to arrange a weekly lesson time.)

No, we are not interested in private lessons at this time.

My child is already studying on his/her instrument with:

Student Name (print first and last)

Student Signature (first and last)

Parent Name (print first and last)

Parent Signature (print first and last)