Band Handbook, 2017/18 Academic Year

6th Grade Band • MS Concert Band • HS Symphonic Band • HS Marching Band

Membership in the Dansville Bands is a privilege. As privileges have responsibilities, all band members must display the highest commitment to the band program’s core values: Effort, Discipline, and Pride.

The Dansville band program has a proud history. When each student strives to completely develop his or her talents, we will uphold the Dansville band program’s *“Tradition of Excellence,”* and sustain an institution of which the students, school, and community will be proud.

A. Program Functions

1. Provide a high quality music education to Dansville students.

2. Enhance appreciation for the arts in the community.

3. Be an ambassador for Dansville Schools.

B. Ensemble/Student Goals

1. Educate: Develop musical skills and knowledge in order to enjoy, understand, and participate in the aesthetic experience relayed through making music.

2. Inspire: Have fun rehearsing and performing. Promote school spirit. Foster teamwork within the group.

3. Succeed: Perform at the highest level, individually, in small groups, and in full ensemble settings. Mature socially as an individual and become a good citizen. Develop life skills that will aid in future education and careers.

C. Program Core Values

1. Effort: Make a determined attempt to improve your personal skill level and support your fellow students. Every individual associated with the band program must commit to make themselves and their ensemble the best possible.

2. Discipline: Mental and physical endurance provides the fuel for consistency. Excellence is not easily achieved.

3. Pride: (“Esprit de Corps”). Approach your craft with enthusiasm. Each ensemble’s personality will show through in its performances and, more importantly, in its rehearsals when every student takes ownership.

D. Attendance

Members of the Dansville Bands are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. Performance dates will be announced no later than the beginning of each semester (MSBOA Festival excepted).

Marching season (high school only) will entail additional rehearsals outside of school hours (once per week) in addition to summer band camp and performances at home football games. An unexcused absence at a performance results in a grade of 0 for that summative assessment.

E. Absence

Students must provide advance notice in the form of a written note signed by a parent/guardian at least two weeks prior to the performance for an absence to be considered excused (e-mail from parent/guardian, confirmed with phone call, is acceptable). With less than a two-week notice, the only excuses allowed for a performance absence is serious illness or death in the family. In such cases, the student must bring a signed note from a parent or guardian on the first day the student returns to rehearsal.

Examples of excused absences include:  Weddings, funerals, conflicts with another school activity or sport. In-school conflicts must be brought to the attention of all parties involved (these will be worked out by the band director and the other teacher or coach). The following are not suitable reasons for an excused absence:  babysitting a sibling, lacking a ride, needing to work, etc. If school is cancelled the day of a performance, the performance will typically be postponed.

F. Tardy

Students will be marked tardy if they are not in the band room when the bell rings. Students will also be considered tardy if they are not ready to play when rehearsal begins (three minutes after the bell rings). During marching season, students will have five minutes to be in their assigned spot in the attendance block on the practice field. Marching rehearsal will always be on the practice field unless posted otherwise on the board. Students should be in their assigned place, with their instrument assembled and all necessary materials ready for rehearsal. Tardy instances will be handled in accordance with the school handbook and will affect the student’s classroom participation grades.

G. Trips

For all out-of-town performances (e.g. band festival) the band will travel as a group on busses. While on the bus, students are expected to: obey the chaperones; remain relatively quiet; keep all body parts in the bus; and remain in their seats while the bus is moving. When the destination is reached, wait quietly for instructions. Each band member is responsible for his/her equipment on all trips.

H. Personal Behavior

The band room, like any classroom, requires respectful behavior conducive to education. Specific rules for the band room are enumerated below.

1. Always return equipment to its proper place.

2. Do not play any instrument other than your own. Percussionists may only play instruments to which they are assigned.

3. All noise must stop when the director begins class.

4. Bring your instrument in working condition to class, along with all music and supplies needed. Instrument maintenance takes place at home (oiling valves, cleaning instruments, fixing slides etc.). Instruments will be checked periodically in rehearsals to see that they are in proper playing condition. This is a graded requirement.

5. No student will mistreat or misuse any school, band, or personal property. Any mistreatment will result in the offender paying for the damage. The student will also be disciplined by the school administration under general school rules.

6. Students unable to play their instrument while in repair are required to sit in their assigned seat, with their music out, and to finger along with their parts. A great deal can be accomplished with mental practice such as this!

7. Students that are physically unable to play their instrument (ill or injured) must bring a doctor’s note excusing them from playing their instrument on specified dates. They will be expected to finger along on their instrument throughout rehearsal. Students who do not have a doctor’s note will be required to make a good-faith effort to correctly play their instrument. Failure to play without a doctor’s note may be reflected in the student’s citizenship grade. Ill students are encouraged to stay home to avoid spreading disease.

8. Doing homework from other classes or reading is not allowed during rehearsal.

9. No food or gum during rehearsal. Only water will be permitted in the band room.

10. Keep a pencil on your music stand during class. Pencils are generally available at the front of the band room for those who forget. Consistent failure in this will be reflected in citizenship grades.

I. Playing Tests

Playing tests will be given on occasion to assess progress. These tests will be announced in advance. The rubric is available on the webpage. All students must take these tests. Learning to overcome performance anxiety only happens through practice.

High School playing tests will generally be conducted out of class. Students are required to use their school-issued iPad to make a recording of their playing and e-mail the recording to mcnabbk@dansville.org. E-mails must be time-stamped no later than 11:59 PM on the date they are due with “Playing Test – Title of Piece” in the subject line for it to be received and graded.

J. Instruments

Band members are encouraged to purchase high-quality, student or professional-level band instruments. Several local music stores offer such instruments via rent-to-own programs. The school will provide instruments when inventories are available. Your personal or assigned instrument must be in good working condition at all times. It is very difficult to play an instrument that is not properly maintained.

When the instrument is stored at school, it must be placed in its proper location. The shelves in the instrument storage room are labeled indicating where instruments go. All instrument cases must have the name of the player on a tag on the handle. These tags can be obtained free of charge from the band office. All instruments must be stored in their case, closed and latched. This will ensure that the instrument remains in good condition all year.

K. Instrument Repairs

Instruments may be taken to any local music shop for repair. The school has a representative from Marshall Music who will take instruments for repair. These repairs are generally returned in one week. Your instrument is your responsibility. Do not wait for the director to take care of it. If it is not working, arrange to have it sent in for repair as soon as possible. Repair tags may be obtained in the band room for Marshall Music or Port Huron Music Center. Marshall Music’s representative usually visits Dansville on Tuesdays and Port Huron’s on Wednesdays.

L. Supplies

Reeds, valve oil, cork grease, etc. are available for sale in the band room. Please see the enclosed sheet with supply prices and other important information about purchasing supplies. Do not wait until the last minute to purchase supplies, as the band room will not always have every item in stock.

Saxophone, clarinet, and double-reed players should keep three to five good reeds on hand and rotate them each day. This will allow reeds to last much longer, saving money in the long run. Reed players are required to have at least one spare reed in playing condition at all times. Reed checks will be done in rehearsal periodically.

Brass instruments will be checked to see that all components are properly assembled and slides and valves move easily.

M. Sheet Music

Students will be loaned sheet music free of charge for each concert cycle. Students will also receive a folder to keep this music in, as well as an assigned music cabinet shelf to store their folder while at school. Students should take this folder home for individual practice most days. Students are expected to have this folder with them in rehearsal each day. If a student loses his or her music, he or she should check the file box at the front of the band room labeled with his or her class for extra copies. If there are no additional copies available, he or she should fill out a copy request form in order to secure additional music. Copy request forms are available in the band room or on the webpage. You are responsible for having music in class each day. This counts as part of being prepared for class.

Students should also have a method book or other music that they can practice out of at home each day. The director can help students find and purchase an appropriate method book for their level.

N. Uniforms

The High School Marching Band uniform consists of: black and white marching coat, black trousers, black shako (hat), and white plume (supplied by the school). To have a complete uniform, each student will be required to obtain: white gloves, black socks, and black marching shoes (shoe/glove orders for new students will be placed during band camp). All school-owned uniform parts will be kept in the band room where they will be issued before each use.

Students will not wear jeans under their marching uniform trousers. Athletic shorts are the best option to wear with the uniform. In cold weather, sweatpants, long underwear, or similar athletic cold-weather gear may be worn under the uniform.

The High School Symphonic Band uniform consists of appropriate concert wear (collared shirts, ties; think wedding/church clothes).

The 6th Grade Band and Middle School Concert Band uniform consists of white “oxford” collared shirts, black trousers or skirt (knee length or longer) and black socks and shoes.

New High School students will purchase an “Aggie Band” t-shirt. This will be worn for pep-band events or paired with shorts and athletic shoes as the marching band’s “summer uniform.”

O. Practice

Band members should make every effort to improve their performance through daily individual practice. Middle School and High School students are expected to practice at least four days per week, 20-40 minutes each day. Without practice, students may find it difficult to keep up with the material in class and the corresponding playing tests. Practice at home is essential for each student to develop as a musician. Students are encouraged to acquire their own music stand. Wire folding stands can be purchased from music stores such as Marshall Music, or can be ordered from the band office. It is important that students have a quiet space, stand, chair or stool, and adequate lighting for their daily practice.

P. Student Grading

Students will receive a grade in band class using the following formula:  100% of the final grade will be based on summative assessments (tests and performances).  An unexcused absence at a performance results in a grade of 0 for that summative assessment. In cases of excused absences (special exceptions may apply for in-school conflicts, such sports or clubs, mediated on a case-by-case basis) a student must perform a make-up assignment to receive a grade for that summative assessment.

In addition to the Summative grade, there will be a separate Work Habits grade that will also show on student transcripts. This grade will be based on being on time to class, classroom participation and on overall effort shown during rehearsals.

A rubric for the grading of playing tests is available on the webpage, and will also be handed out during class. Tests will be announced at least one week in advance. A rubric for your classroom participation (Work Habits) grade is also available on the webpage, and included with this handbook. Grades will be posted on Powerschool and will be updated once per week.

Q. Band Letter and Individual Awards

Awards are assessed by class, provided the student has fulfilled the requirements delineated below. Awards must be earned in order. They are generally awarded at the Spring Concert. Scales will be assessed concurrent with the final playing test. Students may only earn one award per academic year.

1st Award: Band Letter *(Freshman)*

1. Participate in every concert/performance.

2. Memorize three major scales.

(Students who begin Freshman year with Letter awarded are eligible for 2nd Award.)

2nd Award: Instrument Pin *(Sophomore)*

1. Participate in every concert/performance.

2. Memorize three (additional) major scales and two minor scales.

3rd Award: Band medal with year guard *(Junior)*

1. Participate in every concert/performance.

2. Memorize two (additional) major scales and two (additional) minor scales.

4th Award: Band plaque *(Senior)*

1. Participate in every concert/performance.

2. Memorize “all” major and minor scales.

3. Audition for honor band, OR perform in S&E or similar.

4. Audition for first chair in section, OR Selected for Drill Leader, Section Leader, or Drum Major.

Alternate awards once we have the new uniforms: Dansville Band Round Patch (Sophomore) and “Pride of the Aggies” Chevron Patch (Junior)

R. Student Accounts

Band members will have a student account during their band career. Money for the account may be earned through participating in certain fundraisers. The money earned may be applied to trips or passed on to younger family members. These funds may also be used for any expense relating to the student’s time in band, such as purchasing supplies for an instrument. Fundraising money will revert to the Dansville Music Booster organization when the youngest member of a family leaves the band program. Student band account money may not be transferred to an activity outside of band. The form to use funds from a student’s individual account can be found on the webpage or obtained from the director.

S. Uniform Campaign

The 2017-18 academic year will have an intense focus on fundraising for the purpose of purchasing new High School Marching Band uniforms for the fall of 2018 or 2019. Students and parents are encouraged to participate in fundraising activities to the greatest extent possible. The total cost of the project is approximately $35,000.

Student and Guardian Contract Agreement,

2017-18 Academic Year

After reading the handbook, return this agreement form to the band office with both signature lines completed no later than the first Friday of the first full week of school. It will be maintained there for the duration of the school year. You may keep the rest of this copy of the handbook for your own reference. It is also available on the band’s website.

**I have read and understand the *Dansville Bands Handbook* for the 2017-18 school year. Furthermore, I understand that the rules and expectations enumerated in this handbook establish the criteria by which my student will be graded.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent/Guardian signature / date**

**I have read the *Dansville Bands Handbook* and understand that membership in the Dansville Bands is a privilege requiring *Effort*, *Discipline*, and *Pride*. I will, to the best of my ability, be a productive member of my respective ensemble and uphold the band program’s *“Tradition of Excellence.”* Furthermore, I will adhere to the rules and obligations set forth in this handbook. I will respect the learning space and my fellow students. I understand that I am required, without exception, to be a band member for the full 2017-18 academic year.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student signature / date**

**DANSVILLE BANDS**

**A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE**