

2019 – 2020 ECMS Band Handbook

Contact Information

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The Two Most Commonly Asked Questions:

1. When are the concerts?
 - The Beginner Band Concert is **Friday, November 22, 2019 at 7pm**. Students arrive by 6:40.
 - The 7th/8th/ Grade Winter Concert is **Friday, January 17, 2020 at 7pm**. Students arrive by 6:40.
 - The Patriotic Concert (for all grades) is **Friday, May 22, 2020 at 7pm**. Students arrive by 6:40.
2. What is the dress code for the concerts?
 - Beginner Band Concert (6th grade only) – Dress up (all colors are okay, just look nice).
 - Winter (only 7th & 8th grades) – Wear black or dark grey top (t-shirts, hoodies, button up shirts... they're all allowed as long as they're the right color). No rules about pants or shoes. Black and dark grey dresses are also allowed.
 - Patriotic Concert (all band students) – Wear red, white, blue, or patriotic tops (t-shirts, hoodies, button up shirts... they're all allowed as long as they're the right color). No rules about pants or shoes. Patriotic dresses are also allowed. No face paint. No hats.

Overview

At Elizabeth City Middle School we have a traditional school band. We teach traditional concert band instruments. Band class is during school hours. The beginning of 6th grade is the only time that students may join the band, and all 6th grade beginners will start on flute, clarinet, trumpet, or trombone. Sixth grade band class covers everything from how to put the instrument together and make your first sound to how to read music. No prior musical knowledge is needed. Families must provide all items listed on page 2 of this handbook.

Instrument Rental Night

Any family that needs to rent an instrument can come to the ECMS cafeteria on **Thursday, August 29, 2019 at 6pm**. This is just an instrument rental meeting, so families that already have an instrument do not need to attend. Students are encouraged to come, but they do not have to be there.

Buying an Instrument

Most band families rent an instrument. If you are looking to buy, avoid instruments in bright colors. Since our school district is involved in band competitions at the high school level it is important that all instruments match. Do not buy bright colored instruments for your child. If you are planning to purchase an instrument, please let the band director know. They will share information about which brands are best for school band. If your child is going to use a previously owned (used) instrument, consider taking it to an instrument repair shop before school starts so they can make sure it is working properly.

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Local Music Store(s)

Most band families rent an instrument from “Music & Arts” in Chesapeake because they come to our school almost every week to take care of repairs and any other issues. You can rent from “Music & Arts” without ever going to their storefront! Most families purchase reeds and other supplies online (Amazon has music supplies, as does <http://www.music123.com/> and <http://www.1800usaband.com/>). If you do not shop online and need help purchasing supplies for band, please ask the band director for assistance.

Fundraisers

While it is true that most bands do many fundraisers, we don’t do any. Instead, we simply charge a \$5 general admission at our concerts.

Class Rules

1. Be Patient
2. Keep Trying
3. Never Criticize a Teammate

Class Consequences

1. Warning
2. Time out
3. Silent Lunch Detention
4. After School Detention
5. Office Referral

Tardy Students

Students that are late for class will receive the class consequences listed above. Students more than 10 minutes late for class will receive an office referral for skipping class.

Required Materials for Band

1. Music Supplies needed for band:
 - If you rent from a music store you can get all of the music supplies at once
 - A working instrument (band students must have their instrument by the 10th day of school)
 - Lesson Book - “Standard of Excellence”
 - 6th grade and 7th grade first semester needs book 1 (the red book)
 - 7th grade second semester and 8th grade needs book 2 (the blue book)
 - Flutes need the “flute” book, clarinets need the “clarinet” book, trumpets need the “trumpet” book, trombones need the “trombone” book.
 - Clarinets, do not get the “bass clarinet” book.
 - Tuba, do not get the “Eb Tuba” book, you will need the book for “BBb Tuba”.
 - Percussion, do not get the “timpani” or “auxiliary percussion” book.
 - CLARINET / SAXOPHONE Only: A box of 10 reeds (beginner clarinets need #2 ½ reeds)
 - The school will provide a folder to keep band music in.

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Parent Expectations

Band parents are expected to...

- Provide their child with a working instrument and the other required materials.
- Assure their child attends and has transportation to and from performances.
 - a. All concerts begin at 7pm, but students need to arrive by 6:40pm.
 - b. All concerts end around 7:45pm.

Band is Based on Continuous Growth

Our band program is based on continuous growth. Band students must pass band each semester to continue in band. The elective classes at ECMS are scheduled as semester long classes, so students who want to withdrawal from the school band must do so at a semester break.

The School Bus and Band Instruments

According to the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles, state law prohibits transporting large projects and large instruments on school buses. If an instrument fits on your lap or between your legs, it is okay to take it on the bus. That means trumpets, saxes, and trombones are all allowed on the bus! The only instruments too large for the school buses are French horn, baritone, tuba, and baritone saxophone.

Late Work and Make-up Work

Students that are absent have 3 school days to turn in late work. Students that need to do work a second time have 3 school days to turn in the make-up work. If there is an extenuating circumstance (medical concern, instrument in the repair shop, etc.) the band director and parent will address these on a case by case basis.

Bathroom Procedures

Students may leave the band room a maximum of three times each semester for bathroom emergencies.

Grading

All playing assessments and other assessments (oral, written, etc.) will be used to track student growth and progress toward meeting the state standards for music education.

Security

The school district does not assume responsibility for instruments lost, stolen, or broken while on school property. It is the students' responsibility to keep their instrument safe. It is recommended that parents / guardians insure their child's instrument.

ECMS Scholarship Instruments

The school has a limited number of scholarship instruments for families in financial need. Applications should be requested from the band director as soon as possible.

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Switching Instruments

Our beginner band starts with just four instruments (flute, clarinet, trumpet, and trombone). When the time is right we will switch a small number of students to other instruments as follows: saxophone (3 – 5 students), tuba (1 – 2 students), baritone (1 – 2 students), French horn (0 – 2 students) and percussion (3 – 5 students). It is rare to have piccolo, oboe, or bassoon in middle school band.

In order to switch instruments...

1. The student has to want to switch (nobody is forced to switch).
2. They must be excelling on their current instrument.
3. Their parents must be willing to pay for the new instrument.
4. The switch must be approved by the band director.

Brass Maintenance (trumpet, trombone, etc.)

- **Daily:** Empty water key and polish the finish to remove all fingerprints and water spots.
- **When Your Valves / Slide Stick:**
 1. Be sure your hand and finger positions are correct... press directly down (not at an angle) and be sure your fingertips are on the valve buttons (not hanging over).
 2. Still sticking? Add oil.
 3. Still sticking? Use a lint free cloth (not your polishing cloth) to wipe off the old oil, and then apply fresh oil.
 4. Still sticking? It's time to take it to the instrument repair shop.
- **As Needed:** Grease all slides to keep them moving easily.
- **Monthly:** Clean mouthpiece in warm soapy water using a mouthpiece brush.
- **Instrument Bath:** I do not encourage middle school kids to give their brass instruments a bath.
- **Yearly (only if needed):** Full service instrument repair shops can give your instrument a chemical bath (to disinfect or remove odors). If you think your brass instrument needs this type of cleaning, consult the band director.

Woodwind Maintenance (flute, clarinet, sax, etc.)

Daily: Water is the enemy. Remove all moisture.

As Needed For Flutes Only: Theoretically a flute never requires grease. If your “top part” becomes very difficult to put on, try a very tiny amount of cork grease. Using the end of the cleaning rod, check the alignment of the cork in your “top part”. If needed, adjust the cork as instructed in class.

As Needed For Clarinets & Saxophones Only: Apply cork grease to corks as needed so the instrument goes together easily, but not so much that it comes apart when playing. New corks require more grease.

Daily For Flutes Only:

- Using your cleaning rod and a cotton cloth (not your polishing cloth) swab the inside of your instrument to remove all moisture. If moisture is left on the pads they will deteriorate more quickly, requiring more visits to the instrument repair shop.
- Using your polishing cloth (different from the cloth used to clean the inside of the instrument), polish the instrument, being sure to wipe all fingerprints and moisture off of the instrument.

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Daily For Clarinets & Saxophones Only:

- Remove and dry the reed each time you are finished playing (or mold will grow and make you sick). Keep reeds in a reed guard to allow them to dry evenly.
- Use a swab designed for your instrument to clean and dry the inside.
- Use the same swab to wipe moisture off of the corks.
- If moisture is left on the pads or corks they will deteriorate more quickly, requiring more visits to the instrument repair shop.
- Saxophones Only: Using your polishing cloth (different from the swab), polish the instrument, being sure to wipe all fingerprints and moisture off of the instrument.
- Saxophones Only: Replace the end plug before putting instrument in case.

Monthly For All Woodwind Instruments: Using the small brushes included in your cleaning kit (or a pipe cleaner and an unused paintbrush) remove all dust from under the keys and rods; do a visual inspection for any loose screws or springs.

Monthly For Clarinets Only: Use a dry mouthpiece brush to clean the inside of your mouthpiece.

Monthly For Saxophones Only: Clean mouthpiece in warm soapy water with a mouthpiece brush.

Saxophones Only: If your pads are sticking, ask the band director for help cleaning them.

Reed Information (clarinets and saxes)

Unless specifically told otherwise, all 7th and 8th grade saxophones and clarinets should use #3 reeds. Beginners should start on # 2 ½ reeds. They should upgrade to #3 reeds as soon as possible after the Christmas concert. While the Rico's in the orange box (the cheap ones) are fine for beginners, more advanced students will hear an improvement in their playing with a higher quality reed such as Mitchell Lurie, Vandoren, or Rico Royal.

Reed Rotation - Always have two reeds in your case. Use a marker to label your reed cases. Each time you rehearse or practice, use the reed for that day. Over time you will find that some reeds work better than others. For tests and performances, use your best reed (even if it is not that day of the week). Replace one reed at a time in your rotation rather than all of them at once. Always keep new, extra reeds in a safe place. The time to buy more reeds is when the supply of extras runs low, not when you only have one or two reeds left.

Throw a Reed Away...

1. When it doesn't play well compared to your other reeds (even if it looks good)
2. If it is more than three months old
3. When it is chipped, cracked, or split
4. If it is discolored (green or black)
5. If it sounds fuzzy or squeaks too much
6. If it is extremely hard to play compared to your other reeds
7. When the tip is warped (wavy)

Reed tips:

- If possible, season a new reed by soaking it in a cup of water for 30 minutes before you play on it.
- Once a reed has been seasoned or played, do not store it in a sealed plastic bag.
- NEVER leave your reed on your instrument when you're done playing. It can grow germs.
- Remove and dry the reed each time you are finished playing (or mold will grow and make you sick). Keep reeds in a reed guard to allow them to dry evenly.

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Band Contract

1. Student Name: _____
2. If you already receive “band emails” from the band director feel free to leave this blank,
otherwise... Parent Email: _____
3. Medical concerns that may affect playing an instrument:

4. Other information the band director may need to know:

**Reminder: Performances are mandatory;
If they conflict with something else on your schedule, you will
have to miss the other thing and do the band performance.**

Student: I have access to the ECMS Band Handbook, will comply with the rules and expectations listed in it, and work to the best of my ability so that I can be successful on my band instrument.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent(s): By signing below I acknowledge that I have received an electronic copy of the 2019-2020 band handbook or that I know I can ask the band director for a paper copy. I understand that performances are mandatory. I have been given the dates of the required performances. I understand that my child must pass band each semester to continue in band. I give permissions for audio / video recordings to be used for self & peer assessment, performance reflection, and sharing musical ideas with students in other classes.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____