

## **BATH MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND HANDBOOK**

This handbook will help band members and parents understand the philosophy, operations, and expectations of the band program. Becoming familiar with this handbook will help you understand the many opportunities available to band members. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask a director at any time. We are here to help you and your child in your educational pursuits.

The Bath Bands have earned a very favorable reputation throughout the state of Ohio and we must do our best to continue this reputation. In order for our program to be successful, it is important that each band member do their best to be responsible to the group and to themselves. We all make mistakes, but we must learn from our mistakes and strive to maintain our level of excellence.

**Please take time to schedule all rehearsals and performances so nothing is missed. We are looking forward to another exciting year for “The Tradition of Excellence”!**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

The Bath Bands operate under the following philosophy:

1. The learning of good musicianship is an educational process that leads to knowledge of music as an art, to an appreciation of many styles of music, and to the enjoyment of performing at the highest level possible.
2. Students are taught to understand different types of music so enjoyment and participation can continue throughout life.
3. Students are taught that the arts are an essential and integral part of a quality education.
4. Students experience personal growth and maturity to become a better citizen of society.

### **“THE TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE”**

**Quality Musicianship** – *the ultimate goal.* Strive to do your best at all times. Learn your music and complete all assignments. The more effort you put forth, the more enjoyment you will experience. Any band member not accepting their share of responsibility is hurting the entire band. The ‘Tradition of Excellence’ is maintained through the efforts of every band member, not just a few.

**Practice** – *the key to musicianship.* You must have pride in yourself and the band. Expect the best of yourself and the band will do well. Laziness and apathy are not traits of a good band member.

**Rehearsals** – *great rehearsals make great performances.* Band is a regularly scheduled subject, which meets during the school day. In order to maintain or improve quality, rehearsals must be used efficiently. Practice must take place at home prior to rehearsals to make the rehearsals worthwhile. Band rehearsals are not the time to learn the notes, but rather to learn and explore the making of music. The only activities outside of the school day are planned in advance and on the calendar provided with this handbook.

### **PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Fifth Grade Concert Band** – This group meets two times per week in a large group setting and in small “like instrument” groups once a week. There are three performances during the year: the first is a demonstration concert in December, the second and third concerts are with the other middle school bands.

**Sixth Grade Concert Band** – This group meets three times per week throughout the school year in a large group setting, and in small “like instrument” groups once a week. There are four performances: the first is at “Bath Bands Night” at a high school Varsity Football game, the second is the Middle School holiday concert in December, the third is in late winter band concert, and the fourth is toward the end of the school year at our Band-o-rama concert.

**Seventh and Eighth Grade Concert Bands** – This group meets everyday in a large group setting. Small “like instrument” classes are taken out of the large class. In general, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays are Concert Band days and Tuesdays and Thursdays are Pep Band days. There are five or more performances for this grade: the first two are with the high school marching band at 2 Varsity Football games for “Bath Bands Night” and Homecoming, we also have 3 band concerts (Christmas, Winter and the Band-o-rama), a High School Pep Band game (HS Boys BB game), solo and ensemble contest, band contest, and a performance at Cedar Point.

**Solos and Ensembles** – Solo and ensemble performances are strongly encouraged at Ohio Music Education Association Adjudicated Event. Solo and ensembles are organized when interest is expressed and rehearsal time can be arranged.

**Private Lessons** – These are necessary to maintain a high level of performance. We have highly qualified private teachers for most instruments who travel to Bath and are available to teach after school hours. This is an opportunity for every band student to improve his or her playing ability through extra study. There is a fee payable to the private teacher by the student taking lessons.

**Honors Groups** – Throughout the year, various opportunities arise for students to audition for district and state honors ensembles. Students will be approached with information about these groups as they come available to us during the school year. These are wonderful opportunities to meet other great musicians from around the state.

**7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Marching Band to Cedar Point** – This event is on the *first unused make-up day*. The students will march in a short parade then be able to enjoy the park the remaining part of the day. The cost is the discounted music performance price plus a blue band T-shirt. This is an optional trip.

### **ATTENDANCE**

For performances, there are very few excused absences, and these must be cleared in advance with the directors. *A note or phone call to the director explaining an absence is due BEFORE the absence in order to be considered for an excused absence. In an emergency situation, a telephone call to the director is greatly appreciated. Please call 221-0366 ext. 3167 for emergencies. An unexcused absence from a performance will result in a "F" for the 9 weeks grade and may cause expulsion from the band program.*

Attendance at performances is a very important part of a successful band program. You must understand that attendance governs the quality of the group. When a student misses a performance, the group suffers. Please remember: *To be early is to be on time, To be on time is to be late, To be late is to be left out.* This applies to all rehearsals, performances, and trips.

**Performances** – Attendance at all performances is **mandatory**. *An unexcused absence from a performance will result in an 'F' for the grading period, and may result in dismissal from the band program.*

**Rehearsals** – Attendance at rehearsals during school hours is governed by school rules.

**Athletics** – Many band members participate in sports. We have tried to schedule all band time to avoid conflicts. However, when conflicts do arise, it is the student's responsibility to notify the band directors and the coaches as far in advance as possible. This allows both the teachers/coaches to work out an agreeable solution (this is to the student's advantage). It is very possible to be a great instrumentalist and athlete, but it takes responsibility and good organizational skills to accomplish this. We will work to the best of our ability to help you and we also expect the same in return. Students participating as statisticians or in any other non-playing role will be unexcused from missed band time. Absence from a rehearsal or performance for a sport not sponsored by Bath Schools will be unexcused.

**Snow/Fog on Concert or Performance Days** –

- When we have a 1, 2 or 3 hour delay, we will still have the concert!
- ***Usually, when school is cancelled on a performance day we will still have the concert!*** Watch the TV-WLIO. If we are cancelled it will indicated that we are cancelled. If it is not listed as cancelled then we have the concert as scheduled.(When we are back in session, a decision will be made as to whether the concert will be rescheduled.)
- ***If you are uncertain please check the internet, watch TV 35, or listen to the local Lima radio stations for information.***

### **GRADES**

Band grades are an average of class participation, weekly practice cards, playing tests, written tests, sectional class grade, performance attendance, and extra credit. Extra credit will be given for private lessons, additional musical endeavors (honors groups, solos, etc.) and outside of school concert attendance (with our approval and a parent signed program). Please make sure your child remembers their instrument and supplies for all band classes. Failure to forget these class materials more than once per nine weeks may result in a lower grade for that day(s). ***Please be advised that attendance policies may override a student's grade average. In addition, a student who is removed from the band program or chooses to quit band will receive an 'F' for the year. A student's band grade is calculated into their overall GPA and is included on the transcript. This policy does not apply to fifth grade band members, only to 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grades.***

**Dropping Band** - Band is an elective that individual students choose to add to their schedules. Any student who is removed from the program will receive a failing grade for the year in that program. A student who chooses to drop Band after the second week of school will also receive a failing grade, and may choose to drop only with the written permission of their parents/ guardians. Please be advised that this may affect your grade (see "Grades" section).

**Practice Cards** – practice cards are distributed (for free) to each middle school band student the first week of school. They are then responsible for recording all minutes practiced (out of school time) and returning the parent signed card on the weekly designated days. We ask that the student practice 100 minutes per week (an average of less than 15 minutes per day). But, we understand that some weeks are much busier than others

are. Therefore, the minutes are accumulated over the duration of the nine-week grading period. Hopefully this accommodates today's busy families. In other words, if a student can practice one week and not the next...the minutes all add up for the mid-term/final grade. The total number of minutes needed for the nine-weeks will be announced by the directors in advance.

**Rewards for practice cards** – the two band students from each grade with the highest amount of practice minutes will earn a reward. This might include movie tickets, or meal gift certificates. This "contest" is completed at the end of the two semesters.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

**Citizenship** – Learn to work with and get along with your fellow band members. The success of the band depends on your cooperation with each other. We are judged as a group, not as individuals. When you are with the band in public, people form an opinion of our band, community, school, parents, and directors according to your behavior. Part of being a good band citizen is the acceptance (and sometimes tolerance) of a great deal of different people. *Misbehavior will not be tolerated.*

**Discipline** – We wish disciplinary actions were never necessary. As members of the band, you should have enough pride in your actions, and care enough about the band's reputation to avoid trouble. The need for rules and regulations originates from your directors' love for you and the band. If you question something you are about to do, don't do it. At any band function, whether in or out of uniform, tobacco, alcohol, and drugs are forbidden. Automatic dismissal from the band program and enforcement of school policy will result. Any situation needing disciplinary action not specifically mentioned in this handbook or in school rules will be handled on an individual basis in consultation with school administrators.

**Band Conduct** – Good bands look organized at all times. Your conduct in band leaves an impression on everyone. Remember that you are a representative of the Bath Bands. During concert season, all concert etiquette rules apply. Remember... A band that looks good and behaves well has a better chance of playing well.

### **EQUIPMENT, TRANSPORTATION, UNIFORMS**

#### **Equipment and Facilities**

We are fortunate to have fine facilities and equipment for our band program. They have been provided for you through the cooperation of the Bath Board of Education and the Bath Music Association. Please respect the facilities and equipment because they represent a considerable monetary investment and would be difficult to replace. Keep your instrument and other assigned equipment in good condition at all times. You are also responsible for the cleaning and care of the instrument you play. If you play a school owned instrument, advise the directors immediately if anything happens to it or it needs repair. *A student whose school owned instrument is damaged due to negligence on the part of the student will be responsible for repair expenses.*

#### **Equipment Transportation**

1. Small instruments will be carried on the bus. Medium sized instruments will be stored in the bus compartments, and the largest instruments will be put in the band truck.
2. You alone are responsible for your instrument and equipment.
3. Make sure you load everything you need for the performance.
4. Reed players must have good reeds. Brass players need to have slide grease and valve oil.
5. Do not play another student's instrument.
6. Make sure your instrument is properly identified on the case.
7. Never leave your instrument lying out of the case. (We want to avoid accidents).

#### **Transportation**

The school provides transportation to and from band functions. Students are expected to use this transportation. Requests for alternate transportation must be made in writing by a parent prior to the event, and will be decided by the directors on the merits of the request.

##### *Basic Guidelines*

1. No food or drink is allowed on the busses.
2. You must ride both ways in your assigned seat on the same bus.
3. You are responsible for loading and unloading your equipment.
4. Be courteous to drivers and chaperones.
5. Students must obey chaperones at all times.
6. Stay in your seats while the bus is moving.
7. No screaming or loud singing.
8. Profanity will not be tolerated.

9. Be quiet at railroad crossings.
10. Radios, tape players, CD players, etc. can be used with headsets only.
11. Change into and out of uniforms in appropriate areas.
12. You must sit up at all times. Chaperones may separate any students when necessary.

All rules and laws that apply to regular school bus transportation will apply on band trips. The bus drivers, chaperones, and directors are responsible for your behavior and safety. A Bath band member is expected to be polite and courteous at all times. The band doesn't need 'show-offs'. We will 'show-off' together when we perform.

### **Uniforms**

The only time we have a uniform in the middle school is for the Cedar Point & the HS football game performances. It is a blue band t-shirt, jeans and tennis shoes. For all other performances, we do request that all students dress up and look nice for all band concerts and contests. Ladies please wear a nice skirt or dress. Guys please wear a shirt that includes a tie. Please, NO tennis shoes, jeans, or shorts. We always say "a band that looks good, has a better chance of sounding good".

### **Financial Matters**

#### **Fundraisers**

These are an extremely important part of any instrumental music program. The cost of instruments, supplies, and equipment is incredible. The Music Association sponsors the Cheese/Sausage, Rays certificates, Speedway Certificates, the Fruit Sale fundraisers. You and your child are responsible for the delivery of merchandise and the collection of money as part of the fund raising. All monies collected belong to the Bath Music Association. Be prompt in turning it in on the due dates for proper trip credit. We strongly advise that no merchandise or money be left in school or in an unlocked area. The band sponsors a candy sale in the spring to purchase band supplies and equipment.

#### **Band Obligations**

We have always allowed students to 'charge' items they need for band in emergency situations. But this has become increasingly difficult due to the great amount of debt the students have accumulated. Notices are sent home with students and also we remind them regularly. Please check with you son/daughter – sometimes they don't remember until you ask if they need funds. If everyone takes care of the obligations, then we will have the monies to offer supplies to the students, as they need them.

### **Awards**

The awards presented are as follows:

Solo and Ensemble Medals..... Given to all band members that participate  
in solo & ensemble contest.

8<sup>th</sup> grade Director's Award ..... Given to an outstanding 8<sup>th</sup> grade band member.

Band Book Medals..... Given to all band members when they complete book I,  
and II.

### **BATH MUSIC ASSOCIATION**

This organization provides the necessary assistance to the music directors to make the music programs more effective. All parents of instrumental students in grades 5 through 12 are members of the association. It is the parents' responsibility to work for the association when asked, and assume positions of leadership when needed. Music Association is a tremendous support to our music students. Meetings are generally held the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the high school band room.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is our desire to keep both students and parents informed of the rules, regulations, and schedule of the band program. We sincerely hope to make the Bath Bands a wonderful experience. We want students and parents to believe in the band program because of its musical content and value. Your loyalty and commitment to the program are a valuable asset to your child's success in band. We are always open to suggestions that might improve the quality of our program.

**We have one of the best band programs in the state. This is due to the hard work and dedication by the directors, students, and parents. It took everyone to be the best and will take everyone to stay the best. Let's have a great time achieving awesome performances together.**