

Boyd W. Arthurs Instrumental Music Department

Band Handbook

2021-2022



Welcome to the Boyd W. Arthurs Instrumental Music Department! You have made the decision to study music, to acquire a skill that will provide enjoyment for a lifetime. The teachers at Arthurs MS are here to assist you in the development of your musical skills.

Regular attendance to classes and consistent practice will aid you in attaining your musical goals. Perfecting musical skills is not always easy – with your teacher’s guidance and your perseverance, you should be rewarded with increased enjoyment, appreciation and active participation in music.

Please read the policies of the Arthurs Middle School Music Department *carefully!*

Peter Kopera
Director of Bands

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1.) Introduction

At Boyd W. Arthurs Middle School we are building a tradition of excellence in music. Through dedication and hard work you will enjoy and contribute to our success. This Handbook is intended to answer most of your questions regarding the Arthurs Music Department. These guidelines are necessary to any successful music program. Both parents and students are urged to become familiar with this handbook. By carefully reading the entire document, you will avoid any conflicts or problems with the rules and policies.

***Parents and students please sign and return the form at the end of this handbook to confirm that you have received and read this information. Thank You!**

2.) Philosophy of the Arthurs Music Department

Music plays an important role in life. This is especially true for adolescents and pre-adolescents. Music often defines an adolescent's character and can be a measure of their self-worth. It is vital to provide middle school students with the experiences necessary to develop their skills and to think critically about music around us.

Music classes are not meant to train all students to be professional musicians; rather, the purpose of music in our schools is to help students to be creative, further a complete education, and most importantly, to provide a large social learning experience while learning a lifelong skill. Besides providing an opportunity for students to be creative, it has been proven that band/music classes increases students' interest in the overall school workings, and therefore, helps them to be better students. Self-reliance and leadership are among the many lessons learned in band that can be often overlooked.

"College admissions officers continue to cite participation in music as an important factor in making admissions decisions. They claim that music participation demonstrates time management, creativity, expression, and open-mindedness." – Carl Hartman, "Art May Improve Students' Grades," The Associated Press, October 1999

Finally, band is fun! Whether it is an evening concert, a Festival performance, or a jam session, the students will enjoy performing while bonding with other students. The performance, however important, is often the culmination of a larger project. The most important part is the process of getting there and striving for excellence through the daily lessons at school. It is imperative that students push themselves to achieve and succeed in band. In the end, the combination of focused and meaningful daily lessons, with intense and regular daily practice, will lead to an extremely rewarding and beautiful musical performance.

3.) Objectives of the Arthurs Music Department

- Perform quality musical literature.
- Study at an advanced level, the elements of music in varying contexts.
- Perform solo, in small ensemble and in large ensemble in public.
- Develop further the ability to read and interpret music notation.
- Develop greater familiarity with the vocabulary for discussing music.
- Refine the ability to listen to music with understanding and to comment intelligently.
- Develop and refine performance skills such as posture, tone, intonation, breathing, embouchure, fingering, rhythm, articulation and scales. Use these skills in expressive musical performance.
- Develop good home practice/study routines and skills.
- Promote social development through large group interaction.
- Develop personal and social self-discipline.

4.) Point System – Grading Policy

At Arthurs, all music classes are treated as academic classes. Students will earn their grade through classwork, homework and tests. Academic success in band class requires **mandatory attendance** at performances, individual assessments, evidence of musical progress, classroom performance and attitude. Your grade will be determined on a total point basis. The percentage of Earned Points from the Total Possible Points will determine your grade.

REMEMBER, grades are not given – You earn them!

DAILY PARTICIPATION POINT SYSTEM (3 points possible per day)

| | |
|------------|--|
| 3 points = | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does not disrupt class learning. Does not talk at inappropriate times. b. Contributes actively at ALL times. (Including, but not limited to: posture, breath management, tone production, vowels/articulations, vocal artistry, etc...) c. Shows leadership skills-positively contributes to class climate. (Dependable, courteous to classmates, helps others, practices good manners, considerate of the rights of others, values singing, participates in class discussion, etc...) d. Comes to class prepared with Instrument, Folder and Pencil. |
| 2 points = | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Does not disrupt class learning. b. Does not talk at inappropriate times. c. Contributes willingly, but not actively at ALL times. d. Shows potential leadership skills, but display is mediocre. e. Tardy to class without a pass. f. Fails to bring appropriate materials to class. |
| 1 point = | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Some disruption of class learning. b. Talking at inappropriate times. c. Lack of contribution. d. Shows no leadership skill. |
| 0 points = | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Gum chewing, inappropriate physical contact with others, destroying property, talking back, teasing/taunting others, screaming, defying authority, unexcused absence, etc... |

OTHER EARNED POINTS

| | | |
|--|-------|---|
| Weekly PRACTICE CARD with Parent Signature | | |
| +10 | 60-90 | minutes per week – This is the minimum amount of practice expected each week. |
| +30 | 90+ | minutes a week (20 extra credit points!) |

- +25 Playing Tests (Scale Tests, etc...)
- +50 Written Tests (Points here will vary)
- +250 Concert Attendance

PENALTIES

- 25 Mistreatment of the instruments or of school property
- 25 Disruptive Behavior
- 250 Unexcused absence from any performance

444 Consequences for misbehavior when there is a Substitute Teacher in the room are issued at the discretion of Mr. Kopera and penalties up to **3 times their value**.

5.) Practice Cards

It is expected that students will make time to practice their instrument for a minimum of **60 minutes each week**. Students who practice for more than 90 minutes in a week will earn extra credit points toward their grade!

There are 2 parts to the Practice Card:

1. **Time Component** – students will record the number of minutes of practice each day and the total number of minutes for that week.
2. **Reflection Component** – students will indicate what they worked on during their practice and some thoughts about their work.

*The Practice Card is not complete without the signature of a parent or guardian to verify the time totals.

You may use the prepared Practice Cards from the Band Director or you may design your own. Any slip of paper with the time, reflection and a parent signature is acceptable.

6.) Concert Attire

Unless other directions are given, band members will follow these general guidelines:

| | | | |
|---------------|--|--------------|---|
| <u>GIRLS:</u> | Black pants, black long skirt or dress Black shoes/black socks White blouse | <u>BOYS:</u> | Black pants Black shoes/black socks White shirt Dark Tie |
|---------------|--|--------------|---|

6th & 7th Grade students will wear this black/white combination.

8th Graders will wear ALL black.

7.) Attendance

Attendance has a direct effect on your grade. Every member of the group is equally important – any absence hurts the entire group unfairly. The band learns as a group, works as a group and performs as a group – every member of the group should plan to attend all scheduled performances.

-- Review the yearly schedule carefully!

In the case of a schedule conflict, a written explanation should be handed to the Band Director no later than 2 weeks in advance of a performance. No absences will be excused after the performance date in question. In cases of extreme emergency, illness, etc... it is expected that the student will bring a written explanation to the Band Director at the next available opportunity.

8.) Parent Participation

The vital support and assistance from Band Parents has made our many accomplishments possible. You may be interested in volunteering with us this year – here's how you can help:

- Chaperone
- Piano Accompanist (especially at Solo & Ensemble Festival)
- Concert Set-up

- Photographer

At any given time throughout the year parents are there to assist the teachers and students by chaperoning, by riding on the bus, by moving equipment, by setting up percussion, by passing out sweatshirts and by any variety of other things. We are always tremendously thankful for your help! I look forward to working with you throughout the year!

9.) Sports and Other Activities

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in a wide variety of sports and other activities. Being involved in band will not interfere with sports or any other activity. Scheduling conflicts may arise. If a conflict occurs, Mr. Kopera, the student, parents and the other party will get together and resolve the situation in the best interests of the student and the programs. We have never had a problem that could not be worked out to everyone's satisfaction!

10.) School Owned Instruments

A school owned instrument may be provided to those students playing instruments like Tuba, Baritone Horn, Bassoon, Bass Clarinet, Bari Sax, Tenor Sax, Oboe, etc... In order to use the instrument, the inventory/responsibility form must be filled out and signed by the student and parent(s). The school will assume responsibility for annual wear and tear. If a student abuses a school instrument, it is the parent(s) or guardian(s) responsibility to repair or replace the instrument.

11.) Private Lessons

All students in the band program are strongly encouraged to take private lessons. Individual playing ability can only be improved just so far within the confines of classroom band rehearsal. Private lessons are the best method of achieving success individually and with the whole band. Please contact Mr. Kopera for information on how to select a private teacher and for a list of recommended teachers in our area.

12.) Awards and Recognition

Each year there are opportunities and incentives for students to earn awards, ribbons and medals to recognize and celebrate accomplishment, dedication and hard work.

- **MSBOA Solo & Ensemble Medals** – awarded to students who earn Division I (blue) or Division II (red) rating for their performance at the annual S&E Festival.
- **MSBOA Band & Orchestra Medals and Plaque** – awarded to students and to the school who earn Division I (blue) or Division II (red) rating for their performance at the annual B&O Festival.

13.) Band Room

The Band Room must always be kept neat, clean, and organized. This means that your **instrument, music, storage space, and seat area** must be **tidy**. The equipment in the music room is yours to use, please treat it with respect and care – all of the instruments and school equipment is **very expensive**.

14.) Band Student Supply List

- A quality instrument in good working condition, proper reeds, mouthpiece, oil, sticks and cleaning kit. Oboe and bassoon players should consider ordering reeds from www.oboe.net, www.forrestsmusic.com, and www.wbw.com. Clarinet and Saxes consider using Vandooren reeds. Percussion players please use Vic Firth SD1 General sticks.
- **Method Books:**
 - **6th Grade Band** will use Essential Elements 2000 Book 1 (published by Hal Leonard)
 - **7th Grade Band** will use Essential Elements 2000 Book 2 (published by Hal Leonard)
 - **8th Grade Band** will use Standard of Excellence Enhanced Book 2 (published by Kjos)
- Combination lock for instrument storage and security. **No key locks.**
- 4 standard #2 pencils with an eraser.
- A music stand for at home practice.
- Metronome and Tuner – I recommend the Seiko SQ50 Metronome and Sabine MT9000 Metronome/Tuner – there are also great tuner and metronome apps for iOS and Android, etc...

- *PLEASE – put your name on everything! Make sure that your name is on your instrument case, folder and method books, and also be certain to have at least your initials on your combination lock.

15.) Band Room Rules, Guidelines, Procedures

- Please do not play other student's instruments. Not only will you spread germs, but often this is how instruments are broken or damaged.
- Unless you are a percussionist, the percussion section is off limits!
- When you enter the band room please get your materials ready and find your seat – try to be ready by the late bell. Please get into the habit of being quiet when the rehearsal begins and when the conductor stops conducting.
- You should always have at least 3 reeds that work. It is cheaper to buy a box of #2 1/2, #3 strength Vandoren reeds at any music store. Percussionists are expected to supply their own sticks (consider a stick bag too – Vic Firth brand is recommended).
- Home practice is essential. Practice sheets will be checked by the Director every Monday. Home practice, if approached with the right attitude, should be fun and stimulating. The satisfaction of improving and growing, as a musician should be shared with your whole family! Remember, home practice in band is just like homework in other subjects. And don't forget the proper practice routine: warm up, main objective, and fun easy music for last. Each practice session should be at least 30 minutes.
- Your band room is a fine facility and must always be kept clean and treated with respect. Please do not lean back in the chairs or lean on the music stands.
- Sheet music that is passed out is very expensive and must be treated with care. A typical band arrangement costs between \$35.00 and \$75.00. Extra parts cannot be purchased without buying the whole arrangement. As a result, you must keep your music neat and in your folder so future band students can enjoy it. Lost music is wasteful and unnecessary.
- You will be given a Band folder and a numbered instrument cage.
- As part of the weekly practice sheet check, your folder may also be reviewed for a grade. A pencil with an eraser, along with the proper method book, handouts and music will earn an A.
- The Directors office is off limits to all students unless invited.
- Please take the time to properly label your instrument with your complete name, address and phone number. Use a standard luggage tag or masking tape.
- If you feel you need extra help or some additional coaching see Mr. Kopera and we will schedule a time for you to come in.
- The band room will always be open at the end of the day. You can store your instrument there, on the proper shelf. Band storage shelves are NOT for personal items and schoolbooks. Students must provide combination chain/cable lock to secure their instrument. **No key locks.**
- 5 minutes is usually given at the end of the band period for cleaning instruments and putting them away properly. Proper cleaning means swabbing, wiping off fingerprints, empty all spit valves, etc. Please use this time wisely. Only instruments that are clean and well maintained can play their best!! This time is can be forfeited if rehearsals are unproductive.

- Practice rooms are not visiting areas.
- We will play EVERY DAY, so please plan on bringing your instrument and supplies EVERY DAY!
- For your health and safety – no gum or candy is allowed in the band room. It is dangerous to have anything your mouth when playing a wind instrument. Only during supervised reward parties will food/candy be allowed in the music room.

16.) Concert Audience Etiquette

Throughout the school year we will participate in many concerts, sometimes as a performer and sometimes as an audience member. It is important that we set the proper example. Basically the role of an audience member is: the people on stage PERFORM and we LISTEN. This seems simple BUT unfortunately many students do not understand proper concert etiquette. All students and adults should be well versed in proper manners when attending a concert. Below are some items to remember:

- Never talk or pass notes during a performance. Do not eat, drink or chew gum. Do not do anything that would be distracting to the performers on stage or other members of the audience.
- When a performance is in progress, do not enter the auditorium or leave your seat. Wait until the end of the piece or movement and move to your destination quickly and silently during the applause.
- The PROPER way to show your appreciation for a performance is to applaud after the piece is finished. Whistling, hooting, yelling and stomping are NOT cultured responses and are not appropriate for a concert. Never “Boo”, “Hiss” or shout out names – a concert is not a sporting event.
- If the concert was exceptionally wonderful, you may give the performers a standing ovation. This means you stand up at the end (NEVER ON THE SEAT) and continue to clap while the performers take a second bow. This is a special honor and should be reserved for only the BEST performances.
- When there is a multi-movement piece, do not applaud until the final movement is finished. If you are unsure consult the concert program.
- In a jazz band performance it IS APPROPRIATE to applaud after a solo section, even if the entire piece is not yet finished.
- If you are on stage and want to show your appreciation you should shuffle your feet instead of applauding. It is appropriate to do this even while you are performing yourself. This is how professional musicians praise each other.

Concerts at Trenton High School

We will have our Winter and Spring Concerts at Trenton High School. These concerts are large events that require a significant amount of planning and organization. Students not on stage performing will sit in assigned areas while waiting for their turn on stage. Students finished performing will sit in the designated band area while the next group rotates up on stage smoothly and quickly. All students are expected to stay for the ENTIRE concert. When seated in the audience students are expected to work on their audience etiquette. Remember that when we are at the high school we are special guests. As a result, we should ALWAYS act in an appropriate respectful and mature manner.

17.) Jazz Band – Policy & Philosophy

The Arthurs Jazz Band is open to 6th, 7th & 8th Grade students who are currently enrolled in a concert band class. This ensemble is an extra curricular offering to motivated and ambitious band students who want more opportunities for performance and challenge. All members of the Arthurs Jazz Band are selected by audition. The Arthurs Jazz Band meets for rehearsal (in the Arthurs Band Room) Monday evenings from 6pm-7pm and Wednesday mornings from 7am-7:45am. Performances may include: Scarecrow Festival, Anderson/Hedke Talent Shows, Hard Rock Café Detroit, Zal Gaz Grotto Ann Arbor, Jazz Café (sponsored by Trenton Band Boosters), and 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony. Jazz Band may also perform at other community events as opportunities become available.

The Arthurs Jazz Band is inclusive with regard to instrumentation. Generally, the Arthurs Jazz Band is comprised of saxophone, trombone, trumpet, piano, electric bass, drum set and guitar, but we also include flute, clarinet, baritone horn, French horn, violin, oboe and vocalist. It is the philosophy of the Arthurs Music Department that ‘jazz’ can and should be played on any instrument and all of our music students should have the chance to participate in this experience. In addition, jazz improvisation is a featured aspect of our performances and all members of the Jazz Band are instructed and encouraged to improvise.

Method Book: This band will use the **Easy Jazz Conceptions Method Book** by Jim Snidero. We will also use **Chop-Monster 1 – Jazz Language Tutor** by Shelly Berg – books will be provided and must be returned in good condition.

18.) Jazz Band Auditions

Jazz Band auditions are held during the last 4 weeks of the school year. It will be announced that students are to sign up for an audition time with Mr. Kopera. Auditions are held after school.

How to Prepare for Jazz Band Audition: Each student is expected to do 2 things during their audition- First, the student will perform anything they have prepared that they believe ‘shows off’ their playing or demonstrates their finest playing skills. Second, sight-read an 8 – 12 measure piece of music with about 2 minutes of preparation. Audition results will be posted in the Band Room.

19.) Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association (<http://www.msboa.org/>)

MSBOA is an association of 1700 instrumental music teachers in Michigan. The Arthurs Music Department has continued membership in the MSBOA for many years. Arthurs Middle School is a member of District 12. Each year our students perform in and earn the highest ratings at various District and State Festivals.

Solo & Ensemble Festival – This is an opportunity for 7th & 8th Grade Band students to perform a selection of their choice for adjudication. District-level festivals are held in late January through mid-February. Each student or group of students is evaluated by one judge and rated on a scale of Division I to V with I being the highest rating possible. For a Division I rating, students earn a Blue colored ribbon/medal. For a Division II rating, students earn a Red colored ribbon/medal. All performers will receive a copy of the adjudication sheet with all of the judges’ comments about their performance. Pay close attention to all rules that govern participation in this event. *Rules to keep in mind:* each performance must be a minimum of 1 minute 30 seconds in length to receive a rating; an original copy of the music to be performed must be provided to the judge for copyright purposes; acceptable instruments for solo and ensemble performance are standard band and orchestra instruments including harp, piano and harpsichord – electric guitar and electric bass are not allowed. There is a small entrance fee to participate in this event.

Band & Orchestra Festival – This is an opportunity for 7th and 8th Grade Concert Bands to perform a program of three pieces for adjudication, one of which must be from MSBOA’s required list. District-level festivals are held at the end of February through the beginning of March. Electronically amplified instruments (including electric guitar and electric bass) are not allowed at any Band and Orchestra Festival. Each group is evaluated by three performance judges and one sight-reading judge. Ensembles are rated on a

scale from I to V with I being the highest rating possible. The overall score is computed using a formula which combines the ratings of each judge. Ensembles that earn an overall I rating (or "Superior") are qualified for State Band & Orchestra Festival which is held in late April or early May.

20.) Recommended School Music Specialist

Meyer Music

Grand Rapids Location

2855 Lake Eastbrook Blvd.

Grand Rapids, MI 49512

616-975-1122

<https://www.meyer-music.com/>

Recommended Music Vendors

A+R Music

3924 Fort St.

Lincoln Park MI 48146

313-381-2274

www.armusic.com

Marshall's Music

6500 Allen Road

Allen Park, MI 48101

313-383-5560

www.marshallmusic.com

J.W. Pepper & Son, Inc.

552 Robbins Dr.

Troy, MI 48084

Toll Free: 1-800-345-6296

www.jwpepper.com

21.) Email Newsletter and Remind Messaging

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Go to this webpage: <http://arthursmusic.org/parentinfo.html>

Click on the "Subscribe To" links for your classes and complete the sign-up process.

REMIND

Follow the instructions to join the correct class:

For 6th Grade Band = go to "rmd.at/ams-band6" in your web browser, or send this text message "@ams-band6" to 81010

For 7th Grade Band = go to "rmd.at/ams-band7" in your web browser, or send this text message "@ams-band7" to 81010

For 8th Grade Band = go to "rmd.at/ams-band8" in your web browser, or send this text message "@ams-band8" to 81010

For Jazz Band = go to "rmd.at/ams-jazz" in your web browser, or send this text message "@ams-jazz" to 81010

22.) Contact Information

Boyd W. Arthurs Middle School

4000 Marian, Trenton, MI 48183

(734)676-8700

Fax: (734)676-7364

Music Department Website: <http://www.arthursmusic.org/>

Email for Mr. Koper: koperap@trentonschools.com

23.) Agreement and Signature Form

Please sign and return this form to acknowledge your receipt and understanding of the contents of this handbook.

I, _____, am a *student* in the Arthurs Middle School Band program. My signature below indicates that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the rules and regulations in the 2021-2022 Arthurs Band Handbook.

I, _____, am the *parent/guardian* of the above student enrolled in the Arthurs Band program. My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the items in the 2021-2022 Arthurs Band Handbook.

Student signature

date

Parent/Guardian signature

date