

Band 101

Parent Handbook

Marching Band
Concert/Symphonic Band
Pep Band
Jazz Band
Solo & Ensemble
Rehearsals
AND SO MUCH MORE!!!

(this document is a work in progress...)



WHAT ARE THE BAND BOOSTERS?

The OHS Marching Band program is supported by a parent run organization – the Otsego Band Boosters. The Band Boosters exists solely through volunteer parents in order to help provide your students with an enjoyable and rewarding music experience. As a parent of a band member you automatically become a member of The Otsego Band Boosters. This organization depends upon the involvement of every parent with a student in the Instrumental Music Department. Although committee work is not a requirement for membership in The Band Boosters, we encourage everyone to get involved and experience the fun and satisfaction of supporting our students and the band.

Welcome to Marching Season

MARCHING BAND INFO TO KNOW

Scoring	Who gets scores
Superior (consistently) (The absolute best score!)	Drum Major (sometimes)
Excellent (mostly)	Percussion
Good (sometimes)	Auxiliary (Color Guard)
Fair (rarely)	Overall Band
Poor (never)	

Marching Competition Awards

An ensemble's classification is based on grade level and school enrollment at the time the registration form is submitted. Any group from a single school may enter a higher classification. A group may select its required music from a higher grade without changing its classification. We typically follow the classification below:

Classification	School Enrollment
Class AA	400 & Over
Class A	250 - 399
Class B	150 - 249
Class C	90 - 149
Class D	0 - 89

- ★ Best in Class Auxiliary: Best color guard in their classification
- ★ Best in Class GE: Best general effect in their classification
- ★ Best in Class Music: Best overall music in their classification
- ★ Best in Class Percussion: Best percussion in their classification
- ★ Best in Class Visual: Best visuals in their classification
- ★ Grand Champion: Best overall score out of every band competing

Field Terminology

- ★ **Adjudicator:** Another term for "judge." The adjudicator's job is to provide evaluation and feedback for a specific performance at a specific event. In a competition setting, the adjudicator may also be tasked to rank groups and help determine awards based on the scores they provide.
- ★ **Auxiliary:** For marching band scores - color guard | for pit & pit crew - triangles, tambourine, etc.
- ★ **Battery:** Marching Band percussion section that carries drums and marches; consists of snare drums, bass drums, and tenors (see Tenors).
- ★ **Brass:** Trumpets, Mellophones, Horns, Euphoniums, Baritones, Trombones, Sousaphones and Tubas. (All the shiny instruments that don't have reeds.)
- ★ **Drill:** The actual choreography of the show. It involves the development of the patterns in which the band will march while playing the show's music. The drill is written with each band member represented by a specific dot. If a band member is not available for a show, it creates a hole where the dot is and affects the visual aspect of the performance. Each dot is essential to each performance!
- ★ **Drum Major(s):** Student conductor(s) who direct the marching band as it plays.

- ★ Drumline: The entire percussion section of the Marching Band includes both the PIT and the Battery.
- ★ Field Show/Showcase: A marching band competition that takes place on high school football fields. Marching bands perform up to an 11-minute show for the audience and a panel of judges. Bands compete based on size.
- ★ General Effect: (also called GEs) It's meant to measure that very intangible, somewhat subjective idea of the impact your band's show has on your audience. This is the leans, head nods, etc. in a field show.
- ★ Guard: A group of students who add color and style to marching band performances with flags and other props. Also known as Auxiliary, the term was originally used for the flag/rifle carriers who stood at the front of a marching show. This evolved into a modern color guard when dance and decorative flags were added.
- ★ Marimba: Large Keyboard Percussion instrument; looks like a big xylophone.
- ★ Metronome: Device that adulates and visually represents the tempo or steady beat. Can be purchased at music stores or added to electronic devices using an app. (Think tick, tick, tick, tick.)
- ★ Mellophone: Marching French horn.
- ★ Pit: Marching band percussion section (percussion instrument team) that does not march (plays on the sidelines), composed of instruments such as tympani, marimbas, gongs, etc.
- ★ Pit Crew: Parents/Students who help move percussion equipment out to the field for competition. All volunteer parents who assist the marching band with the loading, transportation, unloading, and setup of band equipment Pit Instruments, Show Props, and more at all marching events.
- ★ Quads: Multi-tenor drums commonly mounted in sets of 4-6 drums
- ★ Section: Each instrument group or unit of the band. (i.e. Flutes, Trombones, Color guard)
- ★ Section Leader: Appointed by the band directors to be in charge of his/her section of the band.
- ★ Sectional: A rehearsal called by the Student Leader of each section. All students in a section are expected to attend all Sectionals.
- ★ Sousaphone: Another term for the Tuba.
- ★ Tenors: Set of 5-6 connected drums carried by members of the Battery.
- ★ Vibraphone: Percussion instrument; a big, metal-looking xylophone
- ★ Woodwinds: Flutes, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, and Saxophone.

Uniform Terminology

- ★ Bibs: Overall-type pants. The overall-like garment worn under a jacket in standard marching band uniforms.
- ★ Marching Shoes: Special shoes each marcher wears during shows and competitions. Not to be worn during Concert season
- ★ Plume: Feather adornment worn on the helmet with the marching band uniform.

- ★ Marching Band Jacket: Jacket worn over an undershirt and Bibs/Bibber
- ★ Show Shirts: A shirt matching the theme of the performance. Great souvenir..

Competition Etiquette

For those of you who are new band parents, and as a reminder for those of us who have done this for a while, we wanted to share a few guidelines for competition etiquette. Competition days can be overwhelming for our new families and sometimes the little things get overlooked.

One of the most important parts of a field show is the audience. There are many types of spectators at a band show and they have many different reasons for coming to the show. Each band performing at a competition event has their own story to tell. Some come from large schools, others come from small schools. Some have overcome odds just to have a marching band in which to participate. Some may have experienced difficult setbacks, while others are experiencing their most positive marching season ever.

Regardless of each band's particular circumstances, every student who takes the field has chosen to use music, color, and motion in to an art. As parents, boosters, and spectators, we each have a responsibility to recognize those efforts by simply being a good audience.

It is also important to realize that although it is fun to visit with family and friends during a contest, it is unfair to distract other spectators from enjoying the show. This is true at any performance, please be respectful of all other spectators and hopefully, they will extend you the same courtesy.

DO:

- ★ Be supportive of every band. Be considerate during each band's performance and show your appreciation for their hard work with your hearty applause at the end of every band's performance as well as when they take the field for competition. Remember, the students in the other bands have worked just as hard as our students. They deserve our respect and applause. Every marching band member in every band is participating in an activity that is teaching them teamwork, respect, and pride in what they do. There are no losers in this activity.
- ★ Show up early. This is especially true for supporters of larger-class bands. Many smaller-class bands have great shows. Arrive early at the next show and see what you have been missing.
- ★ Turn off (or at least put on vibrate) your cell phone. If you receive a call during a performance, wait until that performance is over before returning the call.
- ★ Refrain from conversation during the performances. Show respect for the bands and the spectators around you by not talking during a performance.
- ★ Buy a program and familiarize yourself with how the event is being judged and scored. Be an "informed" spectator.
- ★ Buy something from the concession stand. In many cases, a band competition may be the major source of a band program's yearly budget. They have made a large investment and would appreciate your support. In most cases, you will find that the prices are much less than what you will pay at your local movie theater.
- ★ Attend as many performances as possible to support our students and enjoy the show.

DON'T:

- ★ Don't allow children to play in the stands and distract other spectators. Children are the future of this activity. It is good for them to see why big brother and big sister are always at practice and are not at home. However, for their safety and as a courtesy to others they should not be allowed to run up and down steps and play in the aisles so others may enjoy the show.
- ★ Don't leave or return to your seat during a band's performance. Wait until a performance has ended before moving about. You will only need to wait 15 minutes, at the most, before the next break. There is sufficient time between bands to move in and out of your seating area.
- ★ Don't obstruct the view of others. Please avoid standing in front of people trying to watch the show. If you have a banner to display, try to do so from the top of the stands or in some way so that others can still see the bands.
- ★ Refrain from calling out your student's name when the band takes the field. Instead of drawing attention to one individual (which usually embarrasses that student), stick to the traditional, "Go dawgs! Go Band! Go blue!" cheer that will bring attention to the entire ensemble.
- ★ Don't "boo" other bands or the contest results during the awards. Unfortunately, everyone is not going to agree on contest results. Booing the award winners or the judges will not accomplish positive results.
- ★ Don't comment on other performances unless it's complimentary. Every band on the field is "somebody's band", and it may be the folks sitting next to or behind you. Give the other participating bands the same respect and attention you hope they will give to our band.

General Information:

The best seats are as close to the 50-yard line and as high up in the stands as possible. Naturally, these are the first to go. If you want to have the best seats, arrive before the show begins and stake out your spot. Wear your OHS Band & Color Guard gear and look for other OHS fans so everyone can sit together.

Each contest has its own rules concerning video recording. Please watch for signs at the stadium entrance gates and observe the rules. Some contests do not allow recording but do sell professionally produced videos at a cost.

The most important rule of all: Come see your child perform. They work hard and whether they say it or not, they love it when you are there to see them perform. **COME OUT AND ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE!**

Hopefully, these tips will make your experience more enjoyable as you cheer your favorite band on and support all the performers of this amazing art form.

FOOTBALL GAMES The band performs the National Anthem at the start of the game and then their Marching Band show at halftime at all home Varsity football games, as well as playing in the stands during the game. The band has a specially marked section in the stands and many of the band parents sit together near the band – a great opportunity to get to know other parents and see your student perform up

close.

FESTIVALS/COMPETITIONS The marching band performs with other high school bands in the fall. The festivals are located throughout Michigan. Please come to as many events as you can. All of the students appreciate hearing the cheering from the stands. It is great to watch the competitions and cheer the kids on.

REHEARSAL

Band Camp: Camp is required of all students. Pre-camp is around the last weeks of July/Beginning of August at OHS. See the Schedule for specific times. All Camp dates are required of all students in the band. Parent volunteers will be in attendance to help out with whatever needs may arise. The camp will end on Friday evening with a parent performance followed by a family cookout.

FAQs

Q. Will my son or daughter need to audition to be a member of the OHS Marching Band?

A. Only Drum Majors, percussion, and the Color Guard are required to audition. These auditions are held in the spring of the following school year. (i.e., auditions for the 2024-2025 seasons will be held in the spring of 2024.) Percussion auditions are for placement only.

Q. When can we see a schedule for the year?

A. The complete schedule is finalized on the last day of the school year, keep up with the band website in case of moved dates due to weather, games, and other unforeseen circumstances.

Q. How do we keep up to date on band schedule changes, since our kids don't tell us anything?

A. The best way to stay on top of the band's activities is to attend the Band Boosters meetings and provide us with your email address so that you can be included in those communications. We also use the Remind app and post to Facebook. Otsegobands.com is a great resource also.

Q. When does the Marching Band practice?

A. Marching Band starts with mandatory band camp in July/August. Mr. Piersma will provide your students with a practice schedule. All practices and band camp are held at Otsego High School. Students are responsible for finding their way to and from band camp and practices. Make friends with other parents to help carpool!

Q. When does the Marching Band perform?

A. The band performs at all Otsego High School Home football games, the Allegan County Fair parade, and community parades. The competition schedule should be finalized by the end of the school year. Most competitions are held on Saturdays in late September and October.

Q. What is band camp?

A. Marching Band has one full week of band camp. Dates and times for the summer will be announced before the end of the previous calendar year. Band camp is dedicated to learning the music, drill, and marching fundamentals, as well as sectional time.

Q. What is the purpose of band camp?

A. Band camp is an opportunity for the band to become familiar with each other, their music, and formations. Various activities, such as a cookout, allow members of the band to bond with one another.

Q. Is band camp mandatory?

A. Yes, band camp is mandatory. The staff and students work VERY hard throughout these days. The students need to attend **ALL** sessions because this is when they bring together the music that they have been learning on their own before camp and the drill for their marching band show. Help to encourage your student to have their music memorized **BEFORE** camp starts!

Individual problems should be discussed in advance with the Band Directors.

Remember to accommodate band camp in your family's vacation plans this summer!

Q. Is band camp difficult?

A. The kids get quite a workout. Be prepared for plenty of sweating. It's an experience most of the kids "love to hate." Students must follow an appropriate dress code of – t-shirts, shorts, comfortable sneakers, hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Bring a water container – unlimited refills are available throughout the day – water is your best friend!

Q. What is the benefit of band camp?

A. One major benefit of band camp – when your freshman or new marching band student arrives for the first day of high school, he or she will already be a part of a well-respected group and will have a whole new group of friends (across all grades) to help with the transition into high school. Our band students look out for each other and especially for the new members.

Q. Are all practices and performances mandatory?

A. Yes. Each band member contributes a piece of the puzzle that is on display each week during our season. It is important to have all the pieces of the puzzle at rehearsal. Refer to the Band Handbook for attendance policy.

Q. Does attendance at games, parades, and festivals affect my child's band grade?

A. Yes, marching band is a co-curricular activity that extends from the classroom.

Q. How do the students get to the various performances?

A. Keeping track of 100+ band members is a large and difficult task. For this reason, the school provides busing for the band.

Q. How accurate is "Dismissal Time?" from performances?

A. While every effort is made to list accurate “Dismissal Times” so that you know when to pick up your student from OHS, there will be times, due to traffic or some other unforeseen problem, that the return will be delayed by a few minutes. Keep in mind, just because the bus has arrived doesn't mean that each student is done. Uniforms, equipment, and personal belongings all have to be put away before they can leave.

Q. Is there a communication chain?

A. Remind, Google Classroom, and Facebook are the best ways to communicate with the band director, staff, and other parents. We also use email to send out communications.

Q. Can parents attend the rehearsals and performances?

A. Parents are encouraged to attend any performances. Chaperones/Pit Crew helpers are needed for each event and Sign-ups will be available for this purpose. All volunteers traveling with the group and/or helping with the students will need to fill out the required OHS volunteer/background check forms each year and be approved.

Surviving Band Camp

Band camp is a place to have fun while learning to perform a marching show. While you are there to work and learn, it doesn't have to be torture.

Steps

1. Remember what to bring for rehearsal- i.e. water, instrument, etc. Make a checklist so you don't end up in a predicament.
2. Be on time. Timely arrivals show you want to commit to the program. Early is on time - On time is late!
3. Warm up before rehearsal. Chances are you haven't played or done a long rehearsal for a while.
4. Learn rehearsal and performance etiquette. Ask your section leader or band director if you're not sure about something. Good etiquette helps things flow smoothly and look professional.
5. Try your hardest. You will probably make faster friends and be respected more if you make a decent effort at marching and playing your instrument.
6. Be optimistic. Complaining or bellyaching is extremely annoying and unhelpful.
7. Make friends. Get to know your classmate, your section, whoever is sitting or standing next to you in formation, and anybody else that seems interesting. You have band and music in common already. but do not talk when you're setting up formations or going over your music.
8. Learn the show. Now is the time to practice. Practice as you would like to perform- learn your formations, work, music, rhythms, etc.

9. Take care of yourself. You'll perform better and feel better if you take care of your body. Marching band is a sport!
 - Stretch. Marching band can be demanding during the summer. You don't want to pull a muscle or injure yourself.
 - Wear sunscreen and a hat if you will be marching in the sun. That sunburn won't feel good tomorrow, and it'll spare you sock tans, glove tans, and drum harness tans (somewhat). Remember to reapply every 2 hours or so. Wear chapstick that protects against the sun. Sunburned lips are not fun to play an instrument with, especially for brass players.
 - Drink plenty of water. This means water or Gatorade/Powerade (see Warnings). Soda and juice will dehydrate you. Avoid drinking milk or eating dairy products. The heat will cause it to curdle in your stomach and make you nauseous. Get an insulated jug for water. Don't forget to clean and dry it after each day's practice, so it doesn't gunk up inside.
 - Eat healthy foods! Don't just eat a pop-tart for breakfast on your way out the door; marching a lot is a very physical activity, especially if it's for the entire day. Also remember to eat a healthy lunch. Fried foods aren't good for you anyway, but if you eat unhealthy fast food, you will regret it after marching.
 - Wear movable clothing and comfortable, athletic shoes. Dress appropriately for the weather and don't forget a jacket and gloves if it gets cold.
10. Learn how to wear your uniform and try it on. If you are unsure as an upperclassman or a Band Mom.
 - All hair **MUST** be up and under your helmet. No hair should ever be touching your collar. If you need help the Band Moms will help you.
 - If there is a time that you are instructed it is OK to eat in your uniform you **NEED** to have a towel or blanket to use to protect your uniform from spills.
 - Make sure that your shoes are kept clean and free of scuff marks.
 - Wash your gloves and if they become dirty the Uniform Moms can sell you a new pair.
11. Care for your instrument.
 - Insert the brass mouthpiece or woodwind part firmly enough that it doesn't fly out when snapped up and down.
 - Avoid getting a woodwind wet, especially the pads- they will fall off. If you are forced to march in the rain, close all holes/keys. Use your cleaning cloth to dry the instrument after each practice..
 - Oil your valves or slide before practice. It's much harder from mid-field.
 - For percussion, take the opportunity to learn from your drum instructor how to tie cymbals properly and how to replace and tune a drumhead.
 - Learn the proper way to set your instrument down: not on its keys or delicate valves. If you must set your instrument on the ground, set it with the others from your section in a formation. It's a nice flourish and shows off sectional spirit, and it might help save them from a careless foot.

Tips

- Smell good. Deodorant helps and should travel with you somewhere that you can get to it when getting out of a sweaty uniform, later. Remember to take showers after rehearsals!
- Keep a pencil in your instrument case to mark sheet music during practice. Guard people, sometimes a change will occur in your drill book
- Remember that everyone is at band camp to learn. If you're a newcomer, don't take it personally when an instructor gives advice. Remember, they're trying to help you look better in performance. If you're a returning member, help out newcomers and be patient with them. You learned once, too.
- If your water bottle is transparent, sometimes keeping it in a bag will keep it cool on a hot day; this keeps the sun from heating it up.
- Don't complain.

Warnings

- Woodwinds and brass should not play their instrument after eating or drinking sugary stuff (like Gatorade and Powerade). It's fine to have a snack during breaks, just make sure to wash it down with water.
- Never handle or play somebody else's instrument without permission. You will be held accountable if it breaks.
- Many people can overheat during band camp if it's hot outside. If you start to feel fatigued, dizzy, or nauseous, you may be suffering from heat exhaustion. Tell a section leader, drum major, or staff member immediately. Get to some shade and get some water if you think this is happening to you.
- Don't talk when the band director, staff, drum majors, or section leaders are talking. Not only will this make them mad, but it will distract people around you from what they're saying, which could be very important. If you need help finding your drill spot, quietly raise your hand and someone will gladly help you. Respect upperclassmen- chances are they're right and you're wrong.
- If you are given a drill sheet with your formations on it or music do not lose it, because you will probably get in trouble. Your whole section might have to run laps!
- After rain, dry your instrument as soon as you can.
- **Discipline.** Marching Band is very military-esque. When the director is speaking, you do not. When you need to snap to attention, you snap. Take it seriously, many skills that you learn in this activity can be applied to everyday life!
- **SLAY ~~~~**

Welcome to Concert Season

Concert/Symphonic Band

The Otsego Symphonic band members are chosen by audition. Symphonic Band is the OHS Premier performing ensemble with high expectations. The group practices and performs medium-advanced to advanced literature, skills, scales, and exercises. Symphonic Band members are eligible to be a member of the Pep Band or jazz Band (by audition), and participate in Solo and Ensemble festivals. The Symphonic Band participates in the State Band Festival as a longtime tradition.

The Otsego Concert band PreRequisites are MS Band, 6-8 Grades, and Marching Band 1st Trimester. Concert Band is offered 2nd and 3rd Trimesters to complete the entire year class commitment. The Concert Band performs and practices intermediate music and concentrates on intermediate fundamentals, scales, and exercises in class. Concert Band members are eligible to be a member of the Pep Band or jazz Band (by audition), and participate in Solo and Ensemble festivals.

MSBOA Concert/Symphonic Festival

Band and Orchestra Festival is an opportunity for ensembles from member schools 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. Each group is evaluated by three performance judges and one sight-reading judge.

Ensembles are rated on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 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 1 rating (or "Superior") are qualified for the State Band & Orchestra Festival which is held in late April or early May. The structure of the State Band & Orchestra Festival is: ensembles perform for three concert adjudicators whose ratings determine the final rating followed by a clinic provided by a State Band and Orchestra Festival Clinician. The concert standard at the State Band and Orchestra Festival is higher than the District Band and Orchestra Festival. Participating ensembles that earn a rating of 1 or 2 at District or State Festivals receive a certificate and are eligible to purchase plaques for display at their school and medals for each student.

SYMPHONIC/CONCERT BAND WORDS TO KNOW

SUPERIOR	The rating is comparable to the grade of “A”. This rating reflects the finest conceivable performance for the event and class of participants being evaluated – worthy of the distinction of being recognized as among the very best.
EXCELLENT	The rating is comparable to a grade of “B”. This rating reflects an unusually high level of performance in many respects, but one not worthy of the highest rating due to minor defects. Yet it is a performance of distinctive quality. The ensemble receiving this rating usually shows the results of sound fundamental training, but the performance lacks the polish and finesse to qualify for a Superior rating.
GOOD	The rating would be comparable to a grade of “C”. This rating is awarded for a good performance, but one that is not outstanding. It shows accomplishment and marked promise and potential but is lacking in one or more essential qualities.
FAIR	This rating is comparable to a grade of “D”, and describes a performance that shows obvious weaknesses. These MAY reflect instrumentation problems or lack of rehearsal time but generally represent a performance that is weak or uncertain – containing numerous errors and revealing basic flaws in most of the fundamental factors.
POOR	This rating indicates a performance that reveals much room for improvement. The director of such a group should evaluate his/her methods of teaching and compare them to those of directors who achieve higher ratings with their bands.
Disqualified (DQ)	The performing organization did not follow the rules established for the assessment event in some respect.
Comments Only (CO)	New directors or new performing organizations sometimes choose to receive comments only to assist their students in improving their skills.

Ensembles are judged in five categories: TONE, INTONATION, RHYTHM, TECHNIQUE and INTERPRETATION. Each of these categories receives a letter grade similar to students’ grades in school. A predominance of grades determines the final rating. The final ratings of each performance judge and the sight-reading are combined to determine the final rating.

WHAT DOES EACH DIVISION RATING MEAN?

Division I represents an excellent level of performance and musicianship for the event.

Division II represents a good performance but is not worthy of the highest rating due to minor defects in performance or ineffective interpretation. Shows much accomplishment and promise.

Division III represents a fair performance, but not outstanding. Shows accomplishment and promise, but is lacking in some essential qualities.

Division IV represents a poor performance lacking in many essential qualities.

Division V represents an unsatisfactory performance.

Concert Season Terminology

- ★ SCORING - Ensembles are rated on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest rating possible. The overall score is computed using a formula that combines the ratings of each judge.
- ★ MSBOA - Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association
- ★ Tone - refers to the quality and beauty of the sound the ensemble produces
- ★ Intonation - refers to how well in tune the ensemble performs
- ★ Rhythm - refers to the accuracy with which rhythms are performed as an ensemble
- ★ Technique - refers to how each ensemble performs their music with regard to fingering, bowing, etc.
- ★ Interpretation - refers to the musical elements such as dynamics, phrasing, style, tempo, and expression.
- ★ Sight Reading - After each ensemble's performance of their prepared music, they will go to the sight reading room. The ensemble will have 5 minutes to look at a piece of music they have never seen. During this time, students may not play their instruments. After the 5 minutes are up, the ensemble must then perform the piece and are rated based on the same criteria used for the concert portion of the festival. The sight-reading portion is not allowed to be recorded.

Solo & Ensemble

SOLO & ENSEMBLE An annual event that takes place throughout the country in which students prepare their performances either by themselves or with a small group of friends.

Instrumentalists may participate in no more than one solo and two ensembles on a given (singular) instrument for an assessment rating. Instrumentalists are not required to perform from memory in either a solo or small ensemble event. Each event must provide an original copy of the performance selection (with the measures numbered) for the judge. Solo and Ensemble events are subject to a six-minute time limit for solos and small ensembles playing one selection.

Each student or group of students is evaluated by one judge and rated on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the highest rating possible. Students or groups that earn a rating of 1 (or "Superior") are qualified for the State Solo & Ensemble Festival which is held in March. The basic structure of State Solo & Ensemble Festival is the same as District, but the students are held to a higher standard. Soloists in grades 10 through 12 must perform Proficiency Exams which include scales and sight reading. Students and ensembles that are chosen for the Michigan Youth Arts Festival Honors Band, Orchestra, Soloists, and Ensembles come from the highest-rated events at the State Festival. Participating students who earn a rating of 1 or 2 at District or State Festivals are eligible to receive medals.

Rehearsals

WORDS TO KNOW

Private Lessons: Private lessons on a musical instrument are the best way to improve performance skills. The one-on-one approach allows the student to benefit from individual attention..

How can I support my student musician?

Many parents of first-time band students wonder how they can support their students, especially during the first year when it's easy to get frustrated with your instrument.

- Create a supportive environment at home: Getting started in High School band can sometimes be tough, and students need time and space to practice at home to get the most out of their instrument. Find a quiet place at home for your student to practice without distractions. Accessories like a music stand and a metronome can help them get the most out of their practice sessions.
- Set realistic goals: Help your student set realistic goals. Establishing small but achievable musical milestones will help your student feel accomplished and keep progressing forward. Do not wait until the last minute to start learning music, being consistent is key.
- Attend performances: By attending performances, you're showing your students that you're interested and supportive. Attending performances also allows you to see exactly how your student is progressing within the context of a full band.
- Get involved: Connect with your student's band boosters for opportunities to volunteer with or otherwise support your school music program, or learn about other ways to support your student's individual growth.