

To parents and guardians of the Escanaba Middle School Band students,

WELCOME! The EMS Band Program is ready for some fabulous music-making and very cool experiences. Did you know there are over 250 students in the MS bands? WOW! You and your student's involvement is very important to me and I want you to know that I am committed to enriching your student's life through music, as well as helping them feel confident, responsible, and successful.

As parents, your support for the band program is essential. It shows you care about your student's interests, and that you know the value of a quality music experience. Music is a life-long subject unlike anything else and its study can add meaning and value to your student's life.

I believe the EMS Band Program is the foundation of the Escanaba Band Department. The more we work together, the stronger the program. **Please look over this short handbook, COMPLETE THE PARENT FORM, and PUT THE CALENDAR OF EVENTS IN A SAFE PLACE.** I look forward to hearing, seeing, and working with you and your student this year.

Laura A. Robinson

Director

Laura A. Robinson
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Items needed for class:

*Instrument

Essential Elements 1 (for 6th graders)

Essential Elements 2 (for 7th & 8th graders)

*Reeds or mouthpiece or drumsticks (Vic Firth is a good brand)

*Pencil

Good Attitude & Respect

A box of kleenex or small paper cups (we go through more than any other class)

I also welcome any home baked goods, extra venison, and movie suggestions...YES! I am teasing a bit. Humor helps us all survive. My saying to the students is "You're as happy as you want to be..."

Attendance

Becoming a member of the EMS Band Program means you understand you will attend the required events. This includes daily rehearsals, especially on the day of concerts! Concerts are like the marking period final exam, and A TON OF FUN! Missing students effect all the other students and makes the band sound strange, and not in a good way. In band, every student is important and matters. Students who don't plan to attend the performances or families that won't bring their students to the performances should not be in band. Situations such as illness or a death in the family will be addressed on an individual basis. If there is ever a concern about a performance PLEASE CALL ME ASAP. The sooner I know of potential conflicts or issues, the better solutions we can work out for your student.

Be sure to check with Ms. Robinson if you miss a class. Assignments will be posted on Powerschool, too. If you know you'll be missing class, tell Ms. Robinson ahead of time.

PLEASE CHECK THE CONCERT CALENDAR before planning vacations, DENTAL WORK, or other events that take a student out of school, especially when dealing with BRACES. Ms. Robinson wore them for four years so she knows all about it...Braces take a little getting used to, but they will NOT affect your playing ability.

Concert Outfits

To establish a uniform, professional looking group, students will wear:

Gentlemen: black pants, white shirts (with a collar and tie of your choice!), black socks, and black shoes.

Ladies: black pants/skirts (no mini skirts), white or black top. Please be modest and follow the school dress code meaning no spaghetti straps, see through items, or bare stomachs. A nice black dress is fine, too. Black shoes—please no high heels or flip-flops. This is a safety issue.

Please contact me if you have any questions of need assistance.

**We have a great Concert Closet for students who would like to borrow some very nice dress clothes. This is a Parent as Partners project and we're always taking donations of concert clothing, especially for boys. We are in great need of black shoes/socks.

Extra Opportunities

EMS also has an afterschool Jazz Band program, Solo & Ensemble Festival, Michigan All State Middle School Band, and private lessons, to name a few. These opportunities will be discussed in class and information will be sent home for parents.

When thinking about buying your own instruments, give me a call and I can help you with the process.

Students who participate in fundraising/class projects and are enrolled for band the following school year are eligible to receive scholarships to attend summer band camps and private lessons.

Policies

There are just a few policies for the EMS Band Program.

Daily Rehearsals: Our time is short and valuable. Total cooperation is needed so we can have all sorts of amazing experiences. All students will be actively participating during class and must have their instrument, music, pencil, and good attitude. Students earn points for each day they are prepared. Occasionally there may be an “oops”, but if there are constant issues, the class grade may be affected and parents may be contacted. It’s hard to play in band without a horn or music....duh.

Appropriate behavior and progress is expected and rewarded. YES! Rewarded! We will discuss this in class. **Here is what appropriate behavior is: bring required items, arrive on time, warm up quickly and respectfully, be ready for rehearsal both mentally and physically, percussionists set up any equipment required for the day, listen to you, the band, and the teacher, do not play when someone is talking, clean up and put things in their proper place at the end of class, learn something everyday, and HAVE FUN.** Inappropriate behavior will be brought to the student’s attention. Serious issues will result in the student being removed from class, parents being contacted, meeting with the director, and possibly meeting with the principal.

All students have assigned cabinets to store their equipment and music.

Instruments not working correctly should be brought to Ms. Robinson ASAP. If she is unable to repair it, she will contact the family with the recommended repair and procedure.

Reeds, grease, oil, and other supplies can be purchased from local music stores or on line.

Accountability (how you earn your grade)

Since every student is unique and special, there are many ways to earn points in band. Here are the ways we earn points:

1. Announced play checks from the Essential Element Book or music in the folders. Checks are worth 12 points. Should a student have a “bad day” and do poorly on a play check, the check can be redone. It is the student’s responsibility to schedule the “redo” with Ms. Robinson. All “redo’s “ must be completed one week prior to the end of the marking period.
2. Music worksheets (done in class or as homework)
3. Daily participation (on time to class with horn, music, pencil, agenda book, and good attitude) 5pts per day
4. Marking period specials. This is a wild card project that will be explained in class. Some of our projects have included building a castle, creating rain sticks, creating videos/movies, composing a song, researching a composer or country.
5. Concert Performance-20pts
6. Concert evaluation-24 pts
7. Extra credit-students can attend concerts, perform at church or another place, or do a special project. A one page written review of the concert attended is all that is needed. All extra credit is due the week prior to the end of the marking period.

Procedures

To start class all students enter the stage area through the rear stage doors with the correct materials and are seated in their assigned seat within three minutes of the class start time. Daily lessons will be on the board on the front of the stage. Careful warm-up is required. We don't want cracked reeds or pulled lip muscles. Blasting and banging are NOT good warm-ups and won't be tolerated...EVER! Roll is taken by sections with Ms. Robinson visually checking as we go through each section. Section leaders may be appointed.

To end class students will have three minutes to pack up and put their equipment away. Ms. Robinson will verbally dismiss the group with a "Have a great Day".

School and team policies will be strictly followed.

Should a student need to leave the rehearsal for any reason they must have their school agenda book.

Should a student be unable to participate in class, they must see Ms. Robinson prior to the start of class. A doctor note or parent note may be requested.

Again, check the calendar for the concerts and keep this in mind when planning vacations, dental work, or other events that would conflict with our performance.

Please email or call if you know your student will be out of class. Informing the team does not mean anyone else will be informed.

My joke collection is always in need of updating. Feel free to contribute, just keep them clean.

The band equipment room (133) has practice rooms which are available from 7am- advisory, during advisory with permission, and after school, as long as there is a teacher in the area. Students are encouraged to use this time for extra help, extra practice, practicing with friends, or working on special projects. The stage may also be used, if it is available.

Finally, practice is essential for any student to improve musically. Without regular practice, students may struggle or even decline in ability. All EMS students are expected to practice not only to learn their music, but also to improve as individual musicians. Practicing takes a lot of self-motivation and discipline. Use common sense when practicing. Know what to practice and be efficient when practicing. Horns may be kept at school during the week, but should be taken home over the weekend for practice. It's amazing what an extra 15 minutes on a Saturday and Sunday can do for a musician. If a student is unable to take an instrument home on a weekend, try to use the practice areas at school to help.

Calendar of Events for 2009-2010

SAVE ME! PUT ME IN A SAFE PLACE

(items **BOLDED** are **required** and the rest are optional opportunities)

September 25	Last day to register for an All State Audition
October 1	Saykly Candy Sale begins
October 5	Jazz Band Information available (audition and rehearsal information included-late Oct)
October 7	8 th grade band students attend special event in Menominee (students will leave at 9:40am and return 2:00pm)
October 27	7th Grade Band Concert 7pm
October 29	8th Grade Band Concert 7pm
November 9	Saykly Candy Order Packing Party 3:30PM-5PM
November 20	Last Day to register for Solo & Ensemble Festival
December 8	7th & 8th Grade Concert 7:00 PM
December 10	6th Grade Band/Orchestra Concert 7pm
January 21-23	All State Middle School Band in Grand Rapids
February 6	Solo & Ensemble Festival at EHS
March 2	8th Grade Band Pre-Festival Concert 7PM
March 3 or 4	8th Grade Bands attend Band Festival in Marquette. Times will be announced in January. This is a huge event and every student is critical so please keep these days reserved for your student.
March 16	7th Grade Band Concert 7pm
April 16	Jazz Band attends NMU Jazz Festival in Marquette (all day)
April 21	Jazz Band concert at High School 7pm
April 29	6th Grade Band/Orchestra Concert 7pm
May 20	8th Grade Band Concert 7pm
May 25	7th Grade Band Concert 7pm

The Parent Form!

Student/Parent/Teacher Agreement

We, both student and parents, have read, understand, and will abide by the standards stated in this handbook. We will also make arrangements for the student to attend all required Band performances. Only with the approval from the band parents and the directors, in the case of school or family emergency or illness, can a student be excused from a band obligation.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Ms. Robinson.

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I have read and understand the above information.

Student's signature _____ date _____

Parent signature _____ date _____

Please contact the parent if: (check all those that apply)

does not turn in assignments

consistently forgets instrument or required equipment

disturbs rehearsal

if horn breaks and needs to go in for repairs

Best way to contact parent: EMAIL CELL HOME PHONE US MAIL

Parent email (if used regularly) _____

Parent phone number you prefer I use _____

Does your student have any allergies, especially food allergies?

I need parent help for a few projects. Please check any you can assist with and I will confirm those events with you via email unless otherwise indicated. If other events come up, I will send notes home for you.

tabulating Saykly Candy order forms-mid Oct

Packing up Saykly Candy orders-Nov9

Chaperone 8th Grade trip to Menominee-Oct 7

Chaperone 8th Grade Band Festival trip to Marquette-I usually need at least 10 parents, help with loading/unloading equipment, and someone willing to drive their own vehicle ...just in case.

Chaperone Jazz Band trip to Marquette April 16

All jobs are for the February 7th Solo & Ensemble Festival

Introduce performers

Supervise a warm-up Room

Help provide Luncheon to Judges, Directors

Make cookies or bars for the concession stand

Accompany students on piano

Donation of \$5 to help with expenses

