

Bennington High School Band Handbook

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Welcome to the Bennington High School Band Program! It is our sincerest hope that this year will be productive, successful and fun!

EXPECTATIONS

1. To have respect for yourself and others.
2. To be regular and prompt with attendance.
3. To be honest.
4. To cooperate with fellow band members and share responsibilities and privileges.
5. To contribute positively to your education and to the band by working hard at all times.
 6. To strive constantly to improve yourself musically.
 7. To grow personally through your experience in music.
 8. To have pride in yourself, your school, and your band.

The Bennington Band is a group of people working hard to achieve common goals. At all times, we must work **TOGETHER** to “be your best at all times!”

EARNING GRADES IN THE HIGH SCHOOL BAND

Students are graded on formative and summative assessments throughout the year. Weekly check-offs will gauge understanding of class material and performances serve as summative events. Check-offs are able to be retaken for full points until the end of the grading cycle. However, practicing must be evident between retakes.

ASSESSMENT IN BAND

Assessment in music education is done by the use of a rubric when performing at an adjudicated event and during regular check-offs, as prescribed by the director. The categories evaluated in both areas are posture, tone quality, pitch/rhythmic accuracy, articulation, dynamics, pitch, and phrasing. The degree to which these components are exemplified relates to the earned score, broken down by advanced, proficient, progressing, and beginning. These same components are used in the rehearsal process to determine whether or not a piece is performance-ready. These components also form the basis for individual instruction and identifying what areas a student needs to improve.

BAND PERSONNEL AND DUTIES

The **band leadership team** shall consist of drum majors and section leaders. These students apply in the spring for inclusion or may be appointed in special cases. The leadership team will work closely with the director to enhance communication and efficiency of the band program. They will meet regularly to help with all aspects of the band program.

Leadership team members are to help fellow band students perform their music and marching skills to the best of their abilities. These individuals must display a high level of musicianship and have the ability to lead their section while maintaining a positive rapport. **Section leaders** are responsible for music sectionals, record-keeping, attendance, uniform inspections, and assisting the band director within their sections. If students are not acting in a manner worthy of their title, conversations will occur with the director in regards to future leadership team inclusion, and in severe cases determined by the director, expulsion from the team.

Our **drum major(s)** assist the band director during field performances and rehearsals. They are expected to demonstrate leadership skills at all times. They are expected to use intelligence and common sense to maintain control and deal with fellow band members in a confident, tactful, fair, yet authoritative manner.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at regularly scheduled rehearsals and performances is required for membership in the band program. Many of the graded performances/rehearsals in band occur outside of the school day. By registering for band, the student is committing to outside-of-school time necessary for a successful program. The attendance policies stated in this handbook will be adhered to strictly. Absences are permitted only in the event of personal illness, weddings, and funerals in the immediate family or unavoidable emergencies. Remember to email Mr. Fonda at cfonda@bennps.org with any absence *at least 48 hours beforehand*. The director has the final discretion to determine whether or not an absence will be excused.

Students with an excused absence will be able to make-up full points and unexcused absences will be able to make-up 70% of points by performing the missed music for a director and/or members of the leadership team. Students not physically at the performance will only be able to make-up grade points, not letter points.

For early morning rehearsals during the marching season, students are expected to be on the field, ready to play *by 7:30am* each day during the marching season. These rehearsals are necessary in order to prepare for contests. For each instance of four accumulated tardies, the student will spend time after-school to become eligible to march with the band at games/contests.

ATHLETIC CONFLICTS WITH MARCHING BAND CONTESTS

As in the past, we will make every effort to try and work out conflicts with the athletic schedules. Conflicts will be worked out between coaches and directors. Students will be instructed on agreements. Starting Varsity athlete conflicts will be handled on an individual basis with Mr. Fonda, coaches, and Mr. Lamberty. Please inform Mr. Fonda if you are involved in a potential athletic conflict and let your coaches know of your conflicts with band contests as soon as possible.

TARDIES

The most important part of attendance is being on time! You must arrive early in order to be on time! This means that you should have your instrument ready and be in position on the field or in the classroom *before* the start of rehearsal. It is disrespectful to the rest of the band members when integral parts of the group are missing due to tardiness. It is crucial that we utilize every minute to better ourselves for performance and competitions. On the fourth tardy, students will spend time after school with Mr. Fonda to practice their music. Students will not be eligible to participate with the band at contests/concerts until the make-up time is served. Multiple instances of time after school could result in suspension from performances.

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SCHOOL

Bennington provides many instruments that are too costly for most families to purchase, but are necessary in order to have a balanced sound. At this time, we are one of the few schools that doesn't require students to pay rent for using a school owned instrument. Students are to purchase the items necessary for keeping these instruments in good condition. Should an instrument become damaged, please notify Mr. Fonda immediately. It will be the student's responsibility to pay for the repairs and the instrument will be assessed regularly. Instrument loan forms must be turned in if students are to use a school owned instrument.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Students will be required to purchase shoes during their freshman year and a show shirt each season to wear under the uniform. Color Guard and percussion will have different requirements on purchasing, as directed by the instructors. While we receive most of our support through the school district, we need to supplement our budget through fundraising projects. We have a great group of parents working tirelessly to help us raise money. These efforts are guided by the Music Booster organization. It is highly recommended that the parents of all of the band students participate in this organization. Please contact Mr. Fonda with more information, we would love to have you on board!

PERCUSSION EXPECTATIONS

For marching band, BHS will provide one flam head for each snare drum. The individual player of that instrument will pay for broken heads. Bass Drum and Tenor Drum players will be equipped with adequate heads. The individual player of those instruments will pay for broken heads. Students will be required to own a pair of practice sticks, as well as performance sticks for the marching season. Musician ear plugs are highly recommended for marching battery players. During the concert season, students are required to purchase mallets, sticks, and a bag. School-owned instruments, accessories, and sticks must be taken care of and it is the responsibility of the student to replace them if they break unnecessarily.

COLOR GUARD EXPECTATIONS

Members of the Color Guard will be expected to audition every year. Attendance policies as stated earlier will also apply to the Color Guard, as the group is within the band. Only students in band during the spring semester may audition for Color Guard. Students participating in Color Guard must be a member of the band in the fall. New members will be required to purchase shoes, leggings, gloves, and other supplies. Each year, students will be required to purchase a show-specific costume. As this is an auditioned section, please audition only if these conditions are agreeable under your circumstances and the agreement form is signed.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR UNIQUE ISSUES

The Bennington administration and band director expect our students involved in activities to represent us well. Whether they are in or out of uniform, they are representing themselves, the band program, the school, and the community. All participating students should conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the guidelines for behavior that are stated in the BHS student handbook. Parents and students should be aware of the school eligibility rules and make sure that those rules are understood. Should a student become involved in a situation that may jeopardize his or her ability to participate, it is strongly recommended that the student notify the sponsor and the administration right away.

CANDY, GUM, POP, SNACKS, ETC.

Candy, gum, pop, snacks of any kind are not allowed in the band room unless they have been approved for a specific occasion. This is true of the entire band area, including practice rooms. This is more than just a regulation for the good of instruments and the condition of the band facility, it is a trust issue. The band director must be able to trust the band membership that they are upholding this expectation. It shows the band in a poor light when there are candy wrappers etc. on the floor. We want to show pride in what has been given to the program.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Public display of affection are in poor taste, embarrassing, and not permitted. The band director has the discretion to determine what is not allowed.

SNACKS AND BEVERAGES WHILE IN UNIFORM

Because uniforms are expensive, it is not permitted to eat or drink while in full uniform. Stains can be permanent. Water is the only exception. There will be time scheduled for unformed events to allow for snacking.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones provide a distraction both to the students using them and those around them. It is the director's responsibility to keep track of time and release students from rehearsal. If a director sees a cell phone out during a rehearsal, the cell phone will be held in the main office until the end of the day. By signing this document, students and parents agree to these terms. The only exception to this is during the marching season when students are asked to look at their drill, as well as during concert band tuning time.

ACCESSORIES

It is the student's responsibility to purchase needed items to keep their instrument in proper working order. All of the music stores carry maintenance kits, reeds, oils, grease, polish cloths, swabs, etc. This applies to school-owned instruments as well personally owned instruments. Items will not be available for purchase at school. You may contact Mr. Fonda for an order form.

LESSONS

Every student has access to private instruction through the Bennington band program. To schedule a lesson, just ask Mr. Fonda! Lessons occur before and after school. There are also a great number of very good private instructors in the metro area. Students should avail themselves to private lessons whenever possible. Private instruction is a great way to develop your skills at an accelerated pace with a professional player. If students intend to excel in solo/ensemble, honor bands, and all-state, a private instructor is highly recommended. Visit our website to view a list of private instructors.

BUS AND TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

When buses have been provided for band travel, all band members will ride the bus both to and from the event. Adjustments to this can be made only if the student's parent contacts Mr. Fonda in advance. On the day of the event, a parent may take his or her child home with them.

Students must be signed out with Mr. Fonda or a parent chaperone before they are released. When a time is given to load/leave for trips and a student is not present, the band must proceed on time. Please arrive early to avoid this circumstance.

CONCERTS

Concerts are scheduled as an extension of the classroom experience. Live performance is an important part of the class. These concerts serve as a major part of the testing and assessment process. It is not possible to give a make-up assignment that is similar to a live performance. For this reason, attendance at concerts and performances is mandatory. Call time for performances is typically 30 to 45 minutes ahead of the performance. Plan accordingly so that you can be in your seat, instrument ready, all accessories ready at warm-up time. We will warm up, tune and make whatever announcements need to be made at that time.

Most concerts will last approximately one hour. Students are expected to stay for the entire concert and watch any other performers. We encourage audience members to also be polite to the performers by staying for the entire concert.

UNIFORMS

A formal uniform will be assigned to each student prior to the first marching contest. At the end of the year, the uniform will be checked in and prepared for cleaning. Marching shoes should be taken home before the uniform is sent in for cleaning. The school district will pay for the end-of-the-year cleaning. If the uniform becomes soiled before the final wearing, it will be the student's responsibility to have the uniform cleaned. It is not permitted to trade uniform parts with other band members. It is important that this inventory be accurately kept as it is both large and costly. The band department maintains a storage room for the uniforms. This is the only place you may store your uniform. Do not go into the uniform room without approval.

Your uniform must be properly hung on a heavy hanger, and placed in the provided garment bag during storage. At no time should material be cut from a uniform. Should an accident occur and the uniform become damaged, report the damage to Mr. Fonda immediately so that the necessary steps can be taken to repair the damage or replace the suit. Should a student damage the suit through abuse or neglect, they will be responsible for the replacement of the portions that are damaged/missing, or the entire suit.

No jewelry is to be worn while in uniform. In order to ensure uniformity in the group, nail polish, and other individual accessorizing is prohibited. Any student who has hair that extends beyond the earlobe will be expected to tie their hair up and fit it into their hat. Shoes may be left in the shoe pouch on the back of the garment bag during the school year, so long as you remember to take them home after the final concert. You should label your shoes on the tongue. Students will wear black socks and the marching shoes whenever there is a formal

event. Uniforms will be inspected prior to every formal event. Students must have the uniform in proper order to be able to perform.

CONCERT BAND

Band is a one year course. You must have previous experience in instrumental music, or permission from the director to enroll. Transfer students must have a placement hearing in order to determine the proper part assignments for that student. Concert band begins as soon as marching season has concluded.

PEP BAND

Pep band serves as an ambassador for the school district. It's presence at sporting events makes the atmosphere at that event more lively and helps to boost school spirit. Because the pep band is in the public eye, band members will be required to attend pep band performances. Band members who are varsity athletes will be excused from playing at the events in which their sporting team is the competing group, however, they would not earn band letter points for each occasion. All students participate in pep band and is a major part of their final grade. By enrolling in band, you are agreeing to perform with the band at athletic functions.

TRAVELING PEP BAND FOR PLAYOFF GAMES

The pep band may have the opportunity to travel to playoff games for Volleyball and Basketball. The first playoff game that qualifies is District Championships. Should the team win that game, or qualify for the State Championships through a wild card seed, the band will travel to the opening round and continue to perform at games for as long as the team continues to win. The pep band will not perform at consolation games. Students who have an unexcused pep band absence will not be allowed to travel for these games.

PART ASSIGNMENTS

The director reserves the right to place students where he believes that student will most benefit the group. Students will be assigned parts that could vary between pieces. This provides an opportunity for the band to be balanced and for students to experience a variety of parts playing with a variety of different players.

AWARDS

Letters are earned by students in conjunction with all events that require extra effort beyond the classroom. The lettering point sheet is attached. The **John Philip Sousa Award**, is given

each year to the graduating senior who has accumulated the most letter points over his/her HS band career.