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Eighth Grade Band Handbook 2023-2024



Preface

This handbook serves the Union Eighth Grade Band members and their parents by providing information regarding the purpose, procedures, expectations, and activities of the band program. All band students and parents are expected to read the entire handbook carefully to avoid conflicts with the policies stated herein.

Participating in the Union Band Program is a privilege, honor, and responsibility. Union Bands has an extraordinary tradition of excellence and pride. Our parents, administrators, faculty, and school board are committed and dedicated to a quality band program. We look forward to your participation and future in that tradition.

Philosophy of Instrumental Music

Union Bands is committed to “Cultivating a Culture of Artistry, Excellence, and Community.” Music develops self-confidence, teaches discipline, and provides students the opportunity for pride and accomplishment. Participating in band teaches students the importance of teamwork and helps develop the social skills necessary for success. Instrumental music engages students in group activity and helps instill values of responsibility, purpose, direction, devotion to duty, spirit of cooperation, and sensitivity to beauty. Not all band students become great musicians, but hopefully all will become more mature, cooperative, self-disciplined, and hard working members of society with an appreciation of the arts. Music affects one’s entire personality including intellectual, physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and social. We believe our program is structured with student achievement as its focus in helping prepare each student for graduation college and/or career ready.

Band Descriptions

Union Eighth Grade offers participation in two classes of Symphonic Band. Each group functions as an important part of the Union Bands’ comprehensive student and program development. Bands are divided into separate groups in order to meet the individual needs of each student and ensemble. Membership is determined by the Union Bands faculty to ensure student and program success. Changes in band assignment, during the year, are at the discretion of the band faculty and administration.

Please Note

- There are addendum pages to this handbook that require a parent/guardian signature and are due by Thursday, September 15th and should be completed online.
- Students in 8th grade band will be assessed a **general band fee** (\$65) and a **trip fee** (not to exceed \$300) for the trip to Kansas City in the Spring. The General Band fee and Trip fees will be assessed via Charms. All due fees must be paid by the due dates listed on your CHARMS financial statement. Many fundraising opportunities are available. Please frequent www.unionbands.com/fundraising to sign up and participate.

Classroom Rules

RESPECT—MENTAL FOCUS—MAXIMUM EFFORT—PRIDE

1. Look at the director when they are teaching/talking.
2. Be in your seat with all materials and ready to rehearse on time.
3. Focus on the rehearsal and what is being learned.
4. Do not talk during rehearsal. If you have a question, raise your hand (like you mean it).
5. Be prepared for rehearsal.
6. Practice your part. You are part of a team, do your part. Others are counting on you!
7. Work well with others! Treat your faculty and peers with kindness and respect. There will be no tolerance for theft, fighting, profanity, vandalism, hazing, or bullying. Do everything the "Union Way."
8. No food, drink (except water), gum, "hanging out," or running in the band room or hall. Take pride in your amazing multi-million dollar facility. We are fortunate at Union! Exhibit an "Attitude of Gratitude."
9. Only band students are allowed in the band room.
10. Instruments go home every night. Practice is essential to our success. Likewise, you must bring your instrument back to class every day in order to participate and be successful.
11. Band lockers are for musical instruments and music folders/materials only. You are responsible for your assigned band locker and lock. Your band locker must be locked every day. No exceptions!
12. Every member of the Union Band shall conduct themselves properly at all school events. We strive to portray a positive image. The character you display has a great effect on the spirit, pride, and reputation of our school and band program. You are not just representing yourself. Being on a team has both great rewards and responsibility; take both seriously.
13. Communicate effectively and promptly regarding concerns, issues, and conflicts with scheduled events.

Grading

8th grade band grades are determined based on the following:

Daily Participation/Attitude Grades (20%)—Students must bring pencil, music, instrument (in working order), and necessary equipment to class each day and be ready to begin on time with a positive, teachable spirit.

Practice Assignments (15%)—Practice assignments will be announced in class and may be submitted online or performed live in class at the director's discretion.

Test Grades/Written Assignments/Projects (25%)—Students will be held accountable for their performance proficiency and preparation. Test grades may be performance-based or written in nature. Test administration is at the discretion of the directors.

Performances (30%) —This includes all concerts, contests, pep bands, assemblies, etc. of which attendance is mandatory. It is best to assume all performances are mandatory and will affect each student's grade.

Final Exam (10%) - A final exam grade will be assessed at the end of each semester.

Eligibility Guidelines/Requirements

The Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association (OSSAA) governs participation in some competitive elements of our program. Therefore, any student not passing all classes for two consecutive weeks will be considered ineligible and unable to participate in OSSAA sanctioned events. This does not apply to non-competitive concerts and performances, daily class rehearsals, or Out of State Contests and activities since these are an extension of the classroom or not sanctioned by OSSAA.

That being said, all students have a responsibility to themselves, their peers, and the organization/team to pass all of their classes at all times to remain eligible for all performances and activities in which the Union Band is involved. Each student plays a vital role in band and we are dependent on each other for success. It is our experience that most students who are failing a class are simply not turning in their work/ assignments.

Prior to major contests, students may be removed from the ensemble to individually practice during class rehearsal time. This removal may be based on academic, financial, or behavioral ineligibility. This will allow the ensemble to rehearse with the correct instrumentation. If an ineligible student provides appropriate documentation releasing them from ineligibility, they may be allowed to return to the ensemble to rehearse and perform/compete.

Equipment

Student Instruments:

Your instrument is extremely valuable. Take care of it to maintain its value. If repairs are needed, check with your director before taking it to the shop. Never try to repair your instrument yourself. Your instrument case must have a completed nametag on the case handle or bumper sticker on the case. No one other than the owner should ever play their instrument.

School Owned Instrument:

Students who play school owned instruments should treat them as they would their own instrument. These are usually very expensive instruments. Students must always report any damage and repair(s) needed immediately. Student are financially responsible for any damage done to a school owned instrument while in their care. Damage done intentionally or due to negligence to a school owned instrument is considered vandalism and may in the loss of privilege of using any school owned instrument. School owned equipment requires a signed contract to be on file with the band department each year.

Instrument Lockers:

Each student is assigned a band locker and band lock. The assigned lock must remain with the assigned locker and be locked at all times. Never put your lock on the ground or on anyone else's locker. Lost, misplaced, or stolen locks are the student's financial responsibility and are \$5 to replace. Personal locks may not be used on a band locker.

Music, Books, and Binders:

Show the proper respect and care for your materials. All markings on music and books must be done in pencil. Students are financially responsible for replacing lost or damaged music, books, or binders.

Chairs and Stands:

The chairs in the band room are for sitting only. Please keep all four legs on the floor and do not lean back in the chair. The chairs are arranged specifically to accommodate both ensembles. Only directors and faculty are allowed to move chairs from the rows at any time. Music stands are for holding music only. Please do not lean or write on any music stand.

Supplies

- Instrument
- Accessories (mouthpiece, reeds, valve oil, slide oil, cleaning cloth, etc.)
- Pencil
- Tonal Energy or equivalent phone tuning/metronome app

The following items are included in the band student fee and will be provided in class:

- Black 3-ring 1" binder with sheet protectors and accessory pouch.
- Required method book(s) and sheet music
- Band T-shirt and pencil
- Guest Clinician(s)

Performance Calendar

Please mark your calendars now for these required performances. Failure to attend any performance will affect a student's grade and result in an evaluation of the student's standing in the program.

What:

U8 B2S Band Orientation
8th Grade Night (HS Varsity FB)
Winter Concert
NBDA Auditions
NBDA Clinic/Concert
MS Band Festival—**Tentative**
OSSAA MS Band Contest—**Tentative**
Percussion Showcase
Union Solo/Ens Festival
Spring Concert
Kansas City Band Trip
8th Grade Fine Arts Pep Assembly

When:

Thursday, August 31, 2023—7:30pm
Friday, October 13, 2023—5:30PM
Monday, December 11, 2023—7:00pm
Saturday, January 27, 2024—8am
Friday-Saturday, February 16-17, 2024
Tues, Mar 5, 2024 & Thurs, Mar 7, 2024
Thursday, March 14, 2024
Thursday, May 2, 2024—7pm
Friday, May 3, 2024
Thursday, May 9, 2024—7pm
Friday-Saturday, May 10-11, 2024
TBA

Where:

U8 Band Room
HS Band Room
Union HS Performing Arts Center
Union HS
Union HS Performing Arts Center
Union HS Performing Arts Center
Owasso High School
Union HS Performing Arts Center
Union 6/7 Fine Arts Wing
Union HS Performing Arts Center
Kansas City, MO
U8 Gym

Performance Attire

8th grade band students are required to wear a performance uniform. Please begin acquiring concert attire now to avoid last minute problems. Students must wear the uniform in its entirety in order to perform.

Ladies: Solid Black

Black Dress Pants/3/4 length Black Dress Shirt
OR Floor-length Black Dress

Black matte finish dress shoes

Gentlemen: Solid Black

Black Dress Pants with Black Dress shirt, tucked.
Black Belt

Black matte finish shoes AND black socks

*All performance attire must be entirely BLACK including the buttons on shirts and pants. No shades of dark blue or brown will be acceptable. No excessive jewelry should be worn while in uniform.

Extra Musical Opportunities

Private Lessons

While students receive high levels of training in band class every day, it is highly beneficial to receive extra one-on-one instruction with a private teacher on a weekly basis. Private lessons are not considered remediation, but rather, enrichment. Private lessons are beneficial and suggested for ALL players who wish to improve their musical abilities at any level. Please go to www.UnionBands.com/lessons, or contact a director for a list of private lesson teachers and contact information.

NBDA All-District Auditions

8th grade band students from the Northeast Region of Oklahoma will come together to audition for a region-wide honor band. To be chosen for this group is a prestigious honor. Audition information, material, dates, etc. will be given in class and available online at www.nbdaok.org. The audition fee for NBDA Honor Band is built into the band fee and all band members **are expected/required** to audition.

Union Solo/Ensemble Festival

Union Bands host our own in-district solo/ensemble festival in late Spring adjudicated by quality local professional musicians. This is an extraordinary opportunity for our students to excel on their instruments and chamber music education. All band students **are expected/required** to participate. Participation is free to all Union band students.

University of Arkansas Summer Music Camp

Each summer hundreds of students from across the nation attend a week long summer music camp. Students are housed on the University of Arkansas campus and will audition for placement in one of several bands according to their playing proficiency. This is a great opportunity for students to make new friends, have fun, and become a better musician. Please visit www.music.uark.edu/outreach for more information.

Parent Expectations

Parental involvement in your child's musical endeavors is crucial. The following are a few ways you can ensure your child's success in the Union Band Program:

1. Encourage daily practice by setting a regular time and place for your child to practice.
2. Check weekly to ensure that your child's instrument and accessories (reeds, valve oil, slide oil, music, folder, etc.) are in order.
3. Make sure your child is present and on time for all rehearsals and band activities.
4. Attend all concerts and band events.
5. Show an interest in what they are doing and encourage your child continuously.
6. Please join the Union Band Parents Club. Information located at www.UnionBands.com/ubpc

Practice Guidelines for Students

Incorrect habits are sometimes more easily developed than correct habits. A habit is hard to change so think carefully and critically when you practice. Avoid simply going through the motions. Remember, success on any musical instrument involves development of coordination and patience. Learning how to practice is a critical part of successfully playing a musical instrument.

1. Warm up correctly. Consider using a mirror and tuner/metronome. Concentrate on tone quality and embouchure.
2. Set a goal for the practice session. Don't try to do too much at one sitting.
3. Isolate a problem or section in a piece of music. It may be a rhythm, a measure, or a line. Repeat it over and over several times. Start slowly and gradually increase speed using your metronome for steady tempo/pulse. Before you move on, put the isolated section back in context with the rest of the line or section to reinforce muscle memory.
4. In technical passages, change the rhythm and articulations to develop even and accurate technique.
5. Successful practice involves learning and reinforcing areas that are difficult. Practice, therefore, is not always fun because you must play music you have yet to master. Try to end each practice session, however, with something that is fun to play.
6. Structure your practice sessions to get the most benefit out of your time!

Structured Practice Session Example:

<u>Material</u>	<u>Time (min.)</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Warm-Up and daily drill (long tones, scales, lips slurs, etc.)	5-10	Fundamentals: tone, breath control, embouchure, technique, tonguing, etc.
New material and assignments	10-20	Develop new technique, increase range, expand capability of student
Previous and continuing material	10-20	Improvement of finger dexterity, tonguing, tone, musicality, etc.
Personal music choices	5-10	Enjoyment!

The practice session will vary depending on assignments and time constraints. The more consistent you are with practice time, structure, and climate, the better your results will be. Efficient use of time is critical.

Fees

General Band Fee

All students enrolled in Eighth Grade Band will be assessed a student band fee for the year. This fee allows us to provide students with materials and opportunities essential for their and the program's continued success. Among other things, this general fee of \$65 helps provide students with the following:

- The band method book(s), a three ring binder, page protectors, an accessory pouch, pencil, and performance music for the year
- The 8th Grade band T-Shirt that is worn throughout the year including 8th Grade Night @ the HS varsity football game, pep assemblies, and the Spring Trip
- Contest entry fees including NBDA Honor Band and Solo/Ensemble
- SightReading Factory yearly subscription
- Guest clinicians and adjudicators

Spring Trip Fee

This year the Eighth Grade Bands will travel to Kansas City, MO in the Spring. It is expected that ALL students will participate in our Spring Trip due to its contest and performance based nature. Every person is critical to our ensembles' success. The Spring Trip is also a unique and exciting time to reward the students for their outstanding work throughout the year. Our Spring Trip costs are still currently being negotiated and contracted, but are not expected to exceed \$300. All students are automatically enrolled and charged for the trip. Students MUST OPT-OUT by the deadline (mid-January) should there be an unavoidable conflict. This fee includes the following:

- *Chartered Coach transportation*
- *All meals*
- *Accommodations*
- *Entrance fees to museums and attractions*
- *Entrance to Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun*
- *Contest Student Participation Fees*

Parent chaperones will be needed to accompany the bands on this trip. We would love for you to join us for an incredibly rewarding and fun experience. There will be a online signup for interested chaperones. All chaperones will be background checked and approved by the Union Band Parents Club.

* Student participation in the Spring Trip will be based on academic, financial, and behavioral eligibility. Students that present school discipline concerns including, but not limited to, suspension (in-school and/or out of school) may be prohibited from participation in the Spring Trip. Refunds are not issued once payment deadlines have passed.

'Fun'draising

The Union Eighth grade bands are invited to participate in year-round fundraising opportunities. While not mandatory, these opportunities significantly increase the opportunity for students to put money in their band accounts and reduce out of pocket costs for the above fees. We have students every year that cover all band fees through their fundraising participation. Any balance in a student's band account rolls with them throughout their participation in Union Bands. This is a great way to begin planning for future band expenses in high school. All students and parents are encouraged to participate in additional fundraising opportunities offered throughout the year by the Union Band Parents Club. Please visit www.unionbands.com/fundraising for a list of opportunities to get involved and raise funds to cover all your band expenses. Some opportunities such as off-site work can fill up quickly, so visit the sight often. You can also subscribe to Fundraising Remind Messages by texting @ubpc-fundr to 81010.

Payments

There are generally three ways to make payments to your band account. These can be for fundraising or direct student account payments. Please remember all checks are made payable to "UBPC" and should include the student's name in the memo line.

- You can mail your payment to: Union Band Parents Club, Inc.. P.O. Box 471915, Tulsa, OK 74147-1915
- You may have your child bring the payment to band class with them to be placed in the Band Office Lockbox Safe. Students will fill out a deposit envelope, enclose their payment, and drop it in the safe. We highly encourage checks/money orders only and avoiding cash when using this method. The Band Office Lockbox Safe is only accessible to the UBPC Treasurer or designee. Directors do not accept payments directly and do not have access to the Lockbox Safe. We are happy, however, to help students gain access to and complete the deposit envelopes and use the Lockbox Safe.
- You may submit payments with a credit card or check directly through your Charms Account using AffiniPay. Our school code for Charms is: UnionBands. You will also be prompted to enter your student password to access your account. It may be your student's school ID number (without any preceding zeros) until you change it. Choose the red circle at the top with the "\$" inside it to access your student account information. Make sure to choose "Make Miscellaneous Payment." Also note, the AffiniPay system does charge a small processing fee for each payment.

Charms

CHARMS is the web-based software that is used to track Union Bands students information. In addition to equipment, uniforms, and contact information, it is used to track individual student accounts and finances. Please familiarize yourself with the software. It is extremely important that your contact information is kept up to date in the CHARMS system. We often communicate through the CHARMS system and want to ensure you are receiving the information.

Three ways to access CHARMS:

- go to UnionBands.com and use the Quick Links on the right side of the page.
- go to UnionBands.com/Charms
- Directly at www.charmsoffice.com

To sign in, you will need:

- Our School Code: UnionBands
- Your student account password (may be set as your Union Student ID# until you change it.) We do encourage all account passwords to be changed from the Student ID# for security purposes. If you forget your password, contact your director and we can reset it to your School ID# to allow you to change it again and access your account.

Communication

Effective and timely communication between staff, parents, and students is critical to our success. There are several ways we communicate. We may use the website, email, text message, phone calls, etc. Here are a few ways to ensure you are up to date and “in the know.” Please ensure your contact information is up to date in the CHARMS system.

- www.UnionBands.com
- www.UnionBands.com/8th

Other useful Remind Groups within Union Bands:

- Union Band Parents Club General - Text **@ubpc-info** to 81010
- Fundraising - Text **@ubpc-fundr** to 81010
- HS Bands - Text **@uhsbands** to 81010

Social Media

While social media is a part of everyday life, it is important students and parents understand Union Bands etiquette expectations. Students are discouraged from posting negative comments or comments that could be perceived as anything other than having excellent sportsmanship or the attitude of humility in any online format or application. Likewise, it is expected that Union band parents behave in similar fashion. Our rule of thumb: if in doubt, don't do it.

Follow Union Bands on:

- Twitter: @UnionBands
- Instagram: @UnionBands
- Facebook: Union Bands and Renegade Regiment

Sectionals

In an effort to provide a challenging and rewarding curriculum, students may be required to attend occasional after school sectionals/rehearsals. A detailed schedule will be provided prior to any sectionals. If school is closed for any scheduled sectional, it will NOT be made up. Failure to attend may affect a student's grade.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in our continued efforts to achieve excellence.